

# Measures of Student Success and Student Experience Following University/College Transfers in Northwestern Ontario:

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*Final Report*

*July 17, 2012*

This report was produced by Confederation College and includes data that was provided by Lakehead University. Both datasets from the College and Lakehead University were analyzed and interpreted by Confederation College.

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## Introduction

Since 2001 student mobility has been on the rise across Ontario (Carter, Coyle, Leslie, 2011; Kerr, McCloy, Liu, 2010; College-University Consortium Council Report, 2011). Several studies summarize the trends and characteristics of transfer students using data from the existing Graduate Satisfaction Surveys that are conducted at each of the 24 Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (CAAT) (CUCC, 2007; CUCC, 2011; Decock, H., McCloy, U., Liu, S & Hu, B, 2011; Kerr et al., 2010). Confederation College took an opportunity to collaborate with the Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT, formerly CUCC) and Lakehead University, our closest neighbouring institution, to investigate transfer student characteristics, patterns and experiences using more than results from the Graduate Satisfaction Survey. Data from our own registration office, from Lakehead University, from transfer student focus groups and transfer student surveys was collected and analyzed to gain greater insight on transfer students. We are now in the process of creating better strategies to inform students who wish to transfer, and improve their overall transfer experience.

Outlined below is the relevant recent literature found on student mobility, the methods used to collect data in our study, the results from each method used, a summary of the results and the recommendations brought forth from the research project.

## Literature

Transferring through universities and colleges can be difficult in Ontario, partly due to the decisions made during the period colleges were being established. At this time, Universities were already developed and growing in Ontario, and discussions revolved around the need for a different type of education than what was being taught at universities (Skolnik, 2010, p. 3). The plan for colleges was to focus on “technical education” that would help individuals develop the knowledge and skills necessary to keep up with technical advances (Skolnik, 2010, p. 3). While planning the function of the colleges, “transfer for students in occupational programs was not on the radar screen” (Skolnik, 2010, p. 6). Ontario university leaders and the Ontario government made the decision to reject “a transfer function for the colleges” believing that the colleges should not provide university-level general education courses (Skolnik, 2010, p. 6). However, the founders of the colleges did not make this decision as a “once-for-all-time choice; rather, the situation was going to be monitored continuously” and modifications were supposed to be made where necessary and warranted (Skolnik, 2010, p. 14). This monitoring has failed to occur and the original decision seems to have been set in stone, yet students still manage to successfully transfer between colleges and universities, indicating a need to change (Skolnik, 2010, p. 14; Kerr et al., 2011).

Counting the exact number of students that transfer between institutions in Ontario is difficult to do because of the limit of “system-wide sources of information” (Kerr et al., 2010, p. 6). Instead of transfer student counts, studies generally make use of the Graduate Satisfaction Survey that is conducted at each of the 24 CAAT colleges. The surveys are conducted six months after graduation from college and include questions on transfer. Both CUCC and the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO) have reported on results from this survey. CUCC reported on trends from the results between 2001 and 2010, and found that an increasing proportion of graduates further their education six months after graduation, an increase from 23% in 2001 to 28% in 2009 (CUCC, 2011, p. 7). They also found that a larger amount of these transfers chose college over university to further their education, a trend that has been consistent between 2001 and 2009 (CUCC, 2011, p. 10). HEQCO found that those transferring to college “are more likely to be young, under 22 years of age, [and graduate] with a ‘College Certificate’” (Kerr et al., 2010 p. 12; Decock et al., 2011). College graduates transferring to university are “more likely to be female, under age 22, graduating with a ‘Basic Diploma’ or an ‘Advanced Diploma’” (Kerr et al., 2010, p. 11). In regards to geographic mobility, college graduates continuing their education tend to stay within the same geographic region as their originating college (Kerr et al., 2010, p. 19).

The experience of transfer students has also been reported through the Graduate Satisfaction Survey results. Regarding transition, “it was found that college-bound graduates were slightly more satisfied with the transition experience than university bound graduates, but the level for both groups was high” (Kerr et al., 2010, p. 19). When asked about academic preparation for their current program and achievement of goals after graduation, both university and college transfer groups reported high satisfaction levels (Kerr et al., 2010, p. 19). To find information on transfer articulations or agreements, the three most used sources of information included the College website, the University website and publications, and College Faculty/Counsellors (Kerr et al., 2010, p. 22). Those transferring to university made use of university websites more than college websites and those transferring to college made more use of college websites than university websites (Decock et al., 2011, p. 42). Success rates of transfer students have also been researched in terms of grades and graduation rates. HEQCO reported that “a phenomenon known as transfer shock, which refers to the tendency of the GPA of college students to temporarily drop within the first year of university,” has been found to occur in most college transfer students (Kerr et al., 2010, p. 23). It is difficult for students to recover from this, even after two years in university (Kerr et al., 2010, p. 23). Transfer shock is not found in transfer students who move to college (Kerr et al., 2010, p. 23).

Despite the advantages of providing consistent data on graduate transfer, the Graduate Satisfaction survey has limitations. For example, the survey only provides information on graduate status six months after college, leaving out information on students who transfer before graduation or years after graduation (Decock et al., 2011, p. 10). Reporting on only one group of transfer students, results in the Graduate Satisfaction Survey represent “the minimum amount of movement” (Decock et al., 2011, p. 10). Addressing the challenges of finding a better, more systematic way of tracking transfer students in Ontario can be difficult; however, have we attempted to address this in our research methods.

## Methods

The focus of this project was to find information on student success after transfer, the amount of credit transfer granted to students, and the student experience of transfer (please refer to Appendix A for more details on the research focus). Transfer students will be defined as students and graduates who move from a program at a college or university into either Confederation College or Lakehead University. Direct entry students will be defined as students who move into either Confederation College or Lakehead University directly from high school. Data was collected from Confederation College, Lakehead University and focus groups to gain a comprehensive understanding of transfer students and their experiences. The methods have been described in further detail below.

### Confederation College Transfer Data Analysis

As the Graduate Satisfaction Survey produces results exclusive to only one group of transfer students, the Confederation College Banner system was used to provide individual-level data that encompassed all students transferring into our College. Information from 2005 to 2010 was gathered, and the data pulled included variables such as:

- name of the previous educational institution the student had attended,
- the program they previously attended,
- the program and date they successfully were admitted into Confederation College,
- age,
- Aboriginal status,
- first generation status,
- the start and end date of their term at the previous institution
- the amount of credit granted for their previous educational experience,
- the program they graduated from at Confederation College and their graduation date.

An analysis was conducted on the results to see how many transfer students we receive each year, the profile of the students, where the students are coming from, the success rates of the students, and the average GPA of students with certain credentials.

In addition, information was gathered on the graduation rates of all College students from 2005 to 2010 and GPAs were gathered from direct entry students for comparison.

### Lakehead University Transfer Data Analysis

We worked with Lakehead University to gather information on Confederation College students and graduates who transferred to Lakehead University. Information provided from Lakehead included results from 2005 to 2010 and the data pulled from their system included variables such as:

- the term the student enrolled at Lakehead, gender, birth year,
- Aboriginal status,
- first generation status,

- the number of previous institutions attended,
- the start and end date of the most recent Confederation College program taken,
- the total transfer credits received for previous education at all institutions,
- the total transfer credits received for previous education at Confederation College,
- the Lakehead University program the student was first enrolled in,
- the first degree the student obtained and the degree date,
- the GPA of the first year of enrolment at Lakehead University
- and the student's enrollment status at Lakehead University as of May 2012.

An analysis of the data was conducted to see how many Confederation College students transfer to Lakehead University, the profile of the students, the success rates of students, and the length of time between their last Confederation College program and enrolment at Lakehead University.

Lakehead University also provided information on direct entry students that was used to compare results found in the transfer student data.

Best efforts were made to ensure compatibility between the two datasets however there were some differences between information provided by Lakehead University and Confederation College. Lakehead University data did not include information on the previous program taken at Confederation College and the credentials, if any, that were received from Confederation College. Confederation College data did not include information on the amount of credits gained from previous education at Lakehead University.

### Transfer Student Focus Groups

We partnered with Northern Insights, a division of Generator, to create and conduct focus groups on transfer student experience. To create meaningful focus groups we had sent out an email survey to solicit information and participation (Appendix B and C). Two similar but separate surveys were sent. One was sent to 784 students and graduates who had transferred to Confederation College and the other was sent to 462 students and graduates that transferred from Confederation College to Lakehead University. Both surveys were closed March 30, 2012. Focus groups were then conducted using a structured questionnaire (Appendix D).

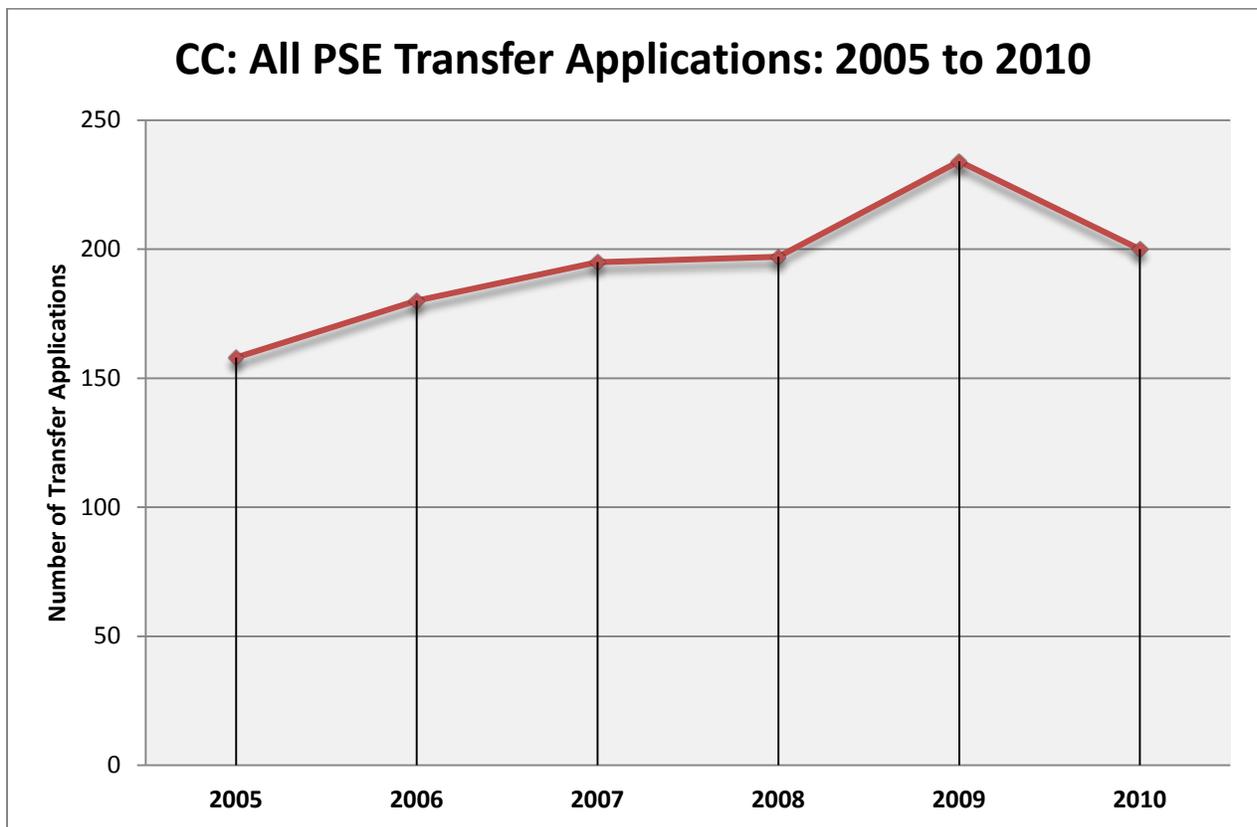
## Results

### Student Transfer into Confederation College

#### *Number of transfer students from all PSE institutions to Confederation College, 2005 to 2010*

Our data tracked the number of transfer students who began a program starting in the winter term of 2005 until the fall term of 2010. Overall, it was found that Confederation College has received 1,167 confirmations from transfer students. Figure 1 depicts the total number of transfer applications received over 2005 and 2010.

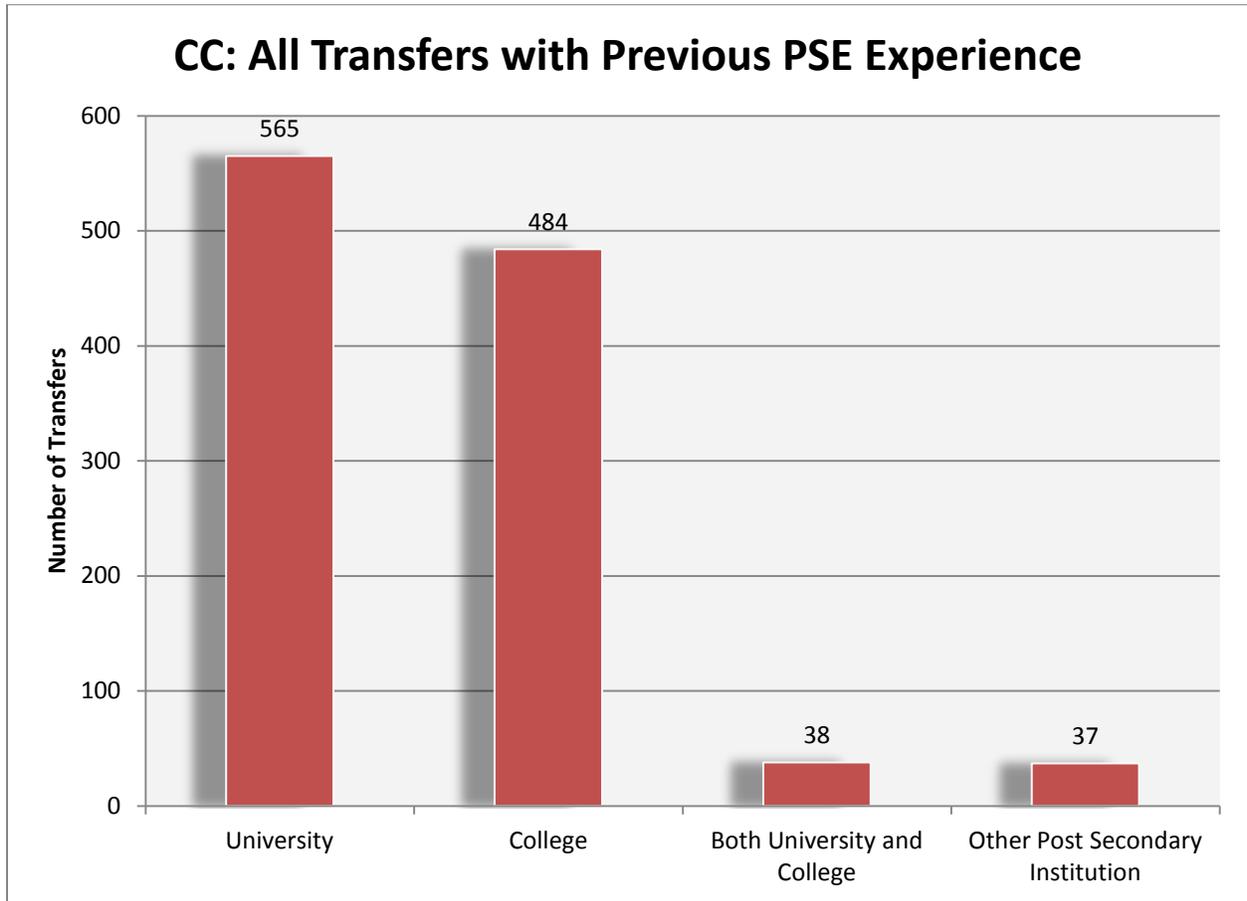
Figure 1



The graph shows that the number of confirmations from transfer students is increasing gradually every year with a peak in 2009 of 239 students. The average percent increase over these five years is 6%.

Though 1,167 transfer applications into Confederation were confirmed, further analysis in this paper is restricted to 1,124 students who received a GPA above 0.0. Those who have transferred to Confederation College come from various backgrounds, including an education at both types of institutions. Figure 2 shows the number of transfers that have previous university, college or other experience.

Figure 2

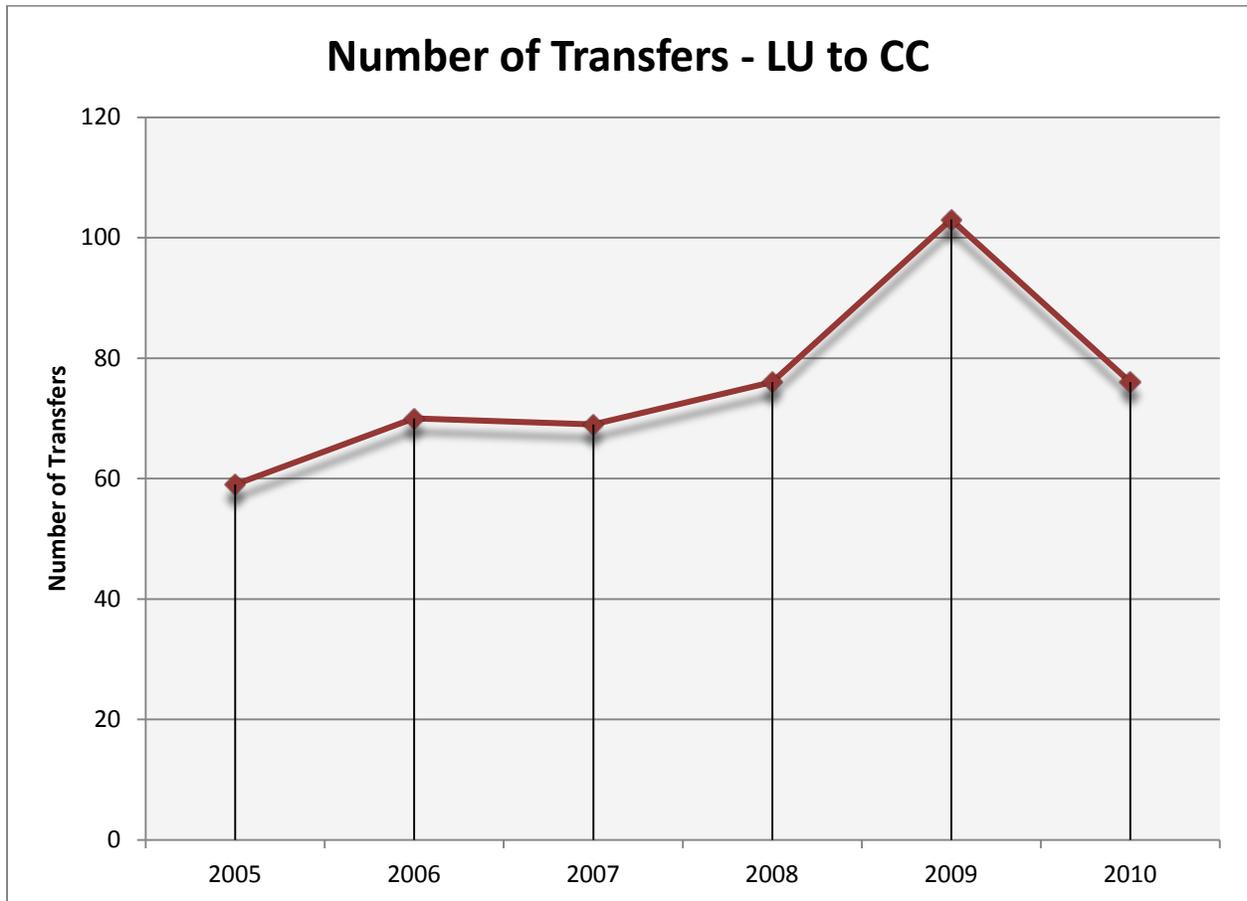


The majority of transfers to Confederation over the past five years have come from university. Lakehead University transfer students accounted for 75% of those transferring with previous experience at university and/or college (453 of 603 students).

### *Number of Transfer Students from Lakehead University*

Of the 1,124 students transferring to Confederation College, 453 (40%) are from Lakehead University. Figure 3 shows a breakdown of the number of students and graduates transferring from Lakehead University to Confederation College by year. Overall, there has been a 7% increase in the number transfer students from Lakehead University to Confederation College over five years.

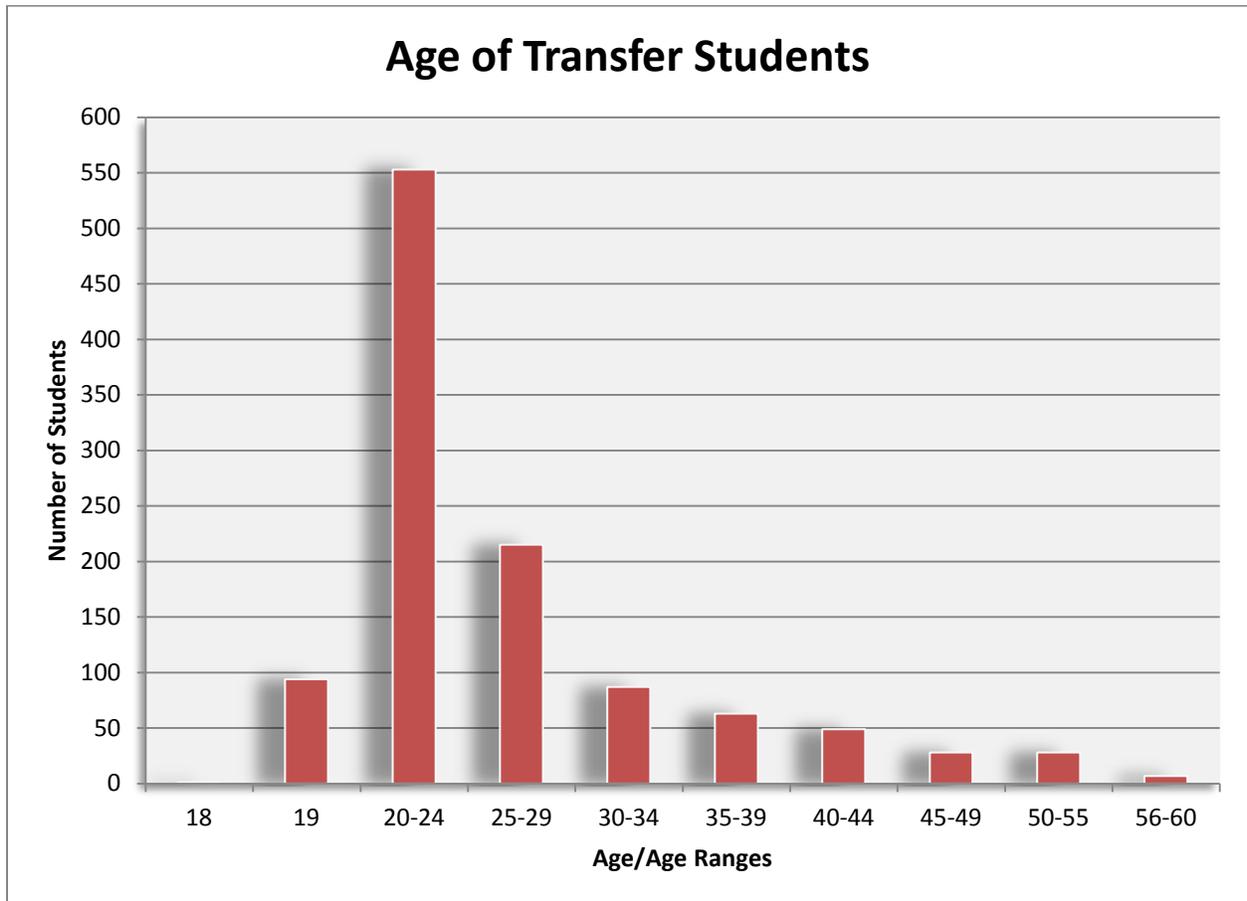
Figure 3



### Profile of all Transfer Students to Confederation College

The age of transfer students was recorded when they were enrolled in Confederation College programs. Ages ranged between 18 and 60, and the data showed the majority of transfer students were 20 (139 students), 21 (109 students), 22 (115 students) and 23 (108 students). Figure 4 shows details on grouped age ranges.

Figure 4



In addition, the data also showed that overall there were more female transfer students (56%) than male (44%), that 133 (12%) indicated they were Aboriginal and 64 (6%) indicated they were first generation. There may be more Aboriginal and first generation students than depicted because not every Aboriginal student will disclose Aboriginal status and there was not a complete set of first generation data. Of all transfer students, 186 (17%) had transferred between 2 or more institutions.

### *Success at Previous Institutions*

Results showed that the majority of transfer students held a previous credential from another institution (57%). More students have Degrees than Diplomas, Certificates and Advanced Diplomas. This is due to the number of transfer students that are coming from Lakehead University. They account for 70% of transfer students with Degrees. The table below displays the breakdown of students with previous credentials.

<b>Highest Credential Earned...</b>	<b># of Transfer Students with Credential</b>	<b>Percentage of total transfer students (1,125)</b>
Degree	256	23%
Diploma	187	17%
Certificate	182	16%
Advanced Diploma	12	1%

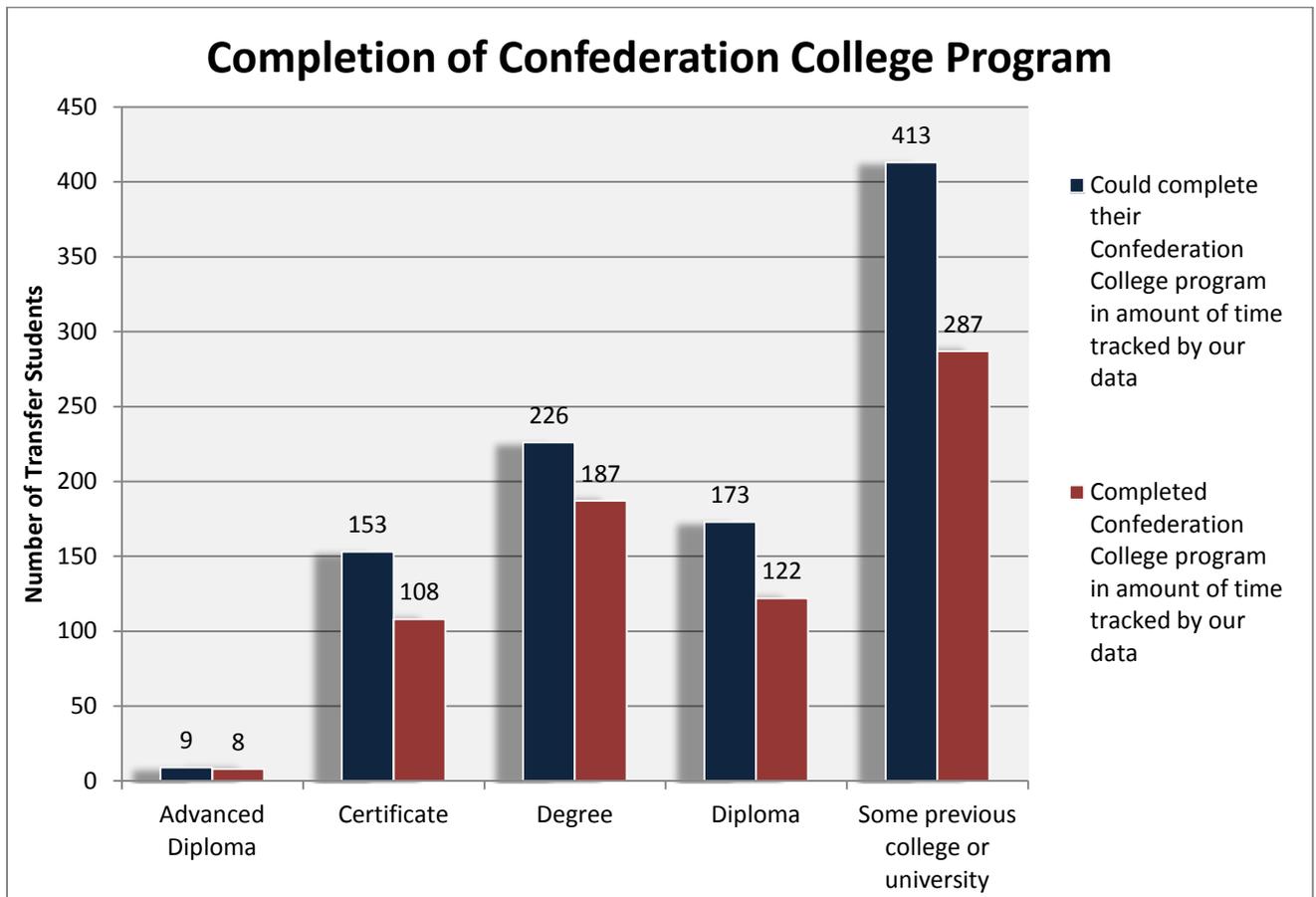
### Success/Graduation Rates of Transfer Students

The success rate of transfer students was calculated by using the number of students who could have completed their program by winter 2011 and comparing it to the number of students who actually completed their program. We evaluated this graduation rate against the 2010-11 KPI graduation rate that is calculated each year. The KPI graduation rate tracks “individual students who entered a program of instruction in a particular enrolment reporting period” and assesses how many individuals completed that program in a time frame that is “approximately 200% of the normal program distribution” (MTCU, 2012, p. 3-4). This means that students are given a longer period than the normal length of a program to graduate, which is similar to the process we used to calculate the graduation rate of transfer students.

Overall, we found that 974 (87%) transfer students could have completed their program by the graduation dates tracked in our data. Of the 974 students, 712 (73%) completed their program. The 2010-11 KPI overall graduation rate at Confederation is 61% which demonstrates that transfer students into Confederation College graduate at a higher rate than average.

Figure 5 shows transfer student graduation rates stratified by previous PSE experience.

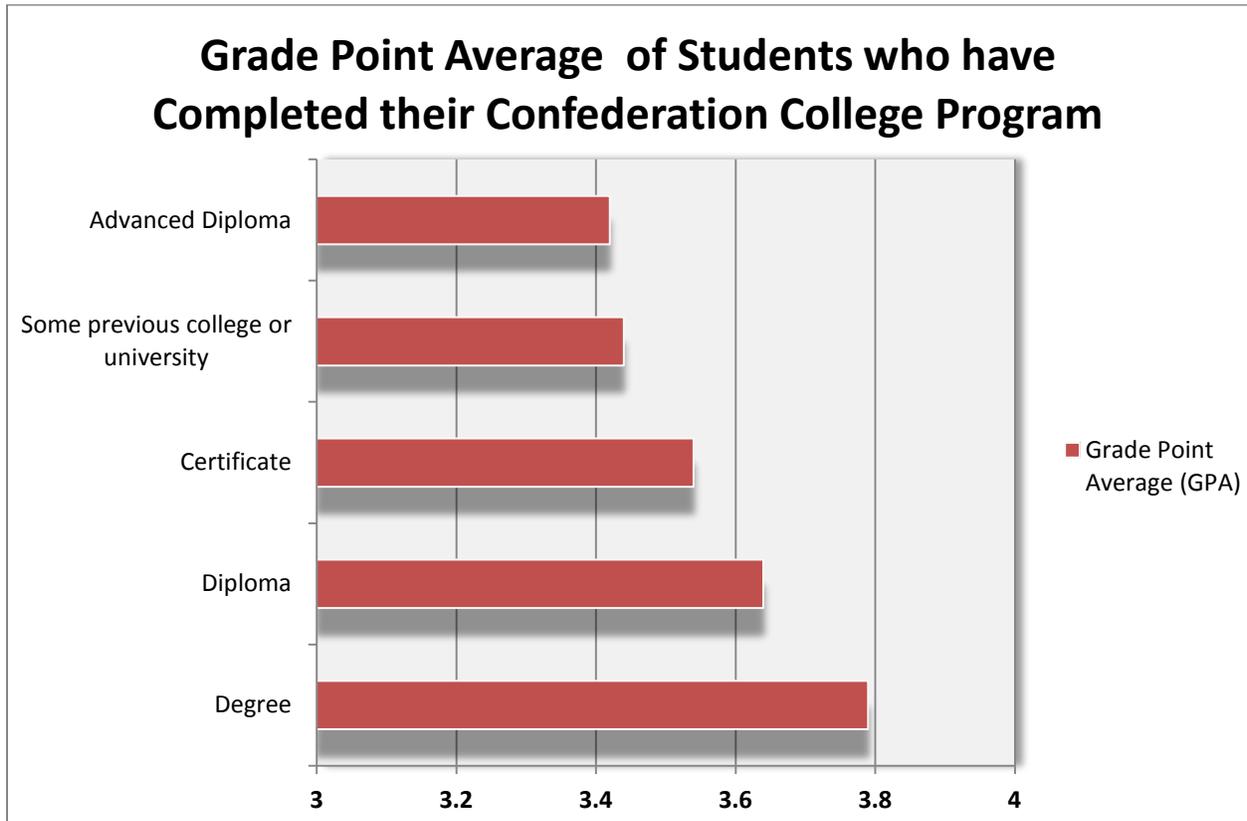
Figure 5



### Grade Analysis of Successful Transfer Students

Those who completed their program were grouped together with others who had the same highest level of education to calculate an average GPA. Figure 6 shows the average GPA of students who hold previous credentials and those who have previous experience at a college and/or university.

Figure 6



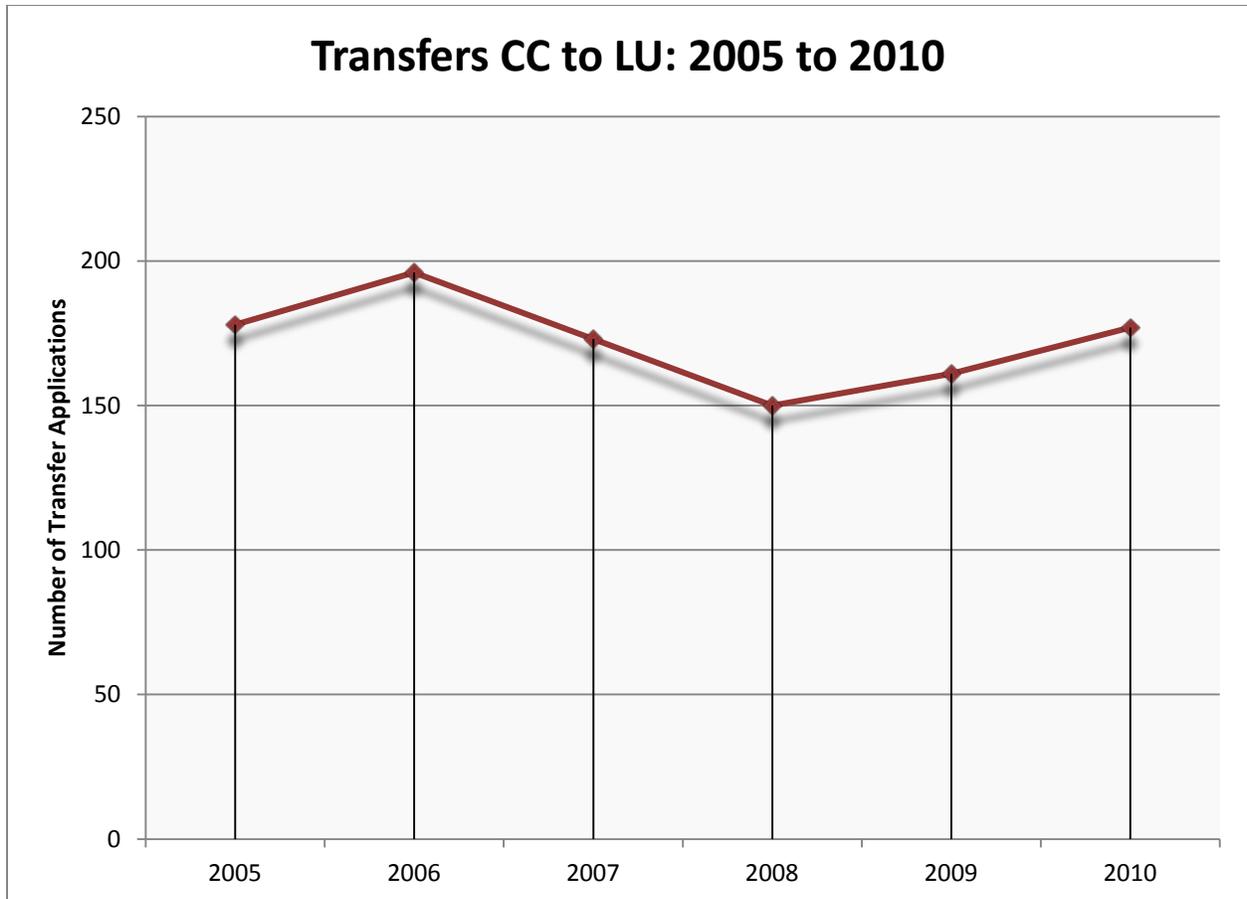
Those who have degrees seem to earn a higher GPA than those with other credentials or previous education. Additionally, transfer students seem to perform better than direct entry students. Direct entry graduates between 2005 and 2010 earned an average GPA of 3.34, which is slightly lower than what transfer students achieved. Previous experience may give transfer students an added edge when it comes to completing assignments and studying for tests. They also may be more engaged in their classes.

## Student Transfer into Lakehead University

### *Number of Confederation College students and graduates to Lakehead University, 2005 to 2010*

Per a letter of understanding, data supplied by Lakehead University included information only on transfers from Confederation College. Between 2005 and 2010, Lakehead University received a total of 1,035 transfer students and graduates who enrolled in their programs (Figure 7).

Figure 7



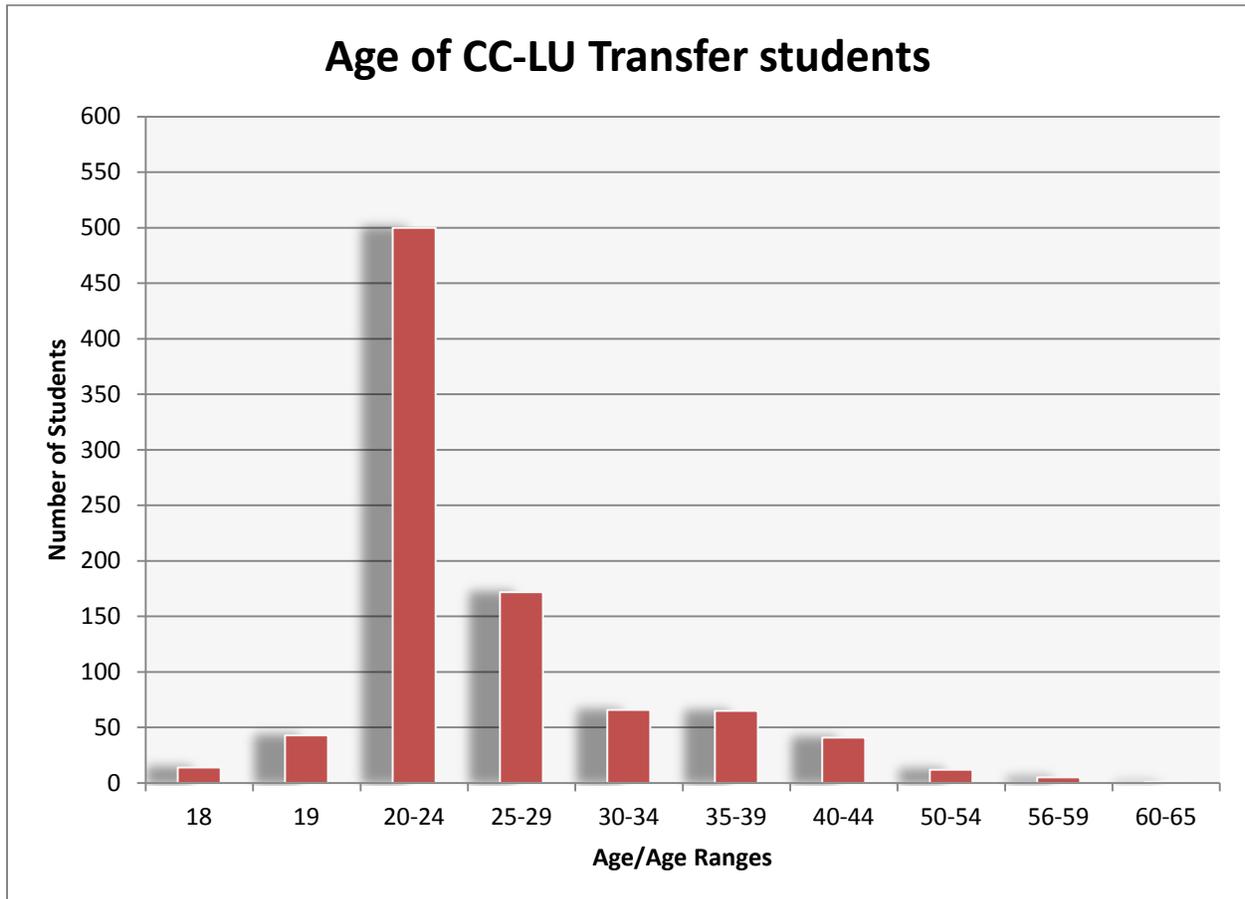
The number of transfer students Lakehead University receives from Confederation College remains steady with no increase or decrease over the five year period.

Though 1,035 transfer students enrolled in Lakehead from Confederation, 939 received a GPA above 0.0. There may be a number of reasons why students enrolled into Lakehead programs and did not achieve an average above 0.0. For a better understanding of the challenges these students face, a separate study should be conducted. Further analysis in this paper is restricted to the 939 students who received a GPA above 0.0.

### *Characteristics of Transfer Students Confederation College to Lakehead University, 2005-2010*

The age of Confederation College transfer students was recorded when they were enrolled into Lakehead University programs and is presented in Figure 8.

Figure 8

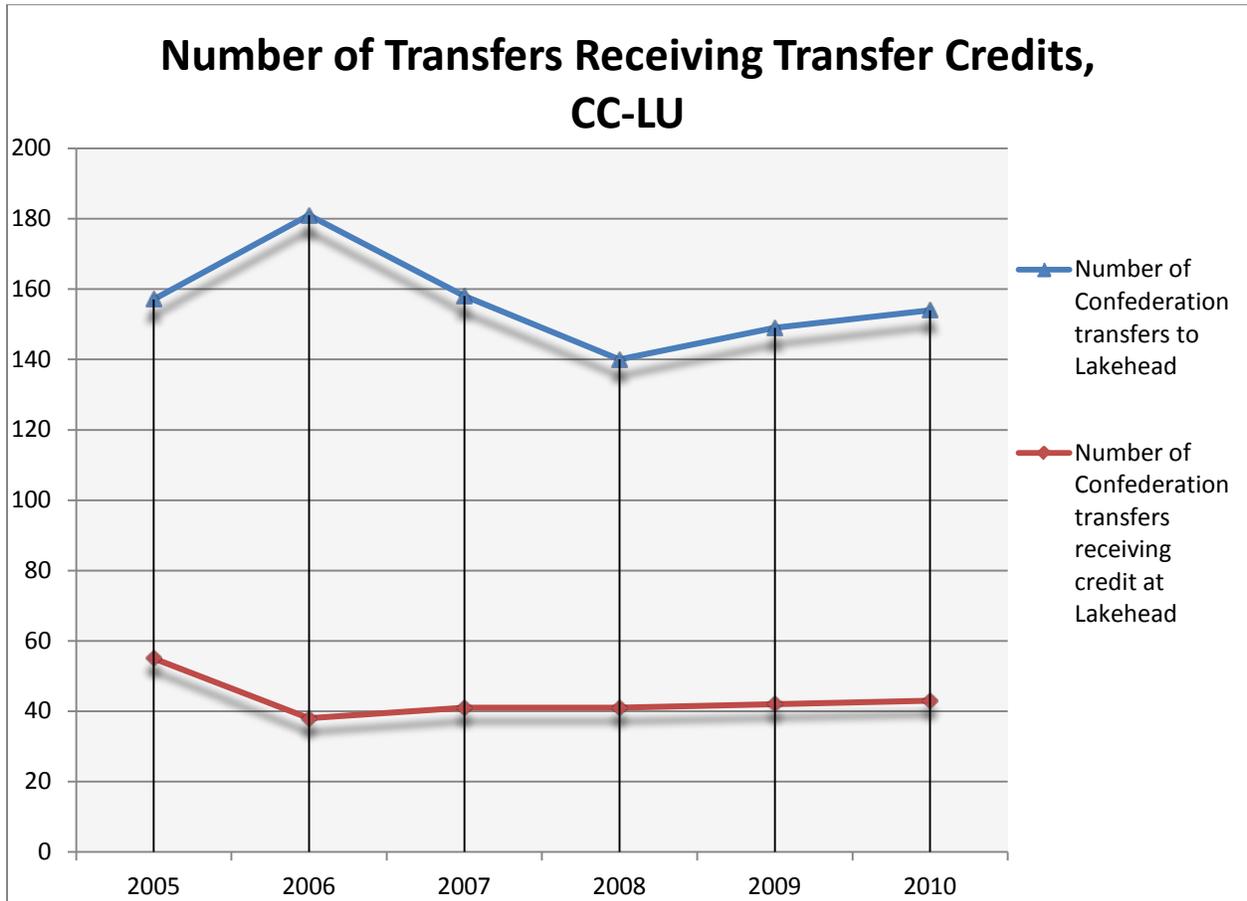


Additionally, the data showed that year over year, more females from Confederation College were transferring to Lakehead University than males. Of the 939 transfer students, 61% were female and 39% were male. Also, 209 (22%) students indicated they were Aboriginal and 224 (24%) indicated they were first generation. Not every Aboriginal student or first generation will disclose this status.

### *Confederation College students receiving transfer credit to Lakehead University*

Of the 939 transfer students from Confederation to Lakehead, 260 (28%) received credit for their previous education, and on average, these students earned four credits. Figure 9 displays the total number of Confederation College transfers into Lakehead University by year and the total number of students that earned credit for their previous education at Confederation College.

Figure 9



Most students do not receive credit for their previous experience at Confederation College and this may be explained by the student's previous educational experience and the transfer policies at Lakehead University. According to Lakehead's policies, those students who have completed a two or three year diploma program, with a 3.0 GPA or higher, are eligible to earn transfer credits. Students who complete a one year certificate or upgrading do not have the opportunity to transfer their credits no matter their GPA (please refer to Lakehead University's website for more information (<http://mycoursecalendar.lakeheadu.ca/pg94.html>)).

The transfer students receiving credits are likely graduates from two and three year diploma programs. Those who have not received credit are likely students from certificate or upgrading programs or students who have not completed their program. With missing variables on graduation and previous credential, it is difficult to fully understand. This is an area that will need further investigation.

### *Success/Graduation Rates of Transfer Students at Lakehead University*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Percentage of transfer students who have earned a Degree from Lakehead University</b>	<b>Percentage of transfers students who do not have a Degree, but are still enrolled in Lakehead University</b>	<b>Percentage of transfer students who do not have a degree and are not enrolled at Lakehead University</b>
2005	47%	9%	44%
2006	39%	20%	41%
2007	36%	31%	32%
2008	20%	53%	27%
2009	5%	85%	10%
2010	2%	92%	6%

Since Lakehead University programs are 3 to 5 years in length, depending on the type of degree, and 2011 was the latest degree date given in the Lakehead University dataset, 2005 may be the only accurate year to report graduation rates. It allows students six years to graduate. However, one year of data does not give enough information to see patterns or trends. In addition, it is important to note that the data included a combination of both full and part-time students which prevents us from drawing conclusions regarding graduation rates. Further analysis will need to be conducted in this area to be able to accurately determine the success rates of transfer students.

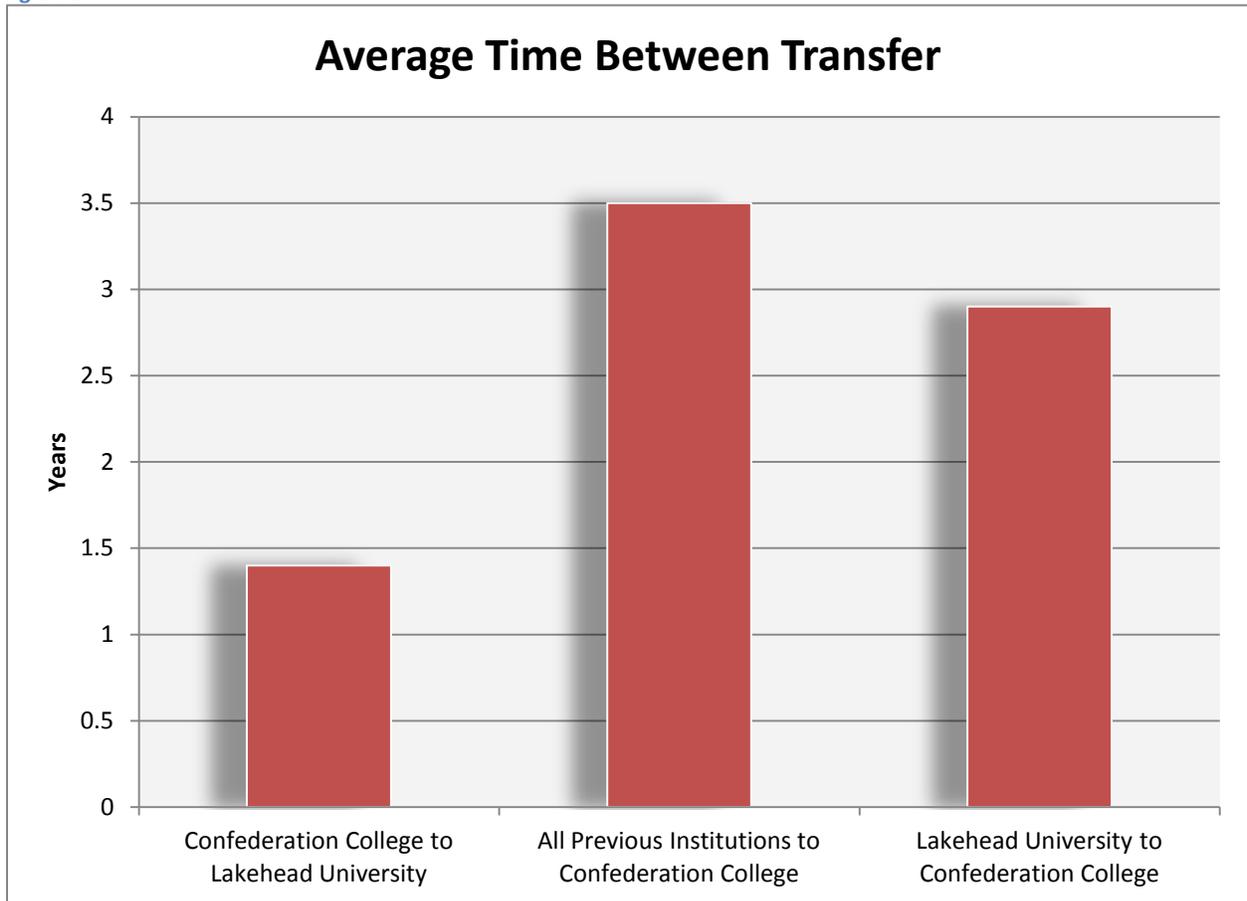
### *GPA Analysis of Confederation College transfers into Lakehead University*

A comparison of GPA was not possible because only high school GPA for direct entry students and first year university GPAs for transfer students were included in the dataset. In addition, missing information on full- and part-time student status may affect a GPA analysis. A better comparator and more information are needed for future research.

### *Time between Transfer*

The CAAT Graduate Satisfaction Survey reports on a minimum amount of mobility between institutions because it only tracks graduates six months after graduation. Figure 10 shows the average amount of time it takes for students and graduates to transfer from one institution to another.

Figure 10



## Transfer Student Focus Groups

### *Transfer Students to Confederation College (7 students)*

The participants in the Confederation College group came from different types post secondary institutions. They were questioned on the differences between Confederation College and their previous institution, their adjustment to Confederation College, their personal motives for transferring and their feedback on the transfer process.

When asked about the differences between institutions, the participants commented on the smaller class sizes at Confederation College, which they preferred. Smaller class sizes enabled the participants to get to know their classmates and professors, which allowed them to have a more personal learning environment. They also stated that classes were composed of students with diverse age ranges, from young to old. They commented that the learning pace was slower at Confederation College, with more, yet less difficult homework. The participants seemed to like this as they had more time to work part-time hours and increase their income. They also favoured the lower tuition at Confederation College and felt the College had prepared them well for a career.

Most participants noted that the credit transfer process was “simple, timely and effective,” and did not take long to complete. They agreed that the amount of transfer credits they received was the amount they expected and some had received even more than they had expected. A couple of issues brought forth from the participants were the long line-ups at the registration office and the fee associated with transfer credits. Participants stated that transfer credits became costly once all credits were added up. Another issue faced by transfer students is obtaining course outlines from discontinued courses. One participant spoke to this issue with his own experience.

In regards to the adjustment to Confederation College, all participants stated they felt academically prepared for their course work. Many of them were not interested in their orientation as they had attended one at their previous institution. Many felt that they would rather be informed about their professors, the facilities, their course-work and assignments rather than be entertained by social activities. They suggested that a program-specific orientation may be beneficial.

Participants stated career-related reasons when asked why they transferred to Confederation College. “Finding a job, finding a steadier job, changing careers, upgrading education to qualify for professional designations” were a few of the reasons stated. In addition, many “individuals stated they chose Confederation College primarily because of its location” as they desired to stay in the region closest to their homes. Transfer credits were also a reason for choosing Confederation College.

To improve the credit transfer process, participants suggested to remove the fee per transfer credit and to implement an online method for submitting credit transfer forms to avoid waiting in lines. In addition, participants recommended creating a transfer key, which would show students what courses they were exempt from. They suggested creating a print version for students who may not want to search online, and creating a key for each program and placing it on the program’s website. In addition, they suggested publishing a sheet with credit transfer details and sending it with acceptance letters.

### *Survey Results, Transfers into Confederation College (10 respondents)*

The survey that was sent to students who had transferred to Confederation College reflected what was found in the focus group. Most were satisfied with their transfer experience; only two participants had stated that the transfer experience did not match their expectations. Many noted that the courses at their previous institution had academically prepared them for their studies at Confederation College and that they had transferred for career-related purposes, for example for career advancement or because there were no jobs in their field. Similar to what was found in the focus group, the main source of transfer information for participants was Confederation's website. Participants came from various educational backgrounds. Of the ten respondents, only four stated that they had come from Lakehead University.

### *Transfer Students to Lakehead University (4 students)*

The Confederation College group that transferred to Lakehead University were asked the same questions posed to the previous group. They were asked about the differences between institutions, their adjustment to Lakehead University, their personal motives for transferring and their feedback on the transfer process.

The participants mentioned several differences between Confederation College and Lakehead University. They stated that class sizes and compositions varied. Second year classes were large and consisted of younger students, while third and fourth year classes were smaller and consisted of older students from different educational backgrounds. The differences in class size and composition made it difficult for participants to get to know their classmates. They also noted the differences in tuition and course work. There were more independent readings per course and fewer assignments with much heavier weights, which put pressure on the participants.

In regards to their transfer experience, two of the four participants were satisfied with the transfer process. Two participants received the transfer credits they expected and received them in a reasonable amount of time. Two found the process lengthy and frustrating and did not receive the amount of credit they had expected. This was due to a change in articulation agreements and to a lack of clear understanding which College courses counted for credits. Interestingly, two participants noted that selecting electives at the university was frustrating because they were required to take second-year level electives. Their selection was slim because many of the second year electives had a first year prerequisite. "Consequently, many students could not take a lot of electives that they wanted to take which they found annoying."

Most of the participants felt well-prepared for their course work and one found that her course work was repetitive because she had already learned the material at Confederation College. These participants, similar to the participants from the previous group, did not attend their orientation and noted some of the same features that the other group would have liked to see. For example, a tour of the facilities, meeting with their professors and classmates, and a description of their specific courses and course work were some of the features the participants mentioned. Also, they stated that they

would like advice on formats of tests, how to study for these tests, and information on proper referencing and formatting.

Reasons for transfer were to attain “higher levels of education for their careers.” Participants also wanted to continue their education to work at a particular desired position.

To improve the transfer process and experience, participants suggested that an individual from the university deliver a presentation to those wishing to transfer. They felt that an in-class presentation would be a more personalized form of information, rather than the print and online advertisements that they receive. Also, they recommended that Lakehead University include information on which credits transfer as part of a student’s acceptance letter, so they would know exactly which courses had transferability. Also, similar to the previous group, they mentioned that having an online system that described transferrable courses would be beneficial.

### *Survey Results, Confederation College Transfers into Lakehead University (12 Respondents)*

The survey results reflected some of what was found in the focus groups. Most respondents stated that they were satisfied with their transfer experience to Lakehead University; only two stated that they were not satisfied and their expectations were not met. Most of the participants responded that their program was “Very related” to their previous Confederation College program and they felt Confederation College prepared them well academically for their studies at Lakehead University. Most respondents stated that their reason for transfer was because it was “the next step in my educational path” and to earn a degree. Their major source for information on transferring to Lakehead University was the University’s website and the staff/faculty at Lakehead University. A couple of comments respondents made regarding transfer was the need for better communication between both institutions. This would help students and staff understand what is needed to transfer.

## Summary of Results

Overall, the number of transfer students to Confederation College is increasing. The importance of proximity mentioned in the literature can be seen to play a role in choice of institution as almost half (40%) of our transfer students come from Lakehead University. This seemed to also be confirmed in both focus groups.

The profile of transfer students seemed to also match what was found in the literature as the majority of college and university transfer students were female and fell between the ages of 20 and 23.

More than half of the students that transfer into Confederation College hold a credential from another post secondary institution, and they seem to achieve a better overall GPA than direct entrants. Though all transfer students into Confederation College with a credential do well in their programs, those with a Degree tend to achieve a better GPA and are more likely to graduate from their programs.

Lakehead University has received over 100 transfer students from Confederation College year over year from 2005 to 2010. Success rates including information on transfer student GPA and graduation rates will need further analysis due to missing variables in the dataset.

Based on the focus group discussions, students experience a number of issues transferring back and forth between colleges and universities. While it is difficult to draw conclusions due to the small focus group sizes, the students who transferred to Confederation College appeared to be happy with the transfer experience. We identified a number of transfer issues that should be explored further in order to help improve the experience for students following a number of transfer pathways.

## Recommendations

Confederation College should build a transfer key or guideline that can be used by perspective students who are looking to transfer here. Not only was this noted as an important source of information in the Graduate Satisfaction Survey, but it was also suggested by participants in both focus groups. These keys or guidelines could be included on a program's webpage for easy access and sent in acceptance letters so students are made aware of transfer credit opportunities.

Currently, on our admissions department webpage there is a list of articulation agreements under an articulation agreement tab. As some students may not be aware what an articulation agreement is, we could change the title to make it more understandable and posted on the websites of programs that have articulation agreements.

In addition, we are also working on a project to better track transfer students and the courses they are exempted from. This tracking system could be used to see the amounts of credit granted to students and common courses they are exempted from. It may also give us a better way to define and observe affinity.

Finally, we are also in the process of increasing the number of articulation agreements between other colleges and universities.

Future research recommendations include:

- Further examination of why roughly 75% of Confederation College transfers to Lakehead University receive no transfer credits at Lakehead
- Analysis on the number of graduates and non-graduates that transfer from Confederation College to Lakehead University and the level of affinity between programs.
- Segregating full and part time transfer students to investigate patterns in GPA and graduation rates
- Investigate ways to link individual records from OCAS to OUAC to examine and research program affinity and measures of success such as GPA and graduation rates to allow meaningful comparisons

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## Appendix A

College-University Consortium Council Requests	Breakdown of Research Questions	Needs	Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student success after transfer, including academic performance and/or graduation rates, compared to direct entry students and/or other appropriate student cohorts</li> </ul>	What is the success rate of transfer students?	Academic Performance	Data on transfer and direct entry students from cohorts between 2005 and 2010 will be gathered from both of the Registration Services departments at Confederation College and Lakehead University.
		Graduation Rate	
	What is the success rate of direct entrants?	Academic Performance	
		Graduation Rate	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Credit transfer, including amount of credit, both specific and non-specific, granted to transfer students upon entry by program/major including reference to student's original program of study</li> </ul>	What is the amount of credit offered to students who transfer?	Amount of credit allotted from programs with pathways	Registration Services departments at both Confederation College and Lakehead University will be asked to collect data on credit transfers offered. Data will be collected on the credit transfers offered every year between 2005 and 2010.
		Amount of credit allotted from programs without pathways	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student experience of transfer, including experiences during the process of transfer and experiences after transfer, such as communication of transfer credits granted, orientation to new institution, academic preparation for new institution etc.</li> </ul>	How do students perceive the process of transfer from college to university/university to college in terms of credit transfers? (E.g., how long did it take to receive notification of credits offered? What amount of transfer credits did they expect to receive?)	Contact information of students to create focus group and/or survey group	Focus and/or survey groups will be conducted on students who have transferred into Confederation College and Lakehead University between 2005 and 2010.
	What are the differences between college and university in terms of social life, economic situation, etc.?		
	What are students' perceptions on the academic aspects of university/college? (E.g., were they academically prepared for the courses? Were they prepared for the amount of homework? Do they find college/university more difficult as compared to their previous academic experiences?)		

## College/University Student Pathway Survey

Confederation College is looking for insight from students who have transferred from a university or another institution into our college. We would like to understand the experiences of transfer students including, any challenges of transition, and strengths or weaknesses of the credit transfer process.

The end goal is to make improvements to the transfer process here at Confederation College.

It should take approximately 3 to 5 minutes to complete.

Your participation is VOLUNTARY and you can withdraw at any time by closing the survey window. All responses will remain COMPLETELY CONFIDENTIAL and will be combined with all other responses to create an aggregate set of data. The aggregate data will be reviewed by a team working on the transfer process at Confederation College. If you have any questions about the study, you may contact Stephanie Schutte, Research Analyst Intern, at (807)475-6596 or [iresearch@confederationc.on.ca](mailto:iresearch@confederationc.on.ca).

This section seeks to examine your satisfaction regarding your student tran...

## 1. How satisfied are you with your transfer experience to Confederation College?

- Don't know
- Very dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Satisfied
- Very satisfied

## 2. How well did your transfer experience match your expectations?

- Don't know
- Not well at all
- Not well
- Neutral
- Well
- Very well

## 3. Imagine the perfect transfer experience from one educational institution to another. How close to this ideal was your transfer experience?

- Don't know
- Not close at all
- Not close
- Neutral
- Close
- Very close

## College/University Student Pathway Survey

### **4. How related is/was your program at Confederation College to your previous program at the other institution?**

- Don't know
- Not related at all
- Not related
- Neutral
- Related
- Very related

### **5. Do you feel the courses at your previous institution academically prepared you for your studies at Confederation College?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Not applicable

## Please tell us a little more about your transfer

### 6. What are/were your reasons for transferring to Confederation College? (Please check all that apply)

- I did not enjoy the program at my previous school
- I wanted to relocate to another geographic location due to personal reasons
- I wanted to switch into a new program, but my previous school did not offer that program
- I was looking for a different approach to teaching and learning
- It's the next step in my educational path
- No jobs available in my previous field of study
- To get a diploma
- Needed for professional designation
- Broaden education
- Encouragement from others (e.g., family, friends)
- More opportunities for career advancement
- Upgrade/improve knowledge and skills in my previous field of study
- There was a formal transfer agreement between my previous program and the program I transferred into
- The company I am/was working for required it
- Other (please specify)

### 7. What sources of information did you use to help you in your transfer? (Please check all that apply)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confederation's web site                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Graduates who attended Confederation College |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confederation's Facebook page            | <input type="checkbox"/> Campus Tour                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family and Friends                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff/Faculty at Confederation College       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Co-workers                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Guidance counsellor                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Students attending Confederation College | <input type="checkbox"/> Other  |

# College/University Student Pathway Survey

## 8. What school did you transfer from?

- Lakehead University
- Another college
- Another university

## 9. In what year did you successfully transfer into a Confederation College program?

- 2010
- 2009
- 2008
- 2007
- 2006
- 2005

**10. Confederation College has partnered with Northern Insights, a division of Generator, to help with this research. Northern Insights will be conducting a focus group on this subject. Meals will be provided and the group will discuss the topic of students' transfer experience.**

**Would you be interested in participating in a focus group discussing student transfer experience?**

- Yes
- No

# College/University Student Pathway Survey

Thank you for your interest!

Please let us know a good time for you to meet with a group and your preferred contact information.

After the survey has been closed (on March 23rd) we will send you details about the focus group, including time and location.

If you have any questions regarding the focus group, please contact Giovanni Scalzo, the researcher at Northern Insights, at [Giovanni@generatorad.com](mailto:Giovanni@generatorad.com) .

## 11. What month would you prefer to participate in a focus group?

- March
- April
- May
- Any month is okay

## 12. What time of day during the week would you prefer to participate in a focus group?

- Morning
- Early afternoon
- Late afternoon
- Evening
- Any time is okay

## 13. What is your last name?

## 14. What is your first name?

## 15. What is your preferred email address?

## Final comments

**16. We welcome any other comments you may have regarding your transfer experience or the transfer process at Confederation College.**

Thanks for your time and participation! By completing the survey you are indicating an awareness of the purpose of this study and that you are participating voluntarily.

## College/University Student Pathway Survey

Confederation College is looking for insight from students who have transferred from our College to Lakehead University. We would like to understand the experiences of transfer students including, any challenges of transition, and strengths or weaknesses of the credit transfer process.

The end goal of this research is to improve the transfer process at Confederation College and to help our students succeed after transfer.

It should take approximately 3 to 5 minutes to complete.

Your participation is VOLUNTARY and you can withdraw at any time by closing the survey window. All responses will remain COMPLETELY CONFIDENTIAL and will be combined with all other responses to create an aggregate set of data. The aggregate data will be reviewed by a team working on the transfer process at Confederation College. If you have any questions about the study, you may contact Stephanie Schutte, Research Analyst Intern, at (807)475-6596 or [iresearch@confederationc.on.ca](mailto:iresearch@confederationc.on.ca).

This section seeks to examine your satisfaction regarding your student tran...

## 1. How satisfied are you with your transfer experience to Lakehead University?

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- Very dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Satisfied
- Very satisfied

## 2. How well did your transfer experience match your expectations?

- Don't know
- Not well at all
- Not well
- Neutral
- Well
- Very well

## 3. Imagine the perfect transfer experience from one educational institution to another. How close to this ideal was your transfer experience?

- Don't know
- Not close at all
- Not close
- Neutral
- Close
- Very close

## College/University Student Pathway Survey

### **4. How related is/was your program at Lakehead University to your previous program at Confederation College?**

- Don't know
- Not related at all
- Not related
- Neutral
- Related
- Very related

### **5. Do you feel your courses at Confederation College academically prepared you for your studies at Lakehead University?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Not applicable

## Please tell us a little more about your transfer

### 6. What are/were your reasons for transferring to Lakehead University? (Please check all that apply)

- I did not enjoy the program at my previous school
- I wanted to relocate to another geographic location due to personal reasons
- I wanted to switch into a new program, but my previous school did not offer that program
- I was looking for a different approach to teaching and learning
- It's the next step in my educational path
- No jobs available in my previous field of study
- To get a degree
- Needed for professional designation
- Broaden education
- Encouragement from others (e.g., family, friends)
- More opportunities for career advancement
- Upgrade/improve knowledge and skills in my previous field of study
- There was a formal transfer agreement between my previous program and the program I transferred into
- The company I am/was working for required it
- Other (please specify)

### 7. What sources of information did you use to help you in your transfer? (Please check all that apply)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lakehead's web site                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Graduates who attended Lakehead University |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lakehead's Facebook page               | <input type="checkbox"/> Campus Tour                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family and Friends                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff/Faculty at Lakehead University       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Co-workers                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Guidance counsellor                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Students attending Lakehead University | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                                      |

## College/University Student Pathway Survey

**8. In what year did you successfully transfer into a Lakehead University program?**

- |                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> 2010 | <input type="radio"/> 2007 |
| <input type="radio"/> 2009 | <input type="radio"/> 2006 |
| <input type="radio"/> 2008 | <input type="radio"/> 2005 |

**9. Confederation College has partnered with Northern Insights, a division of Generator, to help with this research. Northern Insights will be conducting a focus group on this subject. Meals will be provided and the group will discuss the topic of students' transfer experience.**

**Would you be interested in participating in a focus group discussing student transfer experience?**

- Yes
- No

# College/University Student Pathway Survey

Thank you for your interest!

Please let us know a good time for you to meet with a group and your preferred contact information.

After the survey has been closed (on March 23rd) we will send you details about the focus group, including time and location.

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- April
- May
- Any month is okay

## 11. What time of day during the week would you prefer to participate in a focus group?

- Morning
- Early afternoon
- Late afternoon
- Evening
- Any time is okay

## 12. What is your last name?

## 13. What is your first name?

## 14. What is your preferred email address?

## Final comments

**15. We welcome any other comments you may have regarding your transfer experience or the transfer process at Confederation College.**

Thanks for your time and participation! By completing the survey you are indicating an awareness of the purpose of this study and that you are participating voluntarily.

## Post-Secondary Schools & Student Mobility Research – May 2012

### DISCUSSION GUIDE

#### Introduction

Welcome and thank you for coming in today for the group discussion. My name is (*Moderator*) and I am working with Northern Insights, a local research company, hired by Confederation College and Lakehead University. The purpose of today is to get your thoughts, opinions, and insights on student transfers among post-secondary schools. Your input will be used to identify any issues with student transfers and in the potential development of improving the student transfer process and experience.

You were invited because you have direct experience with student migration as transfer students.

As we discussed, today's session will be approximately sixty to ninety minutes. There are no wrong answers but rather differing points of view. Please feel free to share your point of view even if it differs from what others have said. We want you to feel comfortable in telling us your honest opinions.

The discussion is being recorded so that we don't miss anything you have to say. People often say helpful things during these discussions and we can't write fast enough to get them all down. We will be on a first-name basis tonight, and we won't use any names in our reports. As stated on the permission/signature sheet, your name and the audio recordings will remain anonymous and confidential.

Does anyone have any questions?

Research Targets	Date of Focus Group
1. College Transfer Students	May 2, 2012 at 5:00 pm
2. University Transfer Students	May 8, 2012 at 12:00 pm

## College Transfer Students Focus Group Questions

*College Transfer Students segment will receive these questions:*

- 1) Research Objective 1: To understand students' perceptions on the differences between college and university
  - a) What are the differences between college and university in terms of social life and your personal economic situation? Were there any difficulties adjusting?
  - b) What are the differences between college and university programs and courses, and student life?
  - c) Do you feel that one school prepared you for a career more than the other?
- 2) Research Objective 2: To understand students' transfer experiences
  - a) What do you think about the transfer process in terms of the amount of credits that transferred?
  - b) How long did it take to be notified regarding what credits transferred?
  - c) What amount of transfer credits did you expect to receive? Did anyone receive more or less credit transfers relative to what they expected?
  - d) Were there any surprises after transferring?
- 3) Research Objective 3: To understand students' adjustment to their new educational institute
  - a) Did you feel academically well-prepared for your courses and homework during your first semester after transferring?
  - b) Did you receive an orientation at your new school after transferring?
  - c) Are you finding university to be more difficult than college?
- 4) Research Objective 4: To understand student's personal motives for transferring
  - a) What is (are) your reason(s) for transferring?
- 5) Research Objective 5: To gain student feedback for improving the transfer process?
  - a) How can the student transfer process be improved to make it smoother for future students?
  - b) Is there anything we have missed?

## University Transfer Students Focus Group Questions

*University Transfer Students segment will receive these questions:*

- 1) Research Objective 1: To understand students' perceptions on the differences between college and university
  - a) What are the differences between college and university in terms of social life and your personal economic situation? Were there any difficulties adjusting?
  - b) What are the differences between college and university programs and courses, campuses, and student life?
  - c) Do you feel that one school prepared you for a career more than the other?
- 2) Research Objective 2: To understand students' transfer experiences
  - a) What do you think about the transfer process in terms of the amount of credits that transferred?
  - b) How long did it take to be notified regarding what credits transferred?
  - c) What amount of transfer credits did you expect to receive? Did anyone receive more or less credit transfers relative to what they expected?
  - d) Were there any surprises after transferring?
- 3) Research Objective 3: To understand students' adjustment to their new educational institute
  - a) Did you feel academically well-prepared for your courses and homework during your first semester after transferring?

- b) Did you receive an orientation at your new school after transferring?
- c) Are you finding college to be more difficult than university?
- 4) Research Objective 4: To understand student's personal motives for transferring
  - a) What is (are) your reason(s) for transferring?
- 5) Research Objective 5: To gain student feedback for improving the transfer process?
  - a) How can the student transfer process be improved to make it smoother for future students?
  - b) Is there anything we have missed?



# Measures of Student Success and Student Experience Following University / College Transfers in Northwestern Ontario

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# Introduction and Methodology

The purpose of this study is to examine the experiences and success of transfer students in both Confederation College and Lakehead University, with a focus on students who transfer between Confederation and Lakehead. Confederation College and Lakehead University are in a unique position. As the only two institutions in northwestern Ontario, the region is a suitable environment for examining transfer students given that a significant portion of students in this region have attend one of these institutions. The five research objectives of this qualitative study are the following:

1. Research Objective 1: To understand students' perceptions on the differences between Confederation College Lakehead University and other educational institutions
2. Research Objective 2: To understand students' transfer experiences
3. Research Objective 3: To understand students' adjustment to their new educational institution
4. Research Objective 4: To understand students' personal motives for transferring
5. Research Objective 5: To gain student feedback for improving the transfer process

Transfer students in this study will be defined as students who move from a program at a college or university into either Confederation College or Lakehead University. Potential research participants include anyone who satisfies the following criteria:

- Individuals that began studying at Confederation College between summer 2005 and summer 2010
- Individuals have previous experience at a different university or college before they started studying at Confederation College

Individuals who satisfied both criteria were invited to participate in the research study. These individuals were contacted through their existing email addresses at either Confederation College or Lakehead University. In total, seven transfer students to Confederation College participated in a focus group and three transfer students to Lakehead University participated in a focus group. As a result of the relatively lower number of participants in Lakehead University transfer focus group, an additional in-depth interview was conducted to collect additional data. In total, there were eleven participants in this study (see Table 1). There was a \$50 incentive for students to participate. The focus groups and interview all took place in the Northern Insights lab facility located in the Shuniah Building of Confederation College's main campus.

Table 1: Focus Groups and Interview Dates

<b>Date</b>	<b>Focus Group / Interview</b>	<b>Number of participants</b>
May 2, 2012	Focus Group: Transfer students to Confederation College	7
May 9, 2012	Focus Group: Transfer students to Lakehead University	3
May 17, 2012	Interview: Transfer student to Lakehead University	1



The focus groups were moderator-led discussions. The interview was also conducted in a similar manner with an interviewer directing the conversation. The focus groups and interview introduced the purpose of the research study to the participants. Each participant signed a consent form indicating knowledge of and compliance with the recording of the sessions. Approval for reporting of voice recording was provided. The focus groups and interview were moderated by Giovanni Scalzo, and Stephanie Schutte assisted the moderator during the focus groups.

A summary of the results of each focus group and interview can be found in the Appendices section. A formal set of questions was explicitly drafted to help direct discussions in the focus groups and interview. Follow-up questions were asked in addition to the pre-established questions to ensure that a thorough and complete data set would be available for analysis. This method of delivery allowed Giovanni to tailor each focus group and interview to ensure that all topics related to the credit transfer process were discussed.



## Results

The results are subcategorized into two sections. The first section consists of students that transferred to Confederation College. These results are based on Focus Group 1 - Transfer Students to Confederation College (see Appendix 1). The second section encompasses other students that transferred to Lakehead University. These results are based on Focus Group 2 - Transfer Students to Lakehead University (see Appendix 2) and on Interview - Student Transfer to Lakehead University (see Appendix 3).

### Transfer Students to Confederation College

The following section is divided into each of the five research objectives. The participants consisted of university students that transferred from several universities and colleges in Ontario.

#### **Research Objective 1: To understand students' perceptions on the differences between Confederation College and other educational institutions**

There are a number of items discussed regarding the differences between Confederation College and participants' previous educational institution. The number of students in each class is much lower relatively speaking. Also, the participants tended to have the same students in their classes over the duration of their studies at Confederation College. These smaller classes were favourable, and all participants stated they enjoyed knowing the names of their classmates and professors, and having a more intimate and personal learning environment. The classes also tended to be comprised of students of diverse age backgrounds, from young individuals who had graduated recently from high school to older individuals in their 40s.

The learning pace was slower at Confederation College relative to their previous institutions. Some participants noted that the learning pace was particularly slower when computers were involved in classroom learning. The older students tended to experience more difficulty with computers, and so this was a factor that slowed down the learning pace. In terms of the workload, participants noted that the workload tended to be larger in amount and consist of more assignments and homework, but the work was not as difficult to complete. Also, there was less independent reading outside of class. Consequently, students had a more relaxed workload and learning atmosphere, both of which were positive benefits to the participants.

The relaxed workload outside of classes also affected participants' economically as well. Since the workload was relatively lower than at their previous institution, many students were able to work more additional hours, which increased their income. Another economic benefit that students noted was the low tuition rates at Confederation College. Furthermore, in terms of potential future economic benefit, all participants believe that Confederation College had prepared them well for a career.



One comment generated by many participants was the scheduling of social events organized at Confederation College. Many participants mentioned that the social events tended to be scheduled at inconvenient times, usually during classes, and many did not attend these events. However, they did acknowledge the difficulty in scheduling these events since the student body of the college has a diverse age range with students at different life stages.

### **Research Objective 2: To understand students' transfer experiences**

The credit transfer process was simple, timely, and effective for most participants. Many participants noted that the process did not take long to complete, and that everyone received the number of credit transfers they were expecting. Two participants actually received more credit transfers than previously anticipated.

However, two negative aspects of the credit transfer process that participants noted was the fee associated with each transfer credit, which is something that became costly once all transfer credits were tallied. Moreover, participants noted that the lineup at the office to transfer credits was very busy and had long wait times. One student had difficulty locating the course outlines to discontinued courses from his previous institution, and so he encountered difficulty locating these outlines and obtaining the credit transfers. The duration to transfer the credits lasted over three weeks, and the participant was forced to stay in courses at Confederation College for fear that his previously completed courses would not transfer.

### **Research Objective 3: To understand students' adjustment to their new educational institute**

The participants felt academically well-prepared for the program and coursework they undertook at Confederation College. They noted that the coursework was more time-consuming, but it was relatively easier and manageable.

There were a number of interesting findings regarding participants' feelings towards orientation. Many of them did not attend their orientation and most of them had little interest in attending. Some participants mentioned that they would prefer the social and learning aspects involved in orientation to be separated into two distinct orientations. The participants experienced student life before, and as a result, were not too interested in participating in the more "froshy" aspects or social activities of orientation.

The participants prefer to be informed rather than entertained at orientation. They would prefer to know about their professors, the campus facilities and buildings, their program, their coursework, and assignments. The participants prefer to know about their program in particular. One student even mentioned that she liked her orientation at her previous institution where her orientation included socializing with fellow classmates in her program. Consequently, it may be beneficial to look into the possibility of including a program-specific portion of orientation in which incoming students can learn about their program, professors, assignments, and meet fellow classmates as opposed to students they may not interact with again.



#### **Research Objective 4: To understand students' personal motives for transferring**

The reason participants gave for transferring to Confederation College was to find employment. Finding a job, finding a steadier job, changing careers, upgrading education to qualify for professional designations, and other career-related factors were the key determinants in transferring to Confederation College. One student transferred to Confederation College to find employment in the education industry after realizing the current difficulties in finding a teaching position. Another individual transferred to find a more steady employment that was not seasonal and varied in terms of what time of day he worked. One participant came to Confederation College to complete a post-graduate certificate to qualify for a professional designation with her degree. Finally, one participant studied a program at Confederation College to see if she would enjoy a similar program at another university without leaving her hometown and investing a significant amount of money in moving and living expenses, and higher tuition fees.

#### **Research Objective 5: To gain student feedback for improving the transfer process**

Many individuals stated they chose Confederation College primarily because of its location. The participants are from Thunder Bay or northwestern Ontario and wanted to remain in the region while studying. Nevertheless, the transfer credits were also a factor in enticing them to choose Confederation College.

There were several recommendations that the students gave regarding the transfer process. The first is they would prefer the elimination of the fee per credit transfer. Second, they recommended creating a key showing what credits transfer so that students can easily see what courses they are exempt from without having to call. Regarding the key, the participants recommended creating a print version for those who may not want to use a computer or search online. Also, they recommended creating a key on a per program basis and placing it on each program's web page on Confederation College's web site. Third, the participants recommended including some details after credit transfers in student acceptance letters

in case they did not search online or receive a print credit transfer key. Finally, they recommended implementing an online method for submitting credit transfer forms, because the waiting line is too long.

### **Transfer Students to Lakehead University**

The following section is divided into each of the five research objectives. It is important to note that all students attended Confederation College, and one participant previously attended another institution briefly for a year.



## **Research Objective 1: To understand students' perceptions on the differences between Lakehead University and other educational institutions**

The participants noted several differences between Lakehead University and their previous institution. First, they noted that the number of students in a class varied according to each course's year level. Second-year courses tend to have large class sizes, while third and fourth-year courses have smaller class sizes. Participants stated that they did not always know all of their classmates like they did while attending their previous institution. In addition, the composition of the class varied between second-year courses and third and fourth-year courses.

The participants found that second-year classes tended to be comprised of younger students between 19 and 23 years of age that recently graduated from high schools while third and fourth-year courses tended to have students that were around 25 years of age. Also, students in third and fourth-year courses consisted of transfer students from other institutions, and individuals with previous work experience seeking to upgrade their education level.

The participants stressed the financial costs associated with attending Lakehead University. Relative to college, the tuition cost was significantly higher as well as the cost and number of textbooks required for courses.

Finally, they stated that the coursework was structured differently at Lakehead University as opposed to when they attended college. At Lakehead University, there were fewer assignments, and so they were weighted higher as a portion of the final mark. In contrast, the college tended to have many more assignments, so there was less weight attributed to the final mark per assignment. Lakehead University courses had fewer assignments and a higher weight allocation to the final mark put more pressure on students to do well on every assignment, while there was less pressure on assignments at the college since the weight allocated to the final mark was lower. Moreover, the amount of independent reading required per course was significantly higher at Lakehead University as opposed to the college.

## **Research Objective 2: To understand students' transfer experiences**

Two of the four participants were content with the transfer process. They received the exact number of expected credit transfers, and the length of the credit transfer process was reasonable in terms of the length of time. One participant did not receive a credit transfer for her elective, and another participant did not receive some credit transfers. These two participants who experienced some difficulty with transferring described the process as lengthy and frustrating.



The participant who did not receive a transfer credit for her elective mentioned that it should be made clearer at the start of college which credits will transfer and which ones will not. The other participant discussed in detail that the articulation agreement between Confederation College and Lakehead University had changed, and so there was a hassle involved in completing the transfer process. He was initially accepted, then rejected, and forced to reapply due to changes in the articulation agreement, which extended the length of the process, which was frustrating for him.

Also, two of the participants noted that selecting electives was frustrating. As transfer students, the participants were required to take second-year level electives, but they could not take many electives because many had a first-year prerequisite. Consequently, many students could not take a lot of electives that they wanted to take, which they found annoying.

### **Research Objective 3: To understand students' adjustment to their new educational institute**

Three participants noted that they were well-prepared for the coursework at Lakehead University. One participant even noted that they found some of her classes repetitive because she had already learned much of courses' material. One participant was a marketing student at Confederation College, and noted he experienced some difficulty in courses of other functional business areas, such as human resources and accounting. However, he felt well-prepared in his marketing courses.

None of the participants attended an orientation. Several of them noted that they had been invited, but did not attend. However, they did disclose what they would like from an orientation. First, they would like a tour of the campus to learn where places like the cafeteria and gym are located. Second, they would like an orientation specific to their program where they can meet fellow classmates and professors, and the specific courses and coursework they will have. Also, the participants noted that they would like their professors to discuss proper referencing and formatting in advance so that it is not an issue once courses begin. Many noted frustration with the different formatting and referencing depending on the professor of their course.

The participants would like the professors of their program to tell them about the different types of test formats they can expect and advice on how to study for tests depending on its format. The participants noted that they and their fellow classmates were nervous about taking university-level exams and tests, and recommended that a discussion of exams and tests would have made them feel more relaxed. Finally, the participants asked that professors inform them about online classes and warn them about the dangers of complacency associated with them.



#### **Research Objective 4: To understand student's personal motives for transferring**

The participants all transferred for the purpose of attaining higher levels of education for their careers. They all studied different subject areas, but all of them wanted to continue their education to enter the workforce at a particular desired position.

#### **Research Objective 5: To gain student feedback for improving the transfer process**

The participants noted that having an individual from the university visiting an actual classroom at Confederation College and delivering a presentation about transferring would be a great way to inform students on the transfer process and what opportunities are available to them. They noted that they are bombarded with print and online advertisements, and so an in-class presentation would be very personal and informative for them. They recommended hosting the in-class presentations at an appropriate time so that students can make the appropriate arrangements to qualify to transfer.

Also, including what credits transfer and did not transfer in the acceptance letter to Lakehead University would be beneficial so that students know exactly what has transferred. Also, including a credit transfer online for each program would be beneficial so that students can easily and conveniently access it.

