

LAURENTIAN UNIVERSITY

**Tracking Student Success for Credit Transfer Students at Laurentian:  
Executive Summary**

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## **Executive Summary**

The new [ONTTransfer.ca](http://ONTTransfer.ca) web-site/database is a wonderful planning tool to help students who are debating whether or not to attend or transfer to another post-secondary institution in Ontario. However, in some cases, once the student has been admitted and is enrolled at a university the path is often no longer as well defined. This is the case at Laurentian University. This project evolved in order to answer questions regarding the transfer student experience before targeted programming for them could be developed.

Transfer students are likely the most diverse group of students in terms of the range of ages as well as their individual and unique situations. Despite this diversity the main academic concerns of transfer students are generally consistent; they are most concerned with the length of time they have to graduation, financial matters, and the number and actual transfer of credits approved for transfer. When a transfer student arrives at university, they often experience “transfer shock” due to the new campus culture. Differing ways of counting credits, different academic regulations, and a different registration process are all areas of confusion for this population. Transfer student programming, therefore, plays a major role in retention strategies.

This report presents Laurentian’s data on college transfer students over multiple years, including number of applications received and accepted compared to eventual enrolments, as well as the top ten disciplines to which transfer students both applied and were accepted. Information for this report was collected from various North American universities, peer reviewed journals, and the NACADA website. In addition, a transfer student survey was sent out to each of the 1200 transfer students that began at Laurentian in 2013. The aim of this survey was to collect feedback from transfer students about Laurentian’s current processes and supports. The survey, developed in Survey Monkey, was sent 3 times: January 2013, May 2013 and September 2013. A total of 85 students responded, equivalent to a 7% response rate. In an attempt to hear more about students’ experiences at Laurentian, focus groups in both English and French were organized.

Recognizing the unique needs of transfer students, it is important to fashion specific supports and services for this population. This report proposes a transfer student specific Orientation (sample Orientation schedule included), a registration booklet geared specifically to transfer students’ needs, and an online tutorial or registration guide to provide transfer students with an avenue to be self-reliant and to access accurate information quickly and easily.

After completion of this study Laurentian has decided to implement systems and programming that are targeted towards the transfer student population, improve the initial student experience, and work to create a welcoming atmosphere where transfer students feel they can belong.