

LAURENTIAN UNIVERSITY

Tracking Student Success for Credit Transfer Students at Laurentian

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Laurentian will: 1) implement systems and programming that are targeted towards the transfer student population, 2) improve the initial student experience, and 3) create a welcoming atmosphere where transfer students feel they can belong.

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Introduction

The new <http://ONTransfer.ca> web-site/ database is the site to visit if a student is debating whether or not to attend or transfer to another post-secondary institution in Ontario. Guidance is available to the student who wishes to begin at a college and transfer to a university once they have an established career path, to the student who has decided to change career paths, or to the student who wishes to combine the theoretical and procedural aspects of the discipline. This web-site is a wonderful planning tool.

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 before targeted programming could be developed.

Review of Literature

Demographics

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. It is more common for transfer students to work full- or part-time jobs at the same time as completing courses¹, course loads can vary from full- to part-time, and transfer students often carry extra responsibilities, including dependent family members.²

Despite this diversity the main academic concerns of transfer students are generally consistent. Transfer students are often preoccupied with the length of time they have to graduation: they want to know how quickly they can finish their education.³ Financial concerns are a major preoccupation of transfer students, as they feel that they have already put in time and money at another institution. A third concern is with the number and actual transfer of credits approved for transfer. The concern over credits and finances often determines their decision whether or not to 'take the shortest route' to graduation.⁴

¹ Gard, Dwight R. *et al.*, "Student Perceptions of Factors Contributing to Community-College-to-University Transfer Success," *Community College Journal of Research and Practice* 36, 11 (2012): 840.

² Davies, Timothy Gray, "Transfer Student Experience: Comparing their academic and social lives at the community college and university," *College Student Journal* (March 1999): 11.

³ McGowan, Rosemany A. & Timothy Gawley, "The University Side of the College Transfer Experience: Insights from University Staff," *College Quarterly* 9, 3 (Summer 2006): 4.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 8-9.

When a transfer student arrives at university, they often experience “transfer shock”, a term coined by J. Hills in 1965. NACADA refers to transfer shock as “the tendency of students transferring from one institution of higher education to another to experience a temporary dip in grade point average during the first or second semester at the new institution.”⁵ The student may find that the campus culture is so different from the campus they previously attended that it takes some time for them to adjust to a new way of doing things. Students who experience transfer shock often find registration difficult. Many college transfers expect a schedule to be created for them as it was in high school and college. Transfer students can feel out of place and unwelcome, as they are truncated in to the university and join a program at mid-point, rather than commencing at the beginning.⁶ Transfer students initially experience confusion with terminology and filter information through the framework of their previous institution.⁷ Differing ways of counting credits, different academic regulations, and a different registration process are all areas of confusion for this population. Many transfer students also report a lack of communication as a major struggle. In general, some students report a need to be self-reliant and resort to asking friends or family members for advice before asking university staff, either because the university did not communicate sufficiently or the information that was received was unclear.⁸ Transfer student programming therefore plays a major role in retention strategies.

A need for individual attention at the beginning of their studies should be a primary focus of transfer student programming. The culture of Canadian colleges is very hands-on and individualistic. When students arrive at university, they look for that relationship to continue with university staff and do not want to feel like they are just a number.⁹ Universities who are receiving transfer students need to consider the background of transfer students and make an effort to be as welcoming as possible, making the student feel comfortable. In order to ensure a smooth and friendly transfer experience, the first and most important consideration that universities should strive for is to “make clear [that] their doors are open.”¹⁰

Context

The Ontario College-University Degree Completion Accord (March, 1999) provides a model for articulating the 2-year and 3-year college diploma programs to the 3-year and 4-year degrees and indicates the additional university studies required to complete the degree (see Table 1).

⁵ Thurmond, Karen. “Transfer Shock: Why is a term forty years old still relevant?” *NACADA Clearinghouse Academic Advising Resources* (2007): <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/Dealing-with-transfer-shock.aspx#sthash.f5weXLMI.dpuf>

⁶ Davies, 5.

⁷ McGowan, 7.

⁸ Gard, 834.

⁹ Davies, 5.

¹⁰ McClure, Ann. “Targeting Transfers: Community colleges, universities, and states working together to improve the transfer process,” *University Business* (November 2008): 32.

Table 1: Degree completion model calculation matrix

		University	
	Degree completion from college diploma program to university degree will require:	3-year degree program (15 full courses) (90 credits)	4-year degree program (20 full courses) (120 credits)
College	3-year related college diploma	1-1.4 years (5-7 full courses) (30-42 credits)	1.4-1.8 years (7-9 full courses) (42-54 credits)
	2-year related college diploma	1.4-1.8 years (7-9 full courses) (42-54 credits)	2.4-2.8 years (12-14 full courses) (72-84 credits)

The Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance prepared a policy paper on Student Mobility (2012). Their recommendations included:

“Student mobility refers not to just the physical ability of a student to move from one institution to another, but the more comprehensive understanding of a student as an independent agent, who as their own needs and desires change, needs the ability to move from one institution to another to achieve their desired educational result, be it a college certificate, diploma, or undergraduate degree. The policy has been broken into four key pillars which cover the mobility needs of students in the post-secondary sector in Ontario: Transparency, Consistency, Student Support, and the Future of Credit Transfer” (Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance, 2012).

Transparency

- Students must be able to appeal credit transfer decisions to a higher institutional authority.
- Every institution should publish a database of credits recognized as transferrable.
- Institutions should work together to develop a common format for their credit transfer policies, utilizing consistent language.

Consistency

- Ontario universities should fully recognize any first or second year level courses successfully completed at another accredited Ontario university. Where possible, these credits should count towards a student’s chosen field of study.
- The government or the Council of Ontario Universities should facilitate regularly scheduled meetings for program chairs of similar programs to work towards designing common content and learning outcomes for first- and second-year undergraduate courses at Ontario Universities.

- The government should mandate that all per-course minimum grade requirements be set at the passing grade, as defined by the receiving institution.
- To better facilitate student mobility, Ontario universities should develop robust learning outcome measurements that could be consistent across institutions.
- To facilitate credit transfer, Ontario universities should develop a mechanism to collectively share all course descriptions and syllabi.
- The government should audit institutional residency requirements in all programs, and encourage or mandate reductions of those above 50 per cent.

Student Support

- To ensure system-wide mobility, the government must mandate that all credit transfer administration fees be removed through its existing ancillary fee regulations.
- Adequate bridging programs must be in place at all Ontario post-secondary institutions.
- Program eligibility requirements for the Ontario Student Assistance Program should be amended to grant financial assistance to students enrolled in bridging programs. Universities should use direct funding from government to hire credit transfer advisors that guide students throughout the transfer system, as well as facilitate orientation for incoming students.

The Future of Credit Transfer

- The Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer should develop annual province-wide campaigns to inform students of the opportunities available to them.
- The government should use direct funding and accountability agreements to incent and mandate institutions to create more multi-lateral articulation agreements and purpose-built pathways for transfer.
- The Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer should continue to fund research projects on all aspects of student mobility.

(Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance, 2012)

The College Student Alliance (2012) put forth a paper on “Credit Transfer and Student Mobility in Ontario in which they made 16 recommendations.

1. *The government must ensure that students are refunded for their successful exemption credit and that students are charged tuition on a per-credit basis.*
2. *Encourage institutions and organizations to use the same terminology where possible.*
3. *Institutions must build transfer considerations into the early development of new program and other business planning.*
4. *Institutions must clearly communicate the principles and processes of transfer to students very early in the application process.*
5. *The provincial government, institutions and PSE stakeholders should work to achieve 100% credit recognition for students transferring from a high-affinity program at one Ontario college to another.*
6. *Stakeholders must better communicate the transfer processes and transfer*

- opportunities to students.*
7. *Ensure adequate resourcing of the administrative function within every institution to co-ordinate and track the processing of agreements.*
 8. *Institutions must provide training and support to ensure consistency and efficiency in the credit transfer system.*
 9. *Provide a forum or other mechanism for sharing for an open and informed inter-institutional discussion of admissions and transfer issue.*
 10. *Enhance system-wide principles, policies, and procedures to continuously improve student transfer systems across Canada.*
 11. *Forging credit transfer pathways should be maintained as a key priority in the efforts to achieve a minimum 70% PSE participation rate and to avoid a shortage of skilled workers.*
 12. *In order to remain globally competitive, Canada must pay attention to the international activity related to credit transfer to see what the possibilities exist in our system to improve standardizations to increase mobility to and from Canada.*
 13. *The government and college stakeholders should better promote college degrees as a viable alternative to university degrees to help eliminate degree biases that currently exist.*
 14. *Maintain and expand degree-granting opportunities at colleges across Ontario.*
 15. *Stakeholders and government should work to create permanent working groups like those that exist in BC and Alberta to facilitate transfer efforts.*
 16. *Simplify the look of the Ontario Qualifications Framework for user-friendliness."*

The conclusion must be that many voices have expressed opinions and much work needs to be done to clarify the system.

The Laurentian Experience

The Laurentian university Senate approved a general policy on the transfer of course credits in November 1994 which has remained in effect. The policy states:

To facilitate program completion by undergraduate students seeking to transfer course credit from one Ontario university to another, the universities comprising the Council of Ontario Universities agree to implement the following principles:

- (a) Acceptance of transfer credits among Ontario universities shall be based on the recognition that, while learning experiences may differ in a variety of ways, their substance may be essentially equivalent in terms of their content and rigour. Insofar as possible, acceptance of transfer should allow for the maximum recognition of previous learning experience in university-level courses.

- (b) Subject to degree, grade and program requirements, any course offered for credit by one university shall be accepted for credit by another Ontario university when there is essential equivalency in course content.

Students enter Laurentian University from a variety of sources defined by specific admission requirements. The admission categories are outlined in Table 2

Table 2: Admission categories

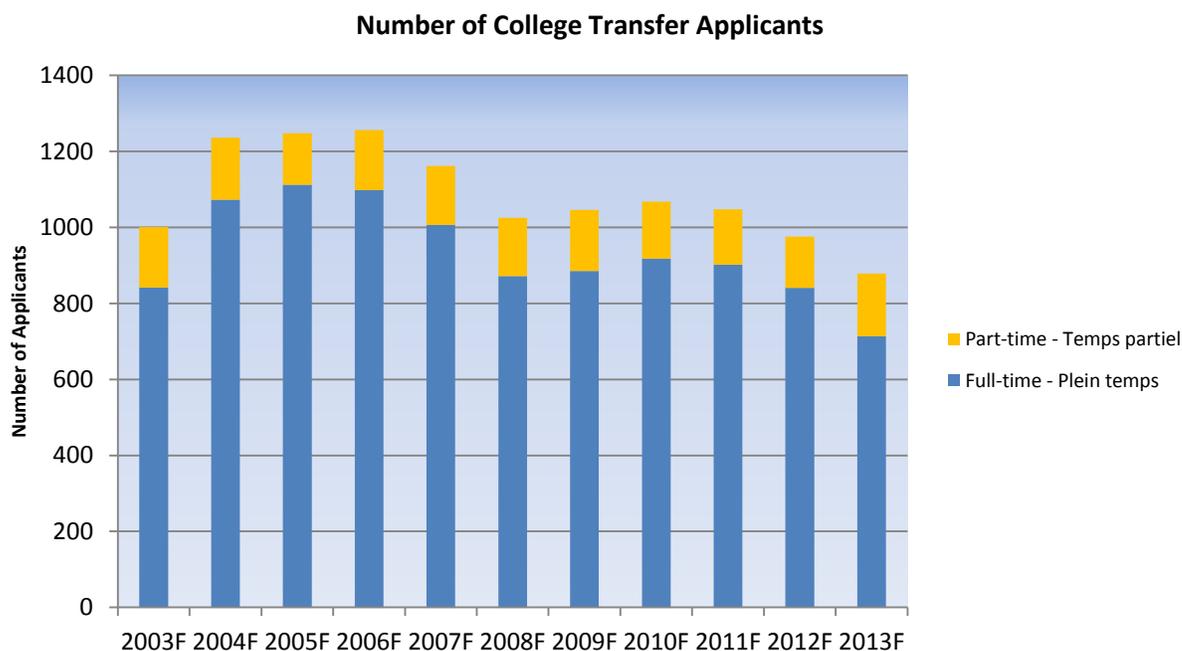
Categories
Sec School Ontario Current
Sec School Ontario Prior & other
Sec School Canadian
Sec School International Bacc
CAAT Transfer
Sec School International
Univ Transfer International
Univ Degree International
International College
Univ Canadian Transfer
Univ Degree Canadian
Internal Transfer
College Transition
CEGEP Transfer
Canadian College
Mature Students

Table 3 and Figure 1 indicate that while the number of applicants with college credit transfers for full-time study has dropped in recent years, the number of part-time applicants has remained relatively constant, perhaps indicating an overall preference/need for part-time programming.

Table 3: Number of new applicants from the Fall Term 2003 to 2013 on all campuses.

	2003F	2004F	2005F	2006F	2007F	2008F	2009F	2010F	2011F	2012F	2013F
Full-time - Plein temps	842	1073	1112	1098	1007	872	885	918	902	841	714
Part-time - Temps partiel	159	163	136	158	155	153	161	150	146	135	165
TOTAL	1001	1236	1248	1256	1162	1025	1046	1068	1048	976	879

Figure 1: Number of new applicants from the Fall Term 2003 to 2013 on all campuses



Laurentian University has not had a tracking mechanism that could yield information on program affinity for any student. It can, however, provide information about which programs the student with transfer credits are applying to. Table 4 describes the ten disciplines most students applied for during the last five years (2009 to 2013).

For example, looking at Table 4, we see that in 2013, 879 students with transfer credits applied to Laurentian University and 766 indicated one of the top ten as their area of choice. While some programs such as Nursing have limited entry, 410 students were quite specific in their choice. The point of interest is that 356 (46.5%) of the students with transfer credits indicated 3 or 4 year Arts or Science. These four categories do not indicate the majors or minors of interest in the application stage.

Table 4: Top 10 disciplines into which college students applied to at Laurentian University from 2009 to 2013

	2009F		2010F		2011F		2012F		2013F
Arts - 4 year	230	Arts - 3 year	220	Arts - 4 year	217	Social Work	176	Social Work	177
Arts - 3 year	225	Arts - 4 year	213	Arts - 3 year	211	Arts - 4 year	171	Arts - 4 year	156
Social Work	110	Social Work	150	Social Work	158	Arts - 3 year	170	Business Admin	95
Business Admin	76	Business Admin	94	Business Admin	103	Science - 4 year	89	Science - 4 year	91
Science - 4 year	53	Science - 4 year	65	Science - 4 year	61	Business Admin	73	Arts - 3 year	84
Science - 3 year	52	Commerce and Adm	54	Commerce and Adm	50	Commerce and Adm	52	Commerce and Adm	48
Nursing	49	Science - 3 year	51	Science - 3 year	46	Engineering	35	Nursing	40
Commerce and Adm	48	Nursing	41	Éducation	36	Human Kinetics	32	Psychology	26
Human Kinetics	41	Éducation	29	Nursing	35	Science - 3 year	31	Science - 3 year	25
Éducation	31	Human Kinetics	29	Engineering	29	Nursing	26	Engineering	24

Table 5 reports the number of college transfer credit students entering Laurentian University on all campuses. As the applications transform to enrolments the number of college transfer credit

students enrolling seems higher than the application numbers. This is due to the difficulties tracking the data from the multiple articulation agreements. Enrolments have been fairly constant since 2007.

Table 5: Number of college credit transfer student entering LU on all campuses

Headcount - UG	2003F	2004F	2005F	2006F	2007F	2008F	2009F	2010F	2011F	2012F	2013F
Full-time - Plein temps	503	949	1,181	1,357	1,367	1,376	1,486	1,558	1,582	1,532	1,462
Part-time - Temps partiel	528	504	531	630	628	620	648	655	599	632	610
TOTAL	1,031	1,453	1,712	1,987	1,995	1,996	2,134	2,213	2,181	2,164	2,072

Figure 2: Number of college transfer students entering Laurentian University

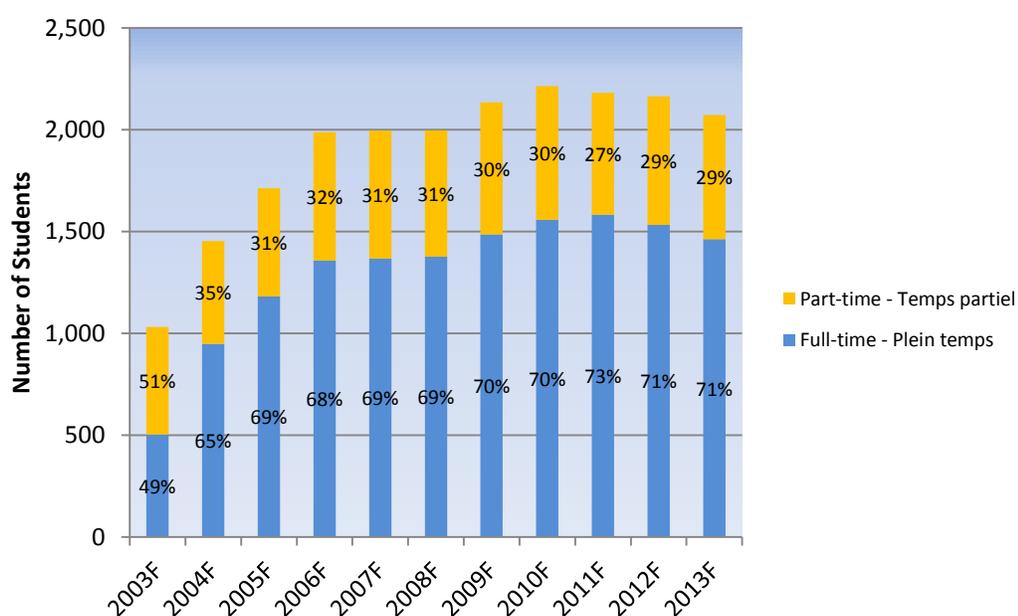


Table 6: Top 10 disciplines into which college transfer students entered at Laurentian University

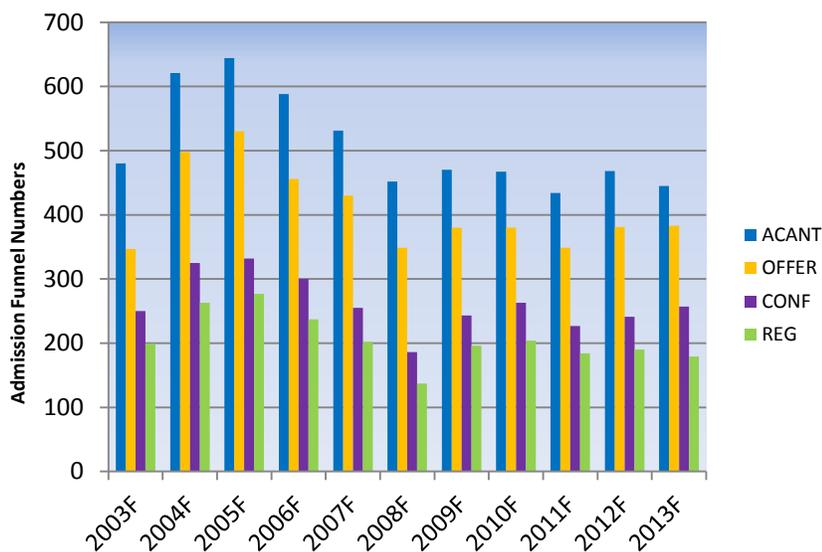
	2009F	2010F	2011F	2012F	2013F
Arts - 4 years	319	331	308	310	278
Social Work	143	180	219	237	252
Arts - 3 years	411	389	375	324	248
Business Administration	236	260	251	255	226
Science - 4 year	46	64	69	70	62
Commerce and Administration	46	38	58	55	56
Engineering	25	29	35	34	45
Arts - 3 ans	71	73	57	40	42
Human Kinetics	46	37	31	35	31
Psychology	22	9	7	8	29

Table 6 describes the top 10 choices of students enrolling as college credit transfer students. Of the 1,269 students who reported these choices, 630 (49.6%) were interested in 3 or 4 year Arts or Science programs.

Table 7: The admission funnels for full-time **college transfer students** from the Laurentian University Main Campus.

Term	ACANT	OFFER	CONF	REG	OFFER/ACANT%	CONF/ACANT%	REG/ACANT%
2003F	480	347	250	199	72.29%	52.08%	41.46%
2004F	621	498	325	263	80.19%	52.33%	42.35%
2005F	644	530	332	277	82.30%	51.55%	43.01%
2006F	588	456	300	237	77.55%	51.02%	40.31%
2007F	531	430	255	202	80.98%	48.02%	38.04%
2008F	452	349	186	137	77.21%	41.15%	30.31%
2009F	470	380	243	196	80.85%	51.70%	41.70%
2010F	467	380	263	204	81.37%	56.32%	43.68%
2011F	434	349	227	184	80.41%	52.30%	42.40%
2012F	468	381	241	190	81.41%	51.50%	40.60%
2013F	445	383	257	179	86.07%	57.75%	40.22%
TOTAL	5600	4483	2879	2268	80.05%	51.41%	40.50%

Figure 3: College transfer admission funnels 2003-2013



The table and figure above (Table 7 and Figure 3) which display the admission funnels for full-time **college transfer students** from the Laurentian University main campus, confirms Tables 4 and 6. For example, in 2013 Laurentian University sent offers to 383 of the 445 students who had applied as transfer credit students. In other words, LU sent offers to 86% of the students.

Of the 383 students who were sent offers of admission, 257 students responded (67% positive response rate). However, of the 257 who confirmed their registration only 179 (46%) followed through and actually registered. From the offer of admission stage to the registration stage Laurentian University lost 204 (53%) potential students.

To summarize, only approximately 46%, year after year, actually register for courses at LU. To quote Finnie (2008) “so much movement suggests that a portion of the students are either turned off by their experience, don’t have enough information going in, or are unprepared.”

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 data was collected until November 29th, giving the respondents 30 days to complete the survey.

Qualitative Data

In an attempt to hear Laurentian voices focus groups in both English and French were organized. Despite repeated efforts, both had very limited success in attracting participants but those who participated did provide some interesting and valuable feedback.

A. Focus Group Results

Summary of Discussion:

Topic 1: ORIENTATION

- ✓ Event should have two different components: a larger group for general questions and information, but also one-on-one time for specific, personal questions
- ✓ Orientation could be program specific, to make the general information sessions more specific to a certain area – could also be by faculty area
- ✓ There should be student mentors that are available to share their experience and help guide students through the transition to university life
- ✓ These students should be “fresh” transfers – preferably 2nd year at Laurentian so that they remember the specific issues they encountered as a new student
- ✓ An initial contact should be made during the summer to help students get their feet planted and get registration sorted out
- ✓ The actual orientation event should take place in late August or early September and should be a weekend event on a Saturday afternoon/Sunday mid-morning

Topic 2: INITIAL SUPPORT

- ✓ Students should be contacted as soon as possible, definitely within first 1-2 months

- ✓ Have peer mentors available to answer questions
- ✓ They should have an obvious way of being identified: t-shirts
- ✓ There needs to be an increased awareness of the resources that are available – need more promotion
- ✓ During the first 2 weeks (before drop/add deadline), there should be a mobile booth at different locations on campus with an advisor who can answer basic course selection questions
- ✓ There should always be advisors on drop-in duty to be accessible to students
- ✓ Personal touches are very important – i.e. a specific letter with a contact person's name and information at the bottom
- ✓ LU should make use of a texting utility where students can quickly send off a text to get an answer to a simple question
- ✓ This could be called "Texts for Excellence" or "Text-cellence"

Topic 3: REGISTRATION

- ✓ LU needs to communicate using clear language and have clear program requirements
- ✓ WebAdvisor should have a way to print a formatted weekly schedule
- ✓ There should be a system of follow-ups to tie up loose ends and ensure that students have chosen the correct courses
- ✓ It shows investment in the student to make sure they had all of their questions answered
- ✓ Introduce student mentors who have fresh experiences and remember what was difficult in the transition to help new students

Topic 4: ACADEMIC SUPPORT

- ✓ Overall, transfer students coming from college find the transition to the new academic level intimidating
- ✓ It is important for LU to communicate to students what they can expect during the transition time – what is different and how do they need to adjust
 - Topics to be covered:
 - Expect larger classes
 - Less individualized attention
 - What the profs expect from you
 - Academic support available (Writing assistance and tutoring)
 - Transfer credits and how they apply to degree
- ✓ The important dates should be posted up everywhere and provided to students
- ✓ Three-tiered mentoring program
 - First contact – another student who is finishing their first year of the program that the student can relate to and share experiences with (provide cautionary tales/experiences)
 - what they did wrong that another student should avoid)
 - Senior student – someone who can share information and resources to ensure that the student's questions get answered

- Staff mentor/Academic Advisor – to go over course selection and ensure the student has what they need to graduate
- ✓ CAE needs to be proactive in promotion but also in contacting students to provide that personal touch
- ✓ The above-mentioned rotating booth should begin again in November to provide students with information about academic support if they aren't meeting their grade requirements

Topic 5: COMMUNICATION

- ✓ Students found that there was a 1-2 month gap in communication between the initial offer and the registration package (one student cited this as the reason he would rate LU 4 out of 5 for excellence – had there been a communication in between, he would have given a 5 out of 5)
- ✓ Registration information not clear enough for transfer students
- ✓ Better promotion and material (using emails or posters and pamphlets)
- ✓ Students who are new to the area also want to know about Sudbury tourism and specific features
 - Where are the grocery stores
 - How much is rent (average)
 - What is downtown and where is it
 - What is the transit system like
 - What activities are there to do (Sudbury Wolves)
 - Where are some good restaurants and/or bars
 - Provide a map of the city
 - Where is the greyhound bus station
 - Are there cross-country trails?
 - Where are the health related resources
- ✓ Letters with information should be signed with the name of the contact person who can help, not the manager or director that that person reports to
- ✓ There should be one place to get all of your questions answered
- ✓ LU needs to make sure that they are providing ACCURATE information
- ✓ There should be opportunities to participate in live chats and/or texting to get answers
- ✓ Information should be in obvious places

Topic 6: MAIN CONCERNS OF TRANSFER STUDENTS

- ✓ Credit Transfers **
- ✓ Program requirements *
- ✓ How far away am I from graduation?
- ✓ How do I find help on campus?
- ✓ Specific scholarships/bursaries for transfer students (do not qualify for entrance awards)
- ✓ Be able to put a face to a need – a specific person to contact

B. Survey results

The survey was targeted at 1,200 students with transfer designation. 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.

Programming Proposals

Recognizing the unique needs of transfer students, it is important to fashion specific supports and services for this population. Transfer students look for their support to be very utilitarian in approach, looking for the answer(s) to their overarching question: “What do I need to do to obtain this degree and move on to my professional career?”¹¹

1. Orientation

There are a few considerations to be made when considering planning a transfer student orientation event. Firstly, a common barrier to orientation events for transfer students is their external commitments such as work and family life. Transfer students are often unable to attend full-day events.¹² Secondly, transfer students are often slightly older. Transfer students are less interested in the high-energy excitement of freshman orientation events and do not want to feel that they are wasting their time at such an event. They would rather receive the essential information such as how to interpret transfer credit reports, how to understand course codes and credits, how to register, what supports are available, etc. This type of information is more valuable if it is delivered in a timely manner. Students should have this information in the month of August so that they are able to register for the correct courses in a timely manner.

Orientation for transfer students should take the form of an evening session in August. The event could be repeated 2-3 times during the month of August to allow for the maximum number of students to attend. The event would provide essential information in a short period of time, allowing for questions at the end. Essential information includes: Academic Advising, Academic Supports, Students Engagement (getting involved), and Fees. After attending an evening orientation session, transfer students would also be encouraged to participate in the September Welcome Convocation and Orientation.

Sample Orientation Schedule:

- 6:30pm – Official Welcome (5 mins)
- 6:35pm – Intro to Laurentian University (15 mins)
 - Bilingual/tricultural nature of LU
 - Campus map (virtual campus tour)
 - Essential services
- 6:50pm – Student testimonial (current transfer student) (5 mins)
- 7:00pm – Advising Session (45 mins)
 - How to read transfer credit report

¹¹ McGowan, 8.

¹² Davies, 12.

- How to apply your transfer credits to your degree
 - How to count credits and interpret course codes
 - How to register
- 7:45pm – Learning Assistance Centre Presentation (15 mins)
- Promotion of Centre and supports offered
 - Emphasis on writing and research
- 8:00pm – Student Engagement (15 mins)
- How to get involved at LU
 - Co-Curricular Record
- 8:15pm – Student Fees (15 mins)
- 8:30pm – Question period
- Should have a representative from student fees present to answer questions
- 9:00pm – Reception/mingle/networking time

2. Registration Handbook/Pamphlet

Laurentian's current registration handbook is geared towards high school graduates only and does not include any information for transfer students. Students therefore either register for the wrong courses (as they register for 1st year courses without considering their transfer credits), or they are left confused and without direction. Correct literature will be developed that is geared towards transfer students and their registration needs. The information that a transfer student needs to know will be condensed into a small 10-15 page booklet.

Information they require:

- Important dates
- Checklist for Registration
- Contact info
- Campus map
- Academic support
- Transfer credit info
- Registration process
- Blank timetables
- Fees
- Orientation info
- Departmental contact info

Providing transfer students with their own specific guide with the correct information would eliminate confusion and misinformation, open lines of communication, and improve retention.

3. Online Registration Guide

Creating an online registration tutorial provides students with an avenue to be self-reliant and access accurate information quickly and easily. Such a guide will walk students through the registration process and will direct students to their department and the Centre for Academic Excellence for additional assistance if necessary. This guide will be available through LUNET and will be a basic introduction to Laurentian's systems and processes.

Conclusion

Laurentian will:

1. implement systems and programming that are targeted towards the transfer student population,
2. improve the initial student experience,
3. create a welcoming atmosphere where transfer students feel they can belong.

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