

COUNCIL ON HIGHER EDUCATION

ACTIVITY REPORT
Academic Year
September 2003 - August 2004

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	Overview	1
2.0	Highlights/Accomplishments	2
3.0	Activities	4
4.0	Opportunities and Challenges Ahead	5

1.0 OVERVIEW

The Newfoundland & Labrador Council on Higher Education (CHE), a joint venture of Government and the province's two public post-secondary institutions is chaired by the Deputy Minister, Department of Education. Membership on the Council consists of senior executives from the Department of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN), College of the North Atlantic (CNA) as well as a representative of the K-12 Directors of Education. A Senior Policy Analyst funded jointly by the Council members and housed within the Department of Education, acts as the Secretary to Council and serves as a liaison for Council and committee members.

CHE was formed in 1992 as a permanent body and operates under a Protocol Agreement with a mandate to:

- provide advice on province-wide policy and planning issues; and
- develop a mechanism and process for enhanced coordination and articulation among and across sectors of the public education system.

Furthermore, the Council:

- functions as a mechanism for active and meaningful cooperation among its members in joint planning and coordination of a variety of activities within the public education system;
- acts as an advisory body to the Minister of Education on province-wide policy and planning issues facing the post-secondary sector in the Province;
- provides direction on province-wide initiatives while responding to new policy issues as they emerge; and,
- serves as a clearinghouse in the exchange of information among members and the community at large, maintaining open lines of communication to the provincial learning network.

There is a standing committee of Council - the Articulation, Transfer and Admissions Committee (ATAC). Other committees are established on an *ad hoc* basis depending on current policy and planning issues. Other committees of Council are:

- International Education Subcommittee
- Math Group

2.0 HIGHLIGHTS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS

During 2003-04:

- ▶ A workshop was held to discuss the much needed revitalization to the process and composition of the Articulation, Transfer and Admissions Committee (ATAC) of Council. It was attended by senior officials from MUN, CNA and the provincial Departments of Education and the former Youth Services & Post-Secondary Education.
- ▶ Terms of Reference (TOR) were revised to reflect ATAC's new reporting structure where the Associate Deans (undergraduate) or equivalent at MUN and Deans of Schools at CNA will be responsible for articulation issues. In addition, Protocol for Articulation have been developed to complement the articulation process.
- ▶ The ATAC Principles Working Group, tasked by ATAC to review the Council's principles and guidelines on credit transfer to ensure consistency with the *CMEC Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer*, submitted its report to ATAC.
- ▶ CNA continued to offer the College-University Transfer Year (CUTY) program at five campuses in Burin, Carbonear, Grand Falls-Windsor, Labrador West, and Happy Valley - Goose Bay. CUTY is a program developed between CNA and MUN that provides university credit for specific College courses. The introductory courses are designed for students intending to transfer to MUN after completion of 10 or more credits at CNA. Currently, 34 courses are transferrable under CUTY arrangements. During this academic year, two Science courses (SI 1500/1501) and two Folklore courses were added to the CUTY course listings for the first time. The two Science courses were offered in Labrador West, Burin, and Carbonear, while the Folklore courses were offered in Happy Valley - Goose Bay.

Enrolments (full/part time) for the 2003-04 academic year were: 370 (Fall 2003), 323 (Winter 2004), and 52 (Intersession 2004).

Of the 482 CNA students who transferred to MUN, 256 were College Transfer Years.

- ▶ The tenth edition of the CHE Transfer Guide 2003-04 was published. The Transfer Guide is an annual publication of CHE and lists established transfer of credit options available to students in Newfoundland and Labrador. For 2003-04, 314 courses were transferrable between MUN, the Marine Institute (MI) and CNA and there were 14 block transfer agreements in place. Senior high school students at various provincial schools were able to avail of 26 Advanced Placement (AP) and 28 International Baccalaureate (IB) courses. MUN awarded transfer credit to 231 AP students and 33 IB students.
- ▶ Fifteen students were accepted to the Concurrent Studies Program. The program

provides students with high academic standards an opportunity to enrol in university courses during their final year of high school.

- ▶ A new block transfer agreement was announced between MUN and CNA which allows CNA students (Corner Brook Campus) who have graduated from the 2-year Adventure Tourism Diploma program or who are in their final semester of the program, to apply for advanced standing to the Environmental Studies program at MUN (SWGC).
- ▶ The federal/provincial Comprehensive Economic Development Agreement (CEDA) expired on March 31, 2004. An application to ACOA's Business Development Program (BDP) will be submitted by MUN on behalf of the province and its educational institutions for funding to continue the remaining three years of the province's International Student Recruitment Strategy. An evaluation of the first two years of the 5-year strategy was completed by an external consultant and distributed to key stakeholders. The consultant presented the findings at the International Student Recruitment Steering Committee meeting in November 2003. Since the recruitment strategy commenced, the number of international students has increased over 57% - from 484 to 763 (Fall 2001 - Fall 2003).

2.1 White Paper on Public Post-Secondary Education

In June 2004, the Minister of Education, John Ottenheimer, announced the commissioning of the White Paper on Public Post-Secondary Education.

The 2004 Speech from the Throne committed the province to commissioning a White Paper on post-secondary education to examine post-secondary concerns, affordability and accessibility, and to identify initiatives that will enhance the employment prospects of graduates. It further committed to examining whether MUN and CNA are meeting their potential to attract investment and generate economic development opportunities in the province.

Dr. Wayne Ludlow was appointed Commissioner to examine public post-secondary education in this province and Mr. Cyril Farrell serves as Advisor to the Commissioner on key issues regarding CNA. Throughout the Summer and early Fall, consultations were held between the Commissioner and key stakeholders including MUN, CNA, student groups, and business and industry representatives. Based on the consultations, the Commissioner will prepare a report which government will draw upon to set out its plan to ensure the public post-secondary education system is positioned to address the challenges and opportunities of the present and the future.

3.0 ACTIVITIES

During 2003-04:

- ▶ Meetings of the Working Group and of the full Council are on hold until the release of the White Paper, at which time the role of Council will be revisited.
- ▶ ATAC met three times. In addition to regular business items, the principal theme of the meetings was the ratification and implementation of the new reporting structure. Planning for a September implementation workshop for institutional officials commenced. Primary objectives of the workshop are to task institutional officials with identifying potential areas of articulation and developing annual work plans for ATAC's approval
- ▶ The international education project financed a variety of targeted activities, including several recruitment missions to promote the province as an education destination. The missions involved representatives from government and the secondary and post-secondary education sectors. Targeted countries include India, Kuwait, Qatar, Trinidad, South Korea, China, Bangladesh, Mexico/Belize, Viet Nam and the New England states. During each mission, efforts were made to increase awareness of the province's education system, recruit international students, and develop partnerships in areas strategically targeted based on market research. Missions involved participation in education fairs, visits to schools, and meetings with trade and immigration officers, as well as with existing and potential partners.
- ▶ The failure rate of first-year Math students at MUN and CNA continues to be a major concern. At the May Council meeting, the Math Group was directed to conduct a detailed analysis of first-year Mathematics performance at the two institutions. The objective of the analysis is to highlight the extent of the problem as well as identify probable causes and include recommendations for Council's consideration.

During this academic year, both MUN and CNA completed a snapshot of first-year Mathematics performance for high school students who entered the two institutions in Fall 2002. The students completed either Academic or Advanced Math (old and new curriculum) in high school and then studied M1090 or M1000 at MUN, while CNA students studied M1104, M1130 or M2100, equivalent to M1090 and M1000 respectively at MUN.

The analyses generally support the following conclusion:

Students who completed Advanced Math (3201, 3205) in high school performed better in first-year Mathematics at MUN/CNA than students who completed Academic Math (3200, 3204).

Because the scope of the studies were limited to only one semester, full conclusions cannot be drawn with regards to student performance in first-year Mathematics. A detailed study is yet to be completed by MUN and CNA.

4.0 OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES AHEAD

Council will continue to *function as a mechanism for active and meaningful cooperation among its members in joint planning and coordination of a variety of activities within the public post-secondary education system.*

- ▶ The recommended changes to the articulation and reporting process of ATAC will be implemented in 2004-05.
- ▶ A major initiative relative to international education was one of Council's priorities. This initiative will maintain a high degree of importance as the demographic challenges facing public post-secondary education continue.
- ▶ Other issues such as the high failure rate of first-year Mathematics courses at MUN/CNA will continue to be of high priority.
- ▶ Following the release of the provincial White Paper on Public Post-Secondary Education, the mandate and role of Council will be revisited by the Department.