In 2005-06 and 2006-07, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) provided the College-University Consortium Council (CUCC) with grants totalling $3M from the Change Fund component of the Quality Improvement initiative. CUCC used $2M of this grant in two phases to fund pilot projects that would increase the number, type and range of collaborative arrangements in Ontario, primarily in high affinity-high priority areas. The majority of those projects are complete and CUCC is now releasing the final $1M to support a third phase of projects.

Advances in Transfer Practice from Phases One and Two
Several of the projects in Phases One and Two involved the development of direct entry degree completion agreements with block transfer from college programs to high affinity baccalaureate degree programs. The degree completion block transfer model assumes that transfer students have all or most of the knowledge and skills gained in the first two years of a degree program and that they are prepared to enter the degree program at a specific point, usually the third year, with or without the addition of specific bridge courses. Bridge courses, where required, are the result of a detailed analysis of any gap between the learning outcomes of the college program and the knowledge and skills required to be successful in courses offered at the degree program entry point. A critical step forward in transfer practice in Ontario enabled by this model is that all graduates from the relevant program(s) are covered by the transfer agreement regardless of the college from which the student graduated.

Ontario College Program Provincial Standards
A unique feature of several of the Phase One and Two degree completion projects was the use of the provincial program standards for the relevant college programs. The existence of these program standards ensures that all graduates will have met minimum stated learning outcomes that can be articulated in terms of specific knowledge, skills and attitudes. The Change Fund project participants analyzed the provincial program standards for the relevant college programs to identify the entry point to the proposed degree and the content of the required courses in the bridge rather than relying solely on the curriculum of a specific college. Consequently, these projects resulted in agreements that were extended to all college graduates of the relevant diploma programs.

CUCC is interested in extending this approach to other high affinity degree programs and expanding the number of universities participating in this type of transfer agreement.

Course-by-Course Transfer in Arts and Science Courses
A further area of significant movement between colleges and universities is from the General Arts and Science and Liberal Arts diploma programs. Generally, these students seek direct entry with transfer credit to university degree programs in Arts and Science. There are also other college graduates who wish to transfer specific courses in arts and sciences, that were earned as part of the required general education component of their college program or that were part of the core curriculum of their diploma program, to meet required or elective credits that will apply toward a degree program in the Arts or Sciences, or in another discipline unrelated to their original college program.
CUCC is interested in exploring an efficient means of identifying arts and science courses that would be transferable from college to university programs.

CALL FOR PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

CUCC seeks Expressions of Interest from universities to lead or participate in one or more of the projects listed below.

CUCC also seeks Expressions of Interest from colleges to participate in one or more of the projects listed below, specifically to provide curriculum expertise in the analysis of provincial program standards for the programs (see A below) or for courses in arts and sciences (see B below).

A. Degree Completion, Block Transfer Projects

We seek Indications of Interest from universities in leading or participating in collaborative projects that would develop direct entry degree completion agreements based on provincial program standards that would be agreed to by several universities and would apply to all college graduates of the programs specified in the agreement. We also seek Expressions of Interest from colleges to provide faculty expertise to assist the project team in the analysis of provincial program standards for the relevant college programs.

An analysis of college graduate transfer to university programs indicates that the college programs that send significant numbers of graduates on to university degree programs are:
- Accounting and Finance to Business degree
- Business Management to Business degree
- Early Childhood Education to Education or Psychology degree
- Engineering Technology programs (multiple) to Science or Applied Technology degree
- Justice related programs to Criminal Justice or Sociology degree
- Marketing to Business Degree
- Social Services Worker and Child and Youth Worker to Social Work or Psychology degree

In the interest of enhancing the level of access, we are particularly interested in projects involving the programs listed above. Each of these programs has provincial program standards. However, we will also consider proposals for degree completion, block transfer agreements for program areas not listed above.

We also welcome projects from collaborative degree-diploma partnerships in which there is no existing point of entry for transfer students. Expressions of Interest in projects related to these programs should have the written support of both institutions involved.

Project participants would:
1. Analyze the knowledge and skills required to enter a high affinity degree program at the third year,
2. Analyze the knowledge and skills of graduates of the relevant college programs as identified in the provincial program standards,
3. Identify the gaps between one and two above, and
4. Develop a bridge of required courses to enable college graduates to enter directly into year three of the degree program as necessary.

College faculty from relevant programs will provide curriculum expertise to the project team to assist in the analysis of learning outcomes achieved by graduates of the college programs.

B. Course-by-Course Transfer of Arts and Sciences Courses

We seek indications of interest from universities in leading or participating in a pilot project that would provide an efficient means of identifying courses in arts and sciences that could be offered by colleges as part of specific diploma programs or as general education electives and that would transfer to university degree programs in arts and sciences. Examples of possible approaches would include the publication of course outlines considered equivalent by members of a consortium of universities against which college courses could be matched and tracked in a database or the establishment of course exemplars for specific disciplines against which colleges could develop transfer courses.

We also seek Expressions of Interest from colleges to provide faculty to assist the project team in the analysis of courses identified for possible transfer credit.

Funding Criteria:

CUCC expects to be able to fund up to four projects depending on the number of participants in each project.

Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate:

- Commitment of partners to making the project successful and sustainable and to participating in project evaluation including an assessment of student success both in the short and long-term. Expressions of Interest in leading or participating in a project must be signed by the Presidents or Executive Heads of each of the institutions involved.
- The likelihood of achieving consensus on an appropriate degree entry point.
- The likelihood that the project can be completed within a reasonable time frame and will meet any regulatory, professional body, or employer requirements.
- Commitment to fostering student success (e.g., development of appropriate bridging courses, an appropriate degree of credit recognition, a transparent and fair process for selecting qualified students and adequate student support).
- Relevance to the needs of the labour market, employer demand, demographic trends, and unique geographic challenges.
- A commitment to provide an effective process for other institutions to join the transfer agreement in the future.
- A commitment to provide a report on “best practices” and “lessons learned” from this approach to the development of transfer agreements and to share and present their projects and results as part of an information sharing workshop.
- Realistic budget, work plan and timelines.
Priority in funding will be given to projects based on:

- The potential number of students impacted by the agreement
- The degree of correlation between the college programs involved in the transfer agreement and the level of participation in degree programs by graduates of those programs
- The number of universities proposing to participate in the agreement including questions of geographic distribution

**Funding:**

Funding will be at a level sufficient to provide time-release for college and university faculty and other staff essential to the development process to meet, discuss and develop curriculum and to develop other student supports to foster student success.

It is expected that projects will be funded in a range of $100,000 to $250,000 per partnership depending upon the number of institutions participating and the number of programs involved in the agreement.

Institutions may indicate interest in participating in more than one project. Institutions expressing interest in leading a project may also include a list of partner institutions committed to participating in the project.

Institutions must commit to the implementation of the agreements developed. The final payment of the grant (10% to 20% of the total) will only be made after it is demonstrated that the new transfer agreement is in place in each participating institution.

**Application Procedure**

Institutions are requested to indicate their interest in leading or participating in a project via a letter from the President or Executive Head of the institution. A separate letter is requested for each project of interest. Each letter should identify the degree program of interest.

Electronic submissions are acceptable and must be received by the end of business on May 25, 2009. The selection of projects to be funded and participating institutions will be announced by mid-June 2009.

Indications of interest should be sent to:
Maureen Callahan, Interim Executive Director, College-University Consortium Council
180 Dundas Street West
Suite 1100
Toronto, Ontario  M5G 1Z8
Tel: (416) 979-2165 ext 254
Fax: (416) 979-8635

Electronic submissions should be sent to mcallahan@cucc-ontario.ca

Please direct any questions to Maureen Callahan Interim Executive Director, CUCC, at mcallahan@cucc-ontario.ca