

# STUDENT MOBILITY: UPDATE ON THE COU WORKING GROUP Presentation to OURA

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redefine THE POSSIBLE.



# CONTEXT

“The globalization of higher education has led to the need to be able to compare and contrast the variety of qualifications granted by academic institutions for transfer credit, graduate study preparation and professional qualification. Similarly, jurisdictions with decentralized systems are looking for ways to measure academic equivalencies. In addition, in order to be able to evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of all aspects of instruction, institutions, accrediting authorities and funding bodies have begun to clarify the outcomes expected of graduates.”

(OCAV, introduction to *Guidelines for University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations*, updated 2007)

## BACKGROUND: Provincial

- goal of the Ontario postsecondary education system: to provide students with the best opportunities for academic success
- complex transfer credit system in place for college to university transfer
- currently about 300 “collaborative agreements” involving Ontario universities and colleges
- lack of consistency in admissions process and standards across the province
- Ontario Government collaborating with universities and colleges, through COU and CO, to explore system changes to:
  - address capacity challenges
  - promote pathways and linkages
  - enhance system differentiation and efficiency
- January 2008: establishment of joint COU/CO task force to recommend approaches to student choices and mobility to offer students informed choices
- July 2008: discussion paper issued
- October 2008: establishment of working group to discuss operationalization
- February 2009: HEQCO Research Report on broadening student access to postsecondary education

# BACKGROUND: National

## Council of Ministers of Education of Canada - Principles:

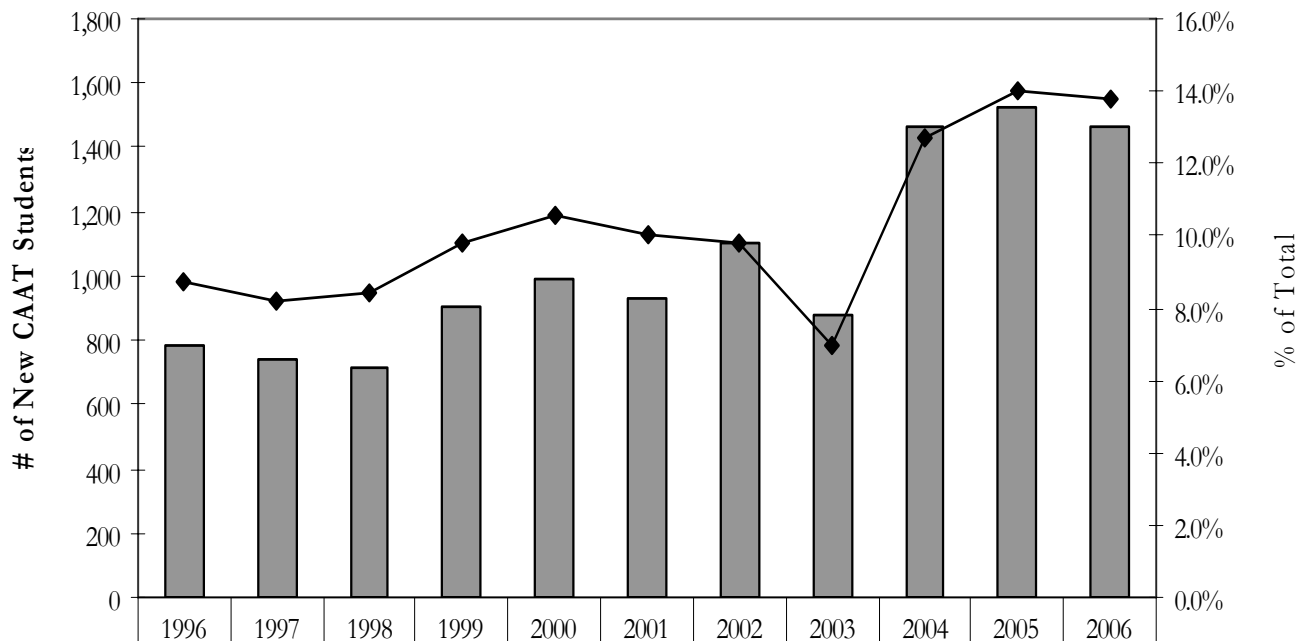
- protection of academic integrity of programs and institutions
- collaboration among institutions to enhance transfer opportunities, recognizing “that the substance of learning experiences may be equivalent in terms of content and rigour, although the learning has occurred in different ways”
- academic prerequisites establish eligibility but do not guarantee admission to particular program
- institutions provide early information to students about transfer credit opportunities and limitations, policies and procedures
- consistency of consideration of transfer requests with clearly stated policies
- students not advantaged or disadvantaged by credit transfer process



# YORK EXPERIENCE: Analysis of Undergraduate Students Admitted to York from CAATs, 1996-2006

Highlights of the Study (commissioned by CUCC):

- CAAT transfers account for a sizable and increasing proportion of York University's new student intake
- this growth is in part attributable to successful ongoing and new CAAT collaborations and partnerships
- the highest proportion of CAAT transfers has been and remains those who come from colleges with established collaborations and partnerships with York
- colleges located in the GTA are becoming an increasing source of CAAT transfers to York
- demographically, the profile of CAAT students has shifted over the past decade, with CAAT students becoming more similar to the secondary school cohort with respect to gender, full-time/part-time status, and age
- CAAT transfers are entering the University with more transfer credit than a decade ago
- the social sciences and humanities are disciplines of choice for CAAT transfers
- fewer CAAT transfers are dropping out now compared to ten years ago
- graduation rates for the CAAT cohort have increased and CAAT students are graduating earlier than a decade ago

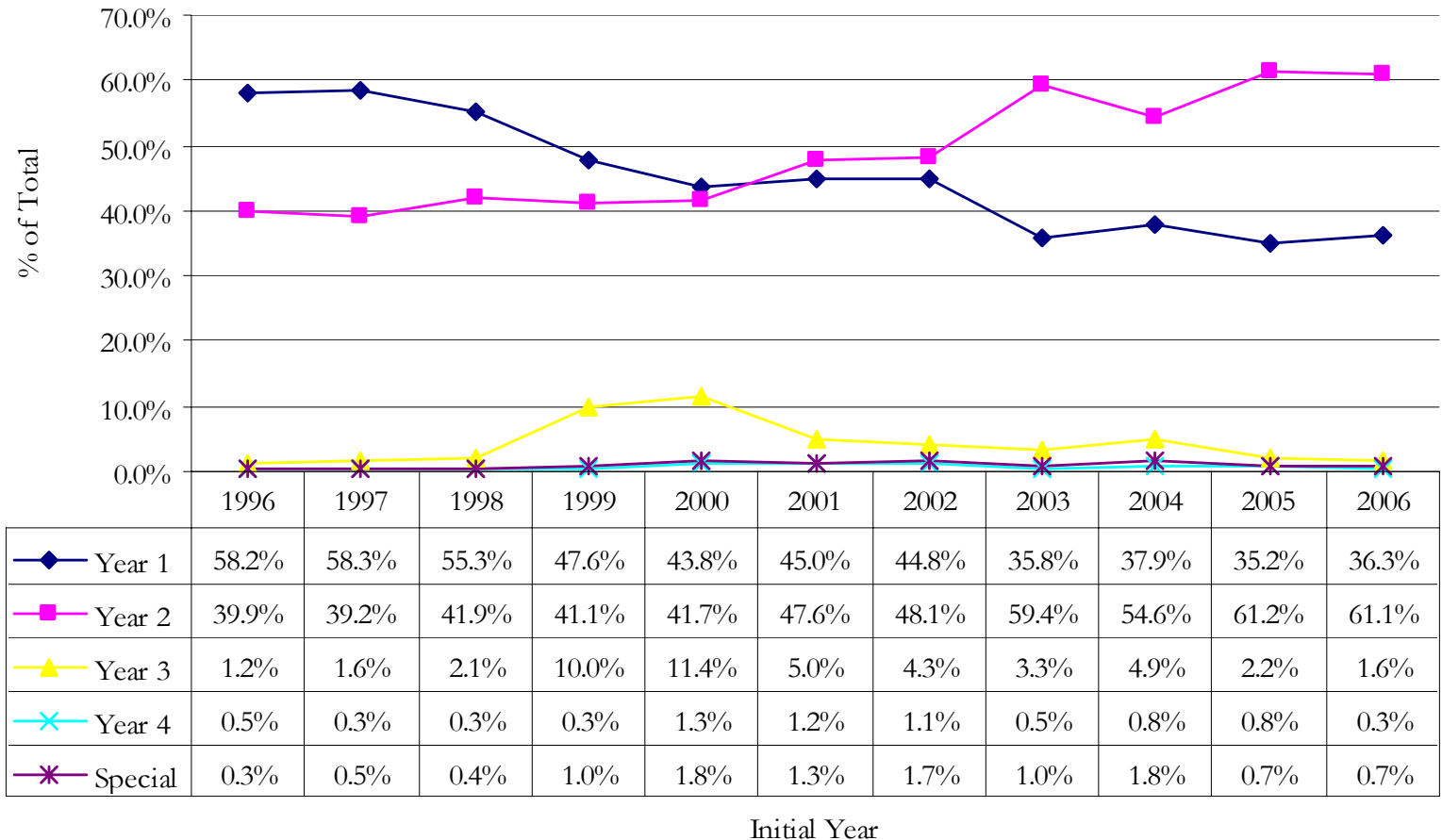
# YORK EXPERIENCE: New CAAT Transfers as a Percentage of Total York University Admits



 New CAAT Students	780	737	713	903	992	927	1,099	882	1,461	1,524	1,467
 % of Total New Admits (All)	8.7%	8.2%	8.4%	9.8%	10.6%	10.0%	9.8%	7.0%	12.7%	14.0%	13.8%

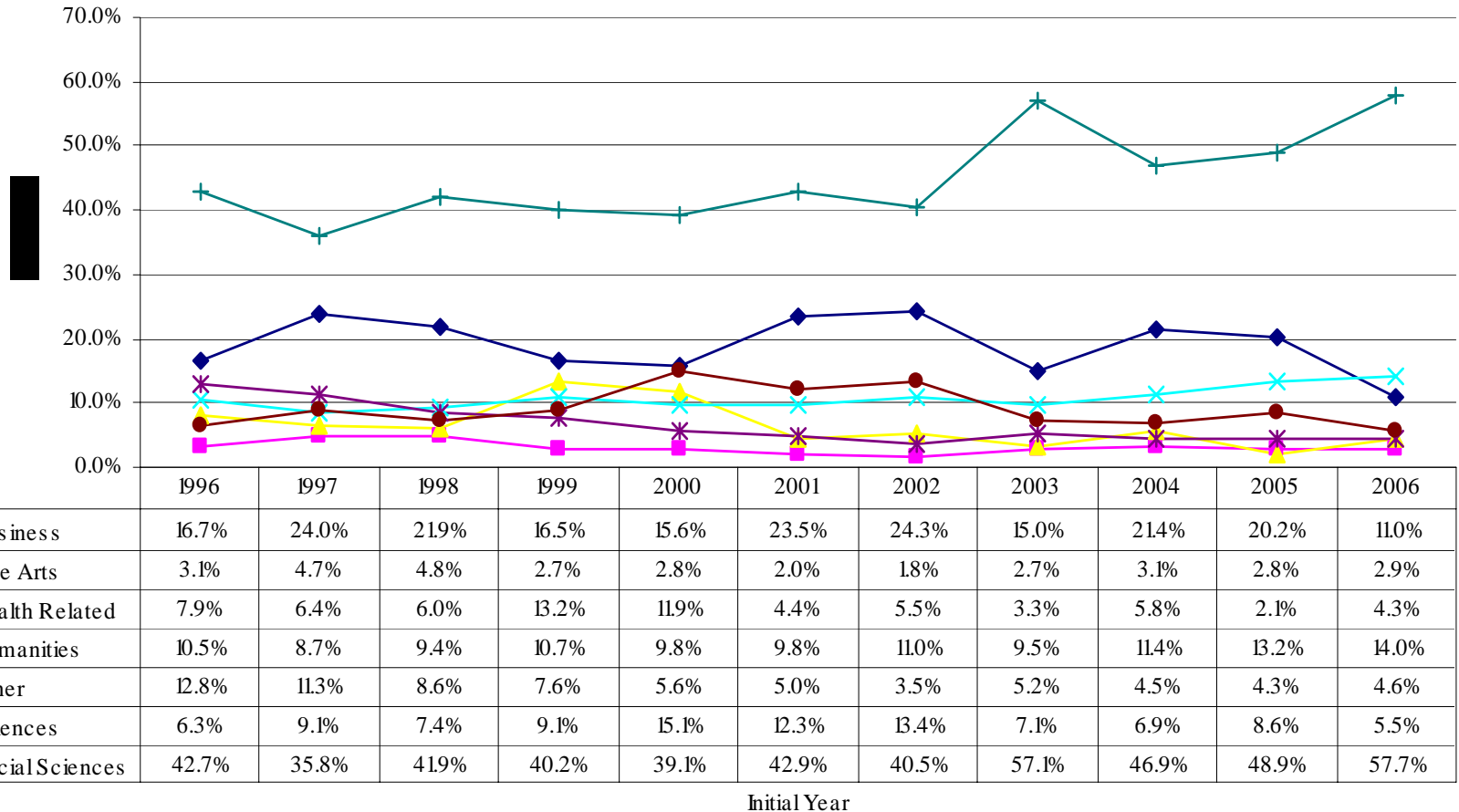
Year

# YORK EXPERIENCE: CAAT Transfers - Entry by Study Level



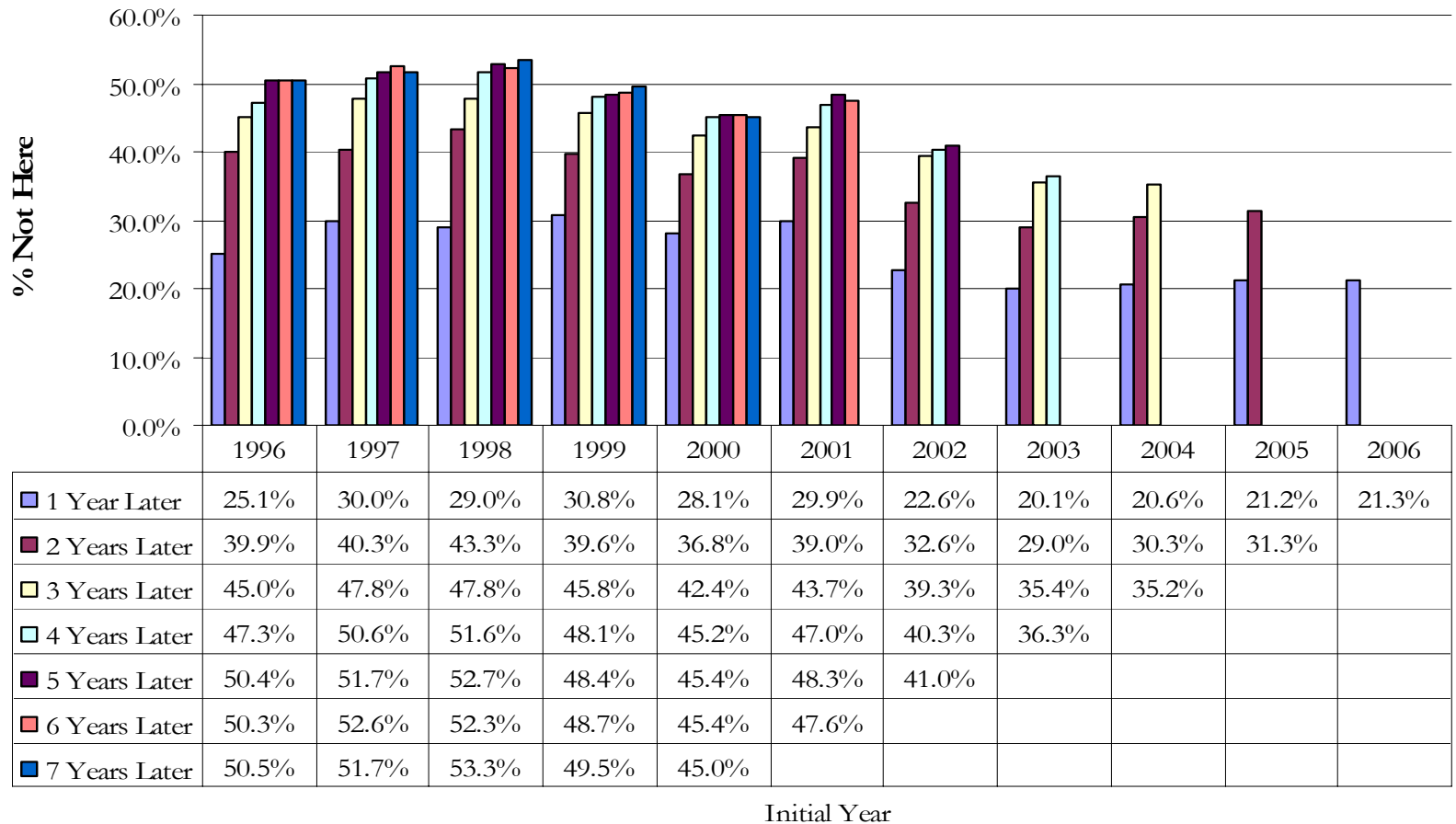
Source: An Analysis of Undergraduate Students Admitted to York University from an Ontario College of Applied Arts and Technology (CAAT) Between 1996 and 2006 (York University report commissioned by CUCC)

# YORK EXPERIENCE: CAAT Transfers' Choice of Discipline at Entry to York



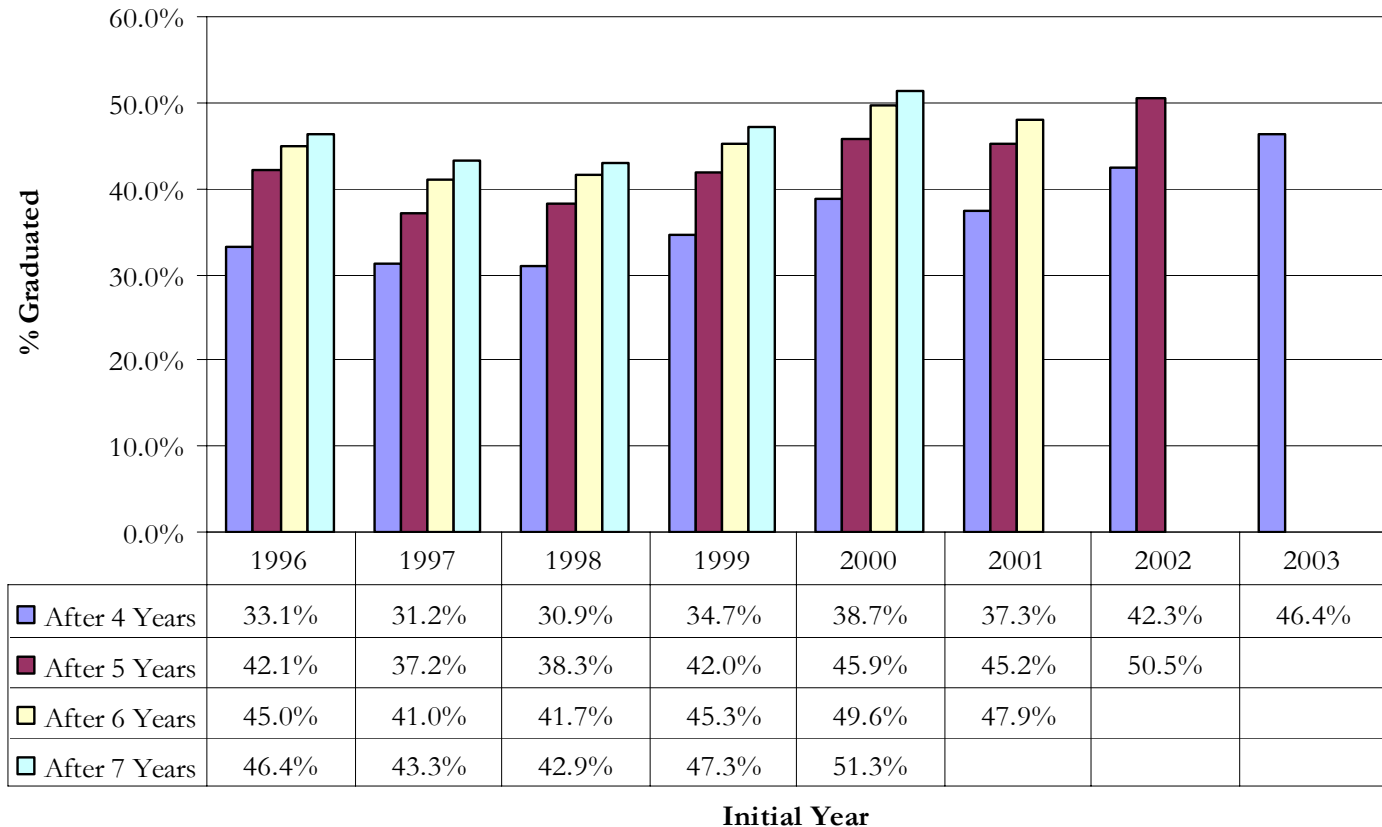
Source: An Analysis of Undergraduate Students Admitted to York University from an Ontario College of Applied Arts and Technology (CAAT) Between 1996 and 2006 (York University report commissioned by CUCC)

# YORK EXPERIENCE: Drop-out Rates of CAAT Transfers



Source: An Analysis of Undergraduate Students Admitted to York University from an Ontario College of Applied Arts and Technology (CAAT) Between 1996 and 2006 (York University report commissioned by CUCC)

# YORK EXPERIENCE: Graduation Rates of CAAT Transfers



Source: An Analysis of Undergraduate Students Admitted to York University from an Ontario College of Applied Arts and Technology (CAAT) Between 1996 and 2006 (York University report commissioned by CUCC)

# YORK EXPERIENCE: UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE PARTNERSHIPS

- instituted a review process to ensure programs are of high quality, addressing:
  - program attractiveness/demand
  - appropriateness of program structure
  - appropriateness of curriculum
  - student satisfaction
  - equity/access
  - administrative issues
  - program strengths
  - program weaknesses
  - costs and benefits of program
- major themes emerging from reviews:
  - programs are of high quality
  - limited demand
    - enhanced visibility?
    - changes to program structure, curriculum?
    - discontinue program?
  - importance of “value added” for career prospects
  - importance of ongoing institutional consultation/collaboration

# COU-CO TASK FORCE: DISCUSSION PAPER

- COU Task Force stated as an overarching objective: “Students need to be able to navigate and find opportunities for movement through the postsecondary system, within and between institutions that account for and build on previous training and educational experiences. The pathways and options should be transparent and explicit and readily available to all students.”
- discussion paper in summer of 2008 made a number of recommendations, including:
  - creation of a Student Mobility and Recognition of Transfer System to provide clear information about postsecondary pathways and enhance opportunities
  - that MTCU allocate resources to support the system
  - that a more coordinated approach to Letters of Permission be considered
  - that the Ministry provide financial and reporting incentives in support of collaborative arrangements
  - exploration of establishment of a common entry portal for college and university applications

# CO-COU TASK FORCE: ISSUES IDENTIFIED THROUGH CONSULTATIONS

## Need for:

- comprehensive approach to serve student and system interests
- broad perspective on a range of mobility paths, including bilateral agreements
- protection of institutional autonomy
- evidence-based information
- mobility based on academic rigour
- quality assurance

# CO-COU TASK FORCE: BARRIERS TO MOBILITY/COLLABORATION

- differences in funding policies
- differences in admissions policies
- institutional costs
- enrolment issues

# CO-COU TASK FORCE: GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR MOBILITY

- development of student-focused solutions to expand and facilitate mobility
- provision of clear and explicit information
- preservation of institutional autonomy re. admission standards and program integrity
- establishment of mechanisms for tracking and analysis of mobility and performance
- achievement of savings for students (cost and time)
- clarification of degree and applied degree recognition for graduate programs

# CO-COU TASK FORCE: OPTIONS PROPOSED TO FACILITATE MOBILITY

- Option 1: curricular model based on program-by-program assessments and curricular requirements approved by Senates, possibly with elements of models such as the “Berkeley model” and coordinated by a central agency (program-by-program)\*
- Option 2: transfer credit model involving assessment and granting of credits, possibly with a central coordinating body to share information (course-by-course)
- Option 3: model based on collaborative programs developed to serve specific needs and on facilitated transfers; MTCU to provide policy framework and supports

\* Working group was asked to consider ways to operationalize Option 1

# CO-COU WORKING GROUP: FRAMEWORK

- Working group comprises Vice-Presidents and Registrars representing universities and colleges

## Agreement:

- goal to develop clear and transparent pathways
- institutional autonomy preserved in relation to admission standards
- institutions required to set and publish their standards for admission for the student mobility initiative
- need for clear and shared understanding of terminology

## Issues:

- will all institutions be willing to participate?
- need for incentives from MTCU for institutions to participate
  - financial
  - inclusion in MYA
- need for tracking and reporting mechanisms (perhaps through HEQCO)
- increased need for bridging programs to support mobility

## “BERKELEY MODEL”

- Objective: “to identify applicants who are most likely to contribute to Berkeley’s intellectual and cultural community and, ultimately, to the State of California”
- admission process for students based on comprehensive qualitative and quantitative review of academic and personal material submitted by applicants; assessment of merit based on:
  - academic background and record
  - personal qualities (e.g., leadership, intellectual independence, initiative, concern for others and community)
  - potential contributions to intellectual and cultural vitality of campus
  - achievement in academic enrichment programs
  - other evidence of achievement
- considered in context of opportunities applicant has had
- race, gender, etc. not part of criteria
- for transfer students also consider whether number/pattern of courses meet breadth/general education requirements and provide continuity with major courses, as well as GPA in transferable courses

# OTHER MODELS?

## British Columbia:

- overseen by the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT)
- designed to facilitate student mobility
- respect institutional autonomy
- based on equivalency of academic achievement and knowledge and skills acquired
- institutions must publish minimum conditions for admitting transfer students
- early access to information for students
- process for “flexible and innovative transfer”

## Alberta:

- Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT)

# NEXT STEPS

Working group to consider and report on implementation issues, for example:

- agreement on a coordinated approach to student mobility/transfer credit
- models?
- institutional participation: require or strongly encourage?
- incentives/penalties for participation/non-participation
- process for negotiation of agreements among institutions
- coordinating body/“enabling agency” to oversee process and dissemination of information for students
- counting and tracking issues
- how would costs associated with the process be addressed?