

COTA Meeting Minutes July 2005

Committee on Transfer and Articulation Department of Higher Education July 7, 2005

Draft Minutes

Participants: Don Doucette, Karen Finkenkiller, Jeff Lashley (for Evelyn Jorgenson), Stephen Lehmkuhle, Julio Leon, Rick Maclin (for Alton Lacey), James Scanlon, Keith Swanson (for Marsha Drennon)

MDHE Staff: Greg Fitch, Robert Stein, Laura Vedenhaupt, Leroy Wade

Guests: Carolyn Carter (ITT-Tech), Jeanie Crain (MWSC), Jeanne McCann (ECC), Mike Prewitt (UMC), Kandis Smith (UM System), Terry Smith (Columbia College)

Robert Stein called the meeting to order at 10:00am on July 7, 2005. Dr. Stein agreed to facilitate the meeting.

Election of Officers

Don Doucette nominated Evelyn Jorgenson as Chair of COTA and Julio Leon seconded the nomination. There were no further nominations. The vote by COTA members was unanimous. Dr. Jorgenson was contacted by telephone during the meeting and accepted the position of Chair.

Jeanie Crain recommended that COTA adopt by-laws to assist in officer elections and transition between Chairpersons.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Karen Finkenkiller and seconded by Dr. Doucette that the minutes of the March 21, 2005 conference call be approved. The motion passed unanimously.

Transfer-Friendly Initiative

Dr. Stein briefed the committee on the request by the Presidential Advisory Committee (PAC) and the Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) to investigate the feasibility of a transfer-friendly initiative in Missouri. Dr. Stein introduced four representatives from the public two-year, public four-year, independent, and proprietary sectors who have volunteered to participate on the transfer-friendly subcommittee. The representatives (Carolyn Carter, Jeanne McCann, Mike Prewitt, and Terry Smith) were invited to attend the meeting in order to gain a better understanding of the intent of this initiative and of the process to be used by the subcommittee.

A motion was made by Dr. Doucette and seconded by Ms. Finkenkiller to appoint Ms. McCann and Dr. Prewitt as co-chairs of the transfer-friendly subcommittee. The motion passed unanimously.

James Scanlon asked that documents such as COTA's Principles of Good Practice for Transfer and Articulation and the General Education Credit Transfer policy be available to the subcommittee members for their review and information along with any other policies that may be of benefit to their discussion. Dr. Doucette advised the subcommittee representatives that while the credit transfer policy has been agreed upon by Missouri signatory institutions it may not reflect the highest level of transfer-friendliness possible in the state. Kandis Smith urged the subcommittee to review information and policies from other states as well.

Another suggestion for the subcommittee's consideration included discussing transfer-friendly criteria with students, faculty, and legislators. By speaking with students or sending out surveys to a sample of transfer students, the subcommittee may discover the factors that go into a student's decision on where to transfer to continue his or her education. In general, COTA believes that academics are only part of why students transfer to other schools. Factors such as student services are also important components.

Stephen Lehmkuhle stated that policies must permeate throughout an institution as many current policies are not always in alignment with institutional practices. The transfer-friendly initiative should be viewed as an opportunity for institutions to review, audit, and provide feedback on their policies and practices.

At the recommendation of the transfer-friendly subcommittee representatives, COTA agreed to extend the deadline for Phase I subcommittee recommendations to November 15, 2005. COTA also decided to only charge the committee with Phase I and to determine next steps for this initiative after Phase I is completed.

Teacher Education Articulation

Ms. McCann presented information for discussion regarding teacher education articulation. The comment was made that there is always some frustration in transfer but the biggest "bump" is the transfer of teacher education credit. The two-year sector noted that these programs are approved by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) yet there continue to be problems. Dr. Doucette commented that with seven major institutions that are recipients of Metropolitan Community College teacher education students, commonality is nearly impossible.

A framework for a statewide teacher education transfer degree would be useful for students and institutions. It was acknowledged that there has been extensive work done on mid-preparation competencies for teacher education students. Many times students transfer to a particular institution because that is the only institution that will accept their credits. This may be the most challenging articulation to accomplish as each four-year program is different.

COTA agreed to invite the Chairs of the two-year and four-year associations for colleges of teacher education to a future COTA meeting in order to discuss concerns about teacher education articulation.

Proprietary Credit Transfer

Many public and independent institutions remain unclear about the standards and procedures proprietary institutions must follow to receive national accreditation and state certification. Educating administrators on these standards and procedures may ease concerns and increase a more equitable treatment of proprietary transfer students.

Dr. Lehmkuhle suggested that COTA send a letter to Chief Academic Officers, registrars, transfer and articulation officers, and student affairs officers. The letter would include a list of Missouri certified proprietary institutions, a copy of the General Education Credit Transfer Policy, and would outline the requirements followed by those institutions to become certified. The letter would further explain that it should be unacceptable for public and independent signatory institutions to turn away students simply because they are from the proprietary sector. The letter will include links to COTA's list of Frequently Asked Questions regarding credit transfer and the Frequently Asked Questions about proprietary schools that are available on the MDHE website.

COTA directed MDHE staff to notify Chief Academic Officers and transfer and articulation officers at each institution of changes to the list of Missouri certified proprietary schools. COTA also recommended that a list of approved accrediting agencies used by Missouri's certified proprietary institutions be made available on the MDHE website.

Lingering Transfer Issues

The Council on Public Higher Education (COPHE) and the Missouri Community College Association (MCCA) recommended statements to the CBHE for inclusion in the General Education Credit Transfer policy covering the following issues: additional lower-division requirements beyond the 42-hour block of general education, the transfer of more than 64 credit hours, and the treatment of lower/upper division course similarity. The CBHE directed COTA to review and analyze each issue and provide recommendations for action at a future CBHE meeting.

COTA agreed that the statement on additional lower division requirements should be modified as follows and included in the policy as a clarifying comment:

"The declaration that once a student completes an associate degree and completes the 42-hour general education core, all lower division requirements for general education is deemed to be complete. Any additional lower division requirements must be considered distinct degree requirements or prerequisites for upper division courses in the major. These lower division courses should not add to the total number of hours required for graduation, unless stipulated differently for the purposes of program accreditation."

The statement on the transfer of more than 64 credit hours should be modified as follows and included in the policy as a clarifying comment:

"Students may transfer more than 64 credit hours for lower division courses from either Missouri associate degree-granting or baccalaureate degree-granting institutions. Any additional lower division course credits above 64 credit hours will be accepted in transfer if the credits are applicable to the baccalaureate degree or are prerequisites for an upper division course in the major."

The statement on upper/lower division course distinction should be modified as follows and included in the policy as an addendum:

"Institutional policies that distinguish between upper- and lower-division courses vary among baccalaureate degree-granting institutions. The variation results in similar courses being identified as upper or lower division at

different institutions. This can create redundancy in the curriculum of a transfer student (i.e., repeating an upper division course at the receiving institution when the student had completed a course with the same content and learning objectives but labeled as lower division by the sending institution). Receiving institutions should avoid duplication of learning and effort by transfer students by requiring the completion of a related but non-duplicative upper-division course that would enrich the curriculum of the student. The analysis of possible duplication of learning and effort in identification of upper- and lower-division courses is best addressed in the context of articulation agreements between sending and receiving institutions."

MDHE staff was directed to make the recommended modifications and submit the revised policy to COTA for approval. When approved by COTA, the recommendations will be forwarded to the Coordinating Board for review.

Development of Case Scenarios

During the April 2005 Presidential Advisory Committee meeting, a suggestion was made to include case scenarios in the credit transfer policy as illustrations for acceptable and unacceptable actions. Dr. Lehmkuhle suggested a meeting of Chief Academic Officers and other institutional representatives in order to record examples of best and worst case scenarios of credit transfer. Jeff Lashley agreed to contact the two-year Chief Academic Officers for a list of possible dates and locations for such a meeting.

Priorities for the Upcoming Year

COTA agreed on the following priorities for the 2005-2006 academic year: transfer-friendly initiative, proprietary credit transfer, articulation conference, community college teacher education programs, and possible revisions to the CBHE recommended high school core curriculum.

Other Business

Dr. Doucette requested that COTA create a schedule of meetings for the upcoming year. COTA agreed that the committee should schedule meetings each month. The meetings should alternate each month between conference calls and face-to-face meetings. MDHE staff will coordinate with COTA members to arrange this schedule.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:45pm.