Trends in College-to-University Transfer in Ontario: Influences on Transfer Rates and the Transition Experience

Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions & Transfer
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Introduction

• There has been a priority placed by the provincial government on a more seamless postsecondary education system in Ontario.

• Announcement in 2011 by Ontario’s Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD) of a new provincial credit transfer framework, committing $73.7 million over five years.

• MAESD continues to fund transfer activities through ONCAT and Credit Transfer Institutional Grants for every post-secondary institution.

• Within this framework, the number of transfer agreements has grown and institutions have increased initiatives to foster student mobility.

Funded by the Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer
Research questions

• What are the trends in transfer to further education after graduation?

• Are college transfers to university satisfied with their academic preparation and transition experience?

• What factors, including socioeconomic and transfer-specific characteristics, influence the transfer rate and satisfaction with the transition experience?
Methodology
Provincial Analysis

• Graduation years of 2006-7 to 2014-15 were analyzed using the MAESD KPI Graduate Student Satisfaction Survey.

• Analysis of the further education pathways of Ontario College graduates six months after graduation.

• Focus on transfer to university programs for college graduates of one-year certificate and two-and three-year diploma programs, excluding college degree and graduate certificate programs (88% of all graduates).

• Descriptive analysis of question responses along with some cross-tabulation of key questions

• Conducted regression analysis to better understand 1) who transfers and who doesn’t; 2) factors influencing satisfaction with the transition experience.
About the Ontario College’s KPI Graduate Satisfaction Survey (GSS)

• Telephone survey administered to all Ontario college graduates six months after graduation since 1999

• Conducted by an external service provider; colleges provide contact information and graduate characteristics such as age, gender, and program of study

• Consists of detailed labour market, satisfaction, and further education questions

• Used for KPIs – graduate satisfaction rate, employment rate, and employer satisfaction rate – tied to performance funding and made public.

• In recent years, used as indicators for transfer to university.
GSS and Transfer Indicators

Graduate Satisfaction Survey (GSS) data is a critical data source for provision of transfer grants and as transfer performance indicators:

- Ontario’s Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD) uses GSS data to distribute the Credit Transfer Innovation Grant (CTIG) to colleges based on each institution’s share of Ontario university transfer students.

- Strategic Mandate Agreements (SMA) template
  - Incorporates the transfer rate calculation used for CTIG;
  - Populates forms with percentage who were satisfied with their academic preparation; and,
  - the percentage of Ontario university transfers satisfied with their transition experience.
GSS and Access Indicators: Link to Transfer

- Access to post-secondary remains a priority for student groups, institutions, and the Ontario government

- Institutions required to report on enrolment as part of their SMA

- Recent additions to GSS to identify students with a disability and students who are Aboriginal has added to the demographic profile of college graduates

- Previous research has shown the role of transfer in supporting under represented groups in attaining baccalaureate degrees
## Graduate Survey Sample, 2007-2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of Graduates</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Response rate</th>
<th>Number of respondents enrolled in university</th>
<th>% respondents enrolled in university</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All graduates (excl Collab. Nursing)</td>
<td>694,379</td>
<td>444,451</td>
<td>64.0%</td>
<td>30,683</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates excluding college degrees and grad cert.</td>
<td>609,131</td>
<td>391,849</td>
<td>64.3%</td>
<td>28,632</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transfer Rates to Further Education: Ontario Graduates, All Credentials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>University Programs</th>
<th>College Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
转让率：安大略省毕业生，1, 2, 和 3 年制课程

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>年份</th>
<th>转让率</th>
<th>数量</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>4579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>4861</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2007：4579
2015：4861
Transfer Rates by Program

1, 2, and 3 year programs only

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credential Type</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certificate (1 Yr)</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma (2 yr)</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Diploma (3 yr)</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Service</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative and Applied Arts</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prep / Upgrading</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering / Technology</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transfer to University by Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>-2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>-0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Toronto</td>
<td>-4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>-1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwestern</td>
<td>-1.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Graph showing transfer to university by region from 2007 to 2015.](image-url)
Degrees Granted by College Region, % of all Graduates


Central Eastern Metro Toronto Southwestern

Seneca
Who Transfers to University?

The characteristics of graduates who continue to university
Transfer Rates by Demographic Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding status</th>
<th>Age (Yrs)</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Neighbourhood Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-international</td>
<td>&lt;22</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Low Income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>22 - 25</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Mid Income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;22</td>
<td>&gt;25</td>
<td></td>
<td>High Income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Transfer Rate to University by Self-Reported Aboriginal and Disability Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate self-reports</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>being of Aboriginal Ancestry</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate self-reports a disability</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transfer Rates by Proximity to University

- Urban: 7.9%
- Rural: 5.4%
- 50 KM or Less: 7.6%
- 50-80 KM: 6.0%
- Over 80 KM: 4.1%
- Not Selective: 7.6%
- Selective: 6.5%

Student's permanent address | Distance to nearest University from college campus | Selectivity of nearest University
Regression Findings: Sociodemographic Factors Related to Transfer

- International students 3% points less likely

- High income neighbourhoods 1% point more likely than low income (international students excluded)

- Older graduates (> 25y) 6% points less likely than <22y

- Male students slightly more likely (0.5% points)

- Aboriginal graduates as likely to transfer (2015 only)

- Graduates reporting a disability more likely to transfer (0.7% points) (2014 and 2015 only)
Regression Findings: Other Factors Related to Transfer

- Graduating from preparatory or community service more likely than business, which in turn has higher rates than hospitality, engineering, or health fields.

- Transfers rates for 3 yr diploma >2 year >1 yr

- Graduates from college campuses >80km from a university 0.6% point less likely to transfer

- Graduates from the years 2012 to 2016 are less likely to transfer than graduates from 2007
Overall Transfer Pattern Summary

• Decrease in overall percentage of transfer to university.

• Transfer rates to university have declined across all credentials, program areas and student demographics, particularly for international and Metro Toronto area graduates

• Major regional shifts producing greater similarity of transfer rates to a university credential across all regions.
**Transfer Pattern Change Explanations**

- Increase in pathway options to a degree, such as college degree programs and access programs in university;

- Increased student spaces in universities due to shrinking feeder population;

- Increased number of students, particularly international students, entering college with a previous degree;

- Greater awareness of the career options for graduates with a college credential (non-degree).
  - eg. Early Childhood Education graduates increase labour market decease university transfer (McCloy, et al, 2015)

- Lack of strategic planning in pathway development – less focus within geographic areas (Lennon et al.,2016).
Transfer Experience

Reasons, sources and experience of transfer for graduates attending university programs fulltime
Reasons for Continuing on to a University, % Major Reason, 2007-2015

- More opportunities for career advancement: 90%
- To get diploma/ certificate/ degree: 86%
- Upgrade/ improve skills: 73%
- Interest in further/ more in-depth training in field: 73%
- Gain theoretical knowledge/ broader education: 72%
- Potential for higher income: 72%
- Needed for professional designation: 56%
- There was a formal transfer agreement between your...: 46%
- Encouragement from others (family members, friends,...): 35%
- Interest in pursuing a different field of study: 27%
- No work/ job available in your field of study: 17%
- Company required/ paid for it: 5%
Information Sources, 2015

- University website/ publications
- University staff (including registrar’s office, faculty, etc.)
- College faculty/ counselors/ program coordinators
- Other students (including current and former college and university students)
- College Website
- Parents and family
- College administration, i.e. registrar’s office, student services
- University credit transfer advising services
- College credit transfer advising services
- College hard copy publications
- ONTransfer.ca web site

Legend: Major: 0% - 60%  |  Minor: 60% - 100%
Perceived Program Relatedness is Increasing

- 2007: 12% Not at all related, 46% Somewhat related, 41% Very related
- 2015: 9% Not at all related, 36% Somewhat related, 54% Very related

- Not at all related: 9%
- Somewhat related: 36%
- Very related: 54%
Percentage Reporting Entering a “Very Related” Program, by College Credential

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Certificate (1 yr)</th>
<th>Diploma (2 yr)</th>
<th>Advanced diploma (3 yr)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>61.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>64.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Estimate of Amount of Credit Received (2 and 3 Year Diplomas)
Satisfaction With Transition Experience and Academic Preparation

- How satisfied are you with the transition experience from college to your current program?
- How satisfied are you with your academic preparation for your current program of study?
Satisfaction With Transition Experience by Reasons for Transferring (Grouped)

Responses were “not a reason”, “minor”, or “major”; not major=“not a reason” or “minor reason”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Not major</th>
<th>Major</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career/ labour market related</td>
<td>77.9</td>
<td>81.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic/ program related</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td>81.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquire credential or designation</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>81.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of transfer agreement</td>
<td>79.2</td>
<td>83.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement from others</td>
<td>79.9</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Satisfaction With Transfer Experience by Amount of Credit and Program Affinity

The amount of credit you received was:

- Less than expected: 23% Satisfied, 48% Very satisfied
- The same as expected: 40% Satisfied, 46% Very satisfied
- More than expected: 48% Satisfied, 40% Very satisfied

How related is your current program to your previous college program?

- Not at all related: 29% Satisfied, 31% Very satisfied
- Somewhat related: 42% Satisfied, 49% Very satisfied
- Very related: 42% Satisfied, 42% Very satisfied
Regression Analysis: Factors Affecting Satisfaction With Transition

Graduates who transferred to university were significantly more satisfied if:

- Used info from college (↑5%); or a university (↑4%), versus not;
- Transferred for academic or program-related reasons (↑10% point)
- Received transfer credit (compared to none)
- Amount of transfer credit met or exceeded expectations (↑14%-17% point more satisfied);
- Transferred into a related program area (↑11% point);
- Were male, international or younger students;
- The timing of notification of credit was not significant;
- Minimal differences in trends over time.
Graduate Satisfaction With Goal Attainment by Activity After Graduation, 2007-2015

“How would you rate your SATISFACTION with the usefulness of your college education in achieving your goals after graduation?”

- University: 87.1%
- College: 87.3%
- Job related: 91.9%
- Job partially related: 77.0%
- Job not related: 62.6%
- Not working or in school: 67.5%
Transfer Experience Summary

• Reasons for continuing have been consistent and include career advancement, obtaining the credential, and expanding education, skills and training.

• Transfers report a high use of a variety of information sources, with university sources, either through staff, website or publications the most common.

• Perceived program affinity is increasing:
  • an increased relatedness of college and university programs (particularly 2 yr),
  • increase in reported transfer credit.

• Satisfaction with academic preparation, the transition process, and their college education overall remains consistently high.
The study of transfer rates, the transfer experience, and trends over time is a complex endeavor,

- particularly in a dynamic environment;
- shifting student aspirations;
- changing demographic characteristics;
- a proliferation of new program offerings at colleges and universities;
- And, changing labour market demand.
Further Work

• The role of college-university transfer for groups traditionally under-represented in university,

• The effectiveness of current transfer agreements to support students.

• The creation of data infrastructure using the Ontario Education Number can provide central tracking of transfer rates, so that transfer can be measured by student demographics, region, transfer credit, and student retention and success after transfer.
  • Administrative data, however, cannot capture the student perspective, and an ongoing reliance on survey data obtained from such sources as the Ontario College Graduate Satisfaction Survey, together with other qualitative research, will be required.

• What are appropriate indicators to evaluate transfer?
  • # transfers, amount transfer credit, seamlessness (duplication), satisfaction by transfer students, institutions?
Report Available on ONCAT Website

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ONCAT Project 2014-34
March 2017

View the report
Thank you!

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