

Enrolment Action Plan | 2009

Project Charter

Project Title:

Admissions & Transfer Credit Policies and Procedures for Undergraduate Direct-Entry Programs

Project Description:

The purposes of this project are to:

- develop admission and transfer credit policy statements for undergraduate students applying to direct-entry colleges
- implement admission and transfer credit process improvements as outlined in the 2008 AACRAO Consulting Admission Audit Operational Plan
- identify outstanding gaps and barriers in our admission and transfer credit policies and procedures that may impact the university's enrolment and that will be reviewed in future projects

Executive Sponsor:

David Hannah, AVP-SESD

Project Manager:

Claude Lang, Director Enrolment Services

Working Group:

Lisa Shepard, Manager of Admissions & Transfer Credit
An Associate Dean to represent the direct-entry colleges
Representative from the USSU
Representative for the Academic Programs Committee or the University Secretary's Office

Consultation Group:

Direct-entry Colleges Assistant/Associate Deans, academic advisors and Administrators

Decision Makers:

University Council through Academic Programs Committee (policy)
Director of Enrolment (procedures)

Need:

The University of Saskatchewan does not currently have a formal admissions policy. Rather, over a long period of time, we have accumulated a complex set of admission requirements and practices. Many of these were developed during a period when demand for admission to the U of S was high, and were often designed to keep people out rather than encourage qualified students to come to the University. Similarly, no comprehensive transfer credit policy or statement of commitment to the Pan-Canadian agreement on transfer credit has been developed or approved at the U of S.

Stakeholders:

SESD – consultation on regulations, practices, procedures and best practices in higher education

Direct-entry college deans, administrators, faculty – consultation on opportunities and demand

University Council through the Academic Programs Committee – decision making

Stakeholder Requirements:

That our admission and transfer credit policies are designed to accommodate the diversity of academically qualified students we wish to have at our institution – Saskatchewan, out-of-province, international, home-schooled, mature, etc.

Scope:

Policy:

The admissions policy statement should be flexible, principle-based and provide us with some discretion to admit promising students who appear to have a good likelihood of success even if they do not meet all the formal requirements.

The transfer credit policy statement should describe the University's general philosophy or approach to recognizing transfer credit, be flexible and principle based, clarify where decision making authority on granting transfer credit lies, support student mobility and the recognition of prior learning, and providing academic units with guidelines and criteria to use when assessing course for transfer credit.

Procedures:

The administrative procedures, practices and workflow related to both the admissions and transfer credit should be designed to be as quick and efficient as possible, to make and communicated admission and transfer credit decisions to students in a timely manner to facilitate a positive and welcoming experience for applicants and admitted students and to maximize the students who register for, receive credit from and attend university.

In Scope:

Of the policy:

- Admission of traditionally qualified students
- Admission of non-traditional populations
- Assessment and recognition of transfer credit for course work completed at institutions other than the U of S
- Flexibility and discretion in decision-making
- Transparent and timely decision-making
- Communication of changes related to the policy and procedures

Of the project:

- Developing admission and transfer credit policy statements that describe the goals, values and principles that will drive the University's admission and transfer credit activities
- Reviewing our admission requirements in the context of our current enrolment environment and the admission policies and requirements of the competitor institutions

- Examining our current admission practices to ensure they are as efficient as possible, and to improve our service standards and the quality of customer services we provide with respect to those procedures.

Not in Scope:

- Recruitment of students
- Decision-making around individual students
- Non-direct entry colleges

Opportunities:

- That a clear and well-defined admission policy statement would provide an overarching philosophy to support and enhance the admission of students to our university, and act as a guideline in further development of policies and procedures around admissions and transfer credit.
- A discussion of goals, values and principles driving admission and transfer credit policies at the University of Saskatchewan will enable conversations around the diversity of the student population and the University's goals for student enrolment, resulting in a shared understanding of the current situation and future goals.
- Conversations around admission and transfer credit policies will engage units, such as the University's Secretary's Office, and enhance a larger conversation around how all units and colleges on campus have a collective responsibility for the student experience, resulting in more collaboration across campus.

Deliverables: (by April 2010)

- A formal admission policy statement
- A formal transfer credit policy statement
- Review of admission requirements
- A list of all current admission policies and procedures, to be reviewed and formalized or updated in the rest of the planning cycle

Milestones:

- Review of admission policy statements of competitor institutions – June 2009
- Consultation with University Secretary re: development of institutional policies – Summer 2009
- Draft admission and transfer credit policy statements – Fall 2009
- Review admission requirements of competitor institutions – January 2010
- Research and review all undergraduate direct-entry admission and transfer credit policies and procedures/practices at the U of S – February 2010
- Create list of existing admission and transfer credit policies, practices and procedures – March 2010
- Review of admissions unit resource requirements – January 2010

Impact of Enrolment

- Increased headcount, particularly by improving access for non-traditional learners
- Increased student diversity