

Minutes
BCCAT Articulation Meeting
Philosophy Articulation
Committee Meeting

Lynn Szabo Meeting Room
Trinity Western University
Langley, BC

May 17, 2017

1. Introductions

Present

Grant Havers (Trinity Western University), John FitzGibbon (Director: Transfer and Articulation, BCCAT), Vance Mattson (College of the Rockies), Darcy Cutler (Douglas College), Lyle Crawford (Alexander College), Jonathan Vanderhoek (Selkirk College), Michael Bourke (Program Head: Liberal Studies, BCIT), Reuben Gabriel, (College of New Caledonia), Wayne Henry (University of the Fraser Valley), Karen Shirley (Camosun College)

Regrets

- Sylvia Berryman (UBC), Boris DeWiel (UNBC), Eike Kluge (UVic), Jeff Lawrence (North Island College), Carolyn Swanson (VIU)
- John will contact the universities about their poor attendance.

Death of a Committee Member

Lyle Crawford told the Committee about the sad loss of Brent Smart (Columbia College) in September. Brent had been a Committee member since 1997. He was a valued committee member and he will be missed.

2. Approval of Agenda

John suggested that we might change the agenda so that the secretary is chosen after the introductions. That way, items that would otherwise be covered before someone was taking minutes, will be minuted. The Committee agreed.

3. Selection of Secretary and Venue for Next Meeting

- John noted that having meetings in central venues encourages people to attend. There was some discussion, a tone of reluctant agreement but no official decision.
- He also suggested that we consider having a long-term chair, even if we move the venue around. Again, no minutable decision was reached.
- Lyle Crawford and Karen Shirley both volunteered to chair the meeting in 2018. Since Lyle had hosted more recently than Karen, he ceded to Karen, who is retiring a few months later.

4. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting (May 20, 2016)

- John noted that BCCAT had to chase our minutes down. Minutes need to be submitted within a couple of months of the relevant meeting so that BCAAT can identify and then invite the upcoming chair to the annual chairs-of-articulation-committees meeting, usually held in November.
- Minutes approved, after some minor changes

5. Business Arising from Previous Meeting

There was a recap of some of the discussions mentioned in the 2016 minutes.

6. Institutional Reports

Grant Havers (Trinity Western University)

- In the minutes from 2016 (#6), Grant told us about Trinity's new Core Curriculum which was then in the process of being implemented. At this meeting, Grant was able to tell us more. Philosophy courses count as foundations courses and so students must take one philosophy course.
- Lower level philosophy courses are getting filled, probably due to lots of international students. (USA students attending faith-based universities in Canada do not face the same financial obstacles that those attending non-faith-based universities face.)
- There are still more male than female students at TWU, but the new gender studies program, including a new philosophy and gender course, should increase the number of female students.

Vance Mattson (College of the Rockies)

- There are 2500 students and 80% are domestic. The number of international students is increasing somewhat, but this has not influenced philosophy courses. Vance is the only philosophy instructor and he teaches four philosophy courses.
- Enrolment is up from five years ago: 15 – 20 students per section, but there is no budget for new courses.
- There is no gender gap in the philosophy courses' makeup but students who go on in philosophy tend to be male.

Jonathan Vanderhoek (Selkirk College)

- Selkirk has a new Rural Pre-med Program so a biomed ethics course (Phil 210) was introduced. This new program is the reason that, after five years without philosophy after John Rowell retired, Jonathan was hired.
- There are long waiting lists for philosophy courses.
- A new Law and Justice Program has put the pressure on for a critical thinking course. The Law and Justice Program chair also wants a second year ethics course.

Lyle Crawford (Alexander College)

- Lyle is the coordinator of Humanities and Social Sciences at Alexander. Philosophy courses are slower to fill than other humanities or social sciences courses because they are seen as more difficult. The attrition rate is also higher. But the courses do fill and philosophy is holding steady at Alexander.

- Lyle is considering trying to add a business ethics course. He'd like it to be a second year course and for it to have a pre-requisite.
- Alexander used to be overwhelmingly Chinese. Numbers have now shifted to South Asian, especially students from the Punjab region. Some of them seem to have the course-goal of getting at least a D, as their real ambition is to get a permanent resident card.

Karen Shirley (Camosun College)

- Karen said that she is on a post-retirement contract which expires in August, 2018.
- She told the group about her experiences in a process that ended in her being rejected as the instructor who teaches health care ethics, after approximately 20 years of teaching the course.
- Camosun has seen an increase of South Asian students.

Wayne Henry (University of the Fraser Valley)

- Wayne is now the Head of the Philosophy Dept.
- The department is aligning the instructional learning outcomes (ILOs) of courses with the departmental and university ILOs.
- UFV has been under a hiring freeze for six years now. In that time, the philosophy dept has seen two retirements. The dept does have a limited term appointment (held by Rana Ahmad), which has been renewed for the last three years. In the Fall of 2018, the dept will get a continuing position. With that new hire, it will consist of six continuing faculty and two full-time equivalents hired out to sessionals.

Darcy Cutler (Douglas College)

- Douglas College's philosophy dept hasn't experienced much in the way of change in the number of students but there are more students from South Asia.

Reuben Gabriel, (College of New Caledonia)

- Phil 100 will be added to the courses offered. A course on social and political philosophy was recently added, as was one on world religions.

Michael Bourke (Program Head: Liberal Studies, BCIT)

- Liberal Studies has expanded in the last six years. (Oddly, this expansion has occurred after two required courses lost their required status.) We have gone from one to six ethics courses.
- Most LA courses are third and fourth year as our students usually have a full, technology-laden course load in their first two years.
- There are seven LA faculty: four English and three philosophy instructors; there are fifteen sessional as well.
- BCIT gets lots of students who already have degrees so Michael has to figure out the transfer credits for many courses.
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7. New Business

a) TCES Articulation Request Queue

John FitzGibbon (Director: Transfer and Articulation, BCCAT):

- i. Unbeknownst to Lyle, someone at Alexander College sent BCCAT a list of philosophy courses for which, the sender mistakenly claimed, transfer credit had been requested but no replies had been received. John asked us to ensure that requests for transferability are dealt with.
 - ii. John said that an 80% outcomes match for a course-to-course transfer seems to be the general standard. In addition, there may be time limits on articulation agreements and it is down to the sending institution to keep on top of whether or not their articulation agreements have expired.
- b) John gave us the highlights of BCCAT news.
- i. BCCAT is examining issues related to inter-disciplinary course transfer
 - ii. Research on gender declaration at PSIs in BC is in progress
 - iii. Research on the South Island Partnership, a dual credit partnership between high schools and PSIs – in progress
 - iv. Research on international credit transfer – in progress
 - v. BC's revised grade 12 curriculum includes philosophy, as a topic, under social studies www.curriculum.gov.bc.ca
 - vi. Profile reports – reports on the progress, etc., of student transferring to research universities in BC, compiled by the universities – are available at www.bccat.ca/research/projects/profile
- c) Academic Freedom Issues in BC Universities
- Wayne proposed that we pass a resolution that administrations should support faculty in their academic right to freedom of expression in the classroom. There will be occasions when faculty are accused of making students feel unsafe in the context of classroom lectures and discussion. After some discussion about the tension between free speech and safe spaces, it was agreed that Grant and Wayne would form a sub-committee to look into whether it might be possible to put together a proposal for a resolution to bring forward to our next meeting for discussion (and, possibly, a vote).
- d) Philosophy and Courses on Indigenous People
- Darcy noted that it is hard, for several reasons, for a non-Indigenous person to teach such courses
 - No one present is teaching an Indigenous philosophy course
- e) Philosophy and the Provincial Government
- Ruben noted that Andrew Weaver is much more approachable than was Clarke. The suggestion was made that we push Weaver to encourage philosophy courses for international students. Critical thinking and ethics are the well-suited to ESL students.
 - Jonathon agreed to look at philosophy in the K-12 system as there are proposals for new courses in philosophy at the grade 11-12 level. Input will be welcomed by the Ministry of Education until around the end of November.
- f) Progress on Pool of Sessional Instructors

- John said that the articulation committee could host the list of philosophers looking for sessional work on its section of the BCCAT website.

8. Adjournment to the Ford Pub