

# FRIENDS OF BCCAT

\* TREVOR TOONE \*



"I came to fully appreciate the remarkable flexibility of the post-secondary educational environment in BC. A student is not penalized if they need to relocate or change their mind about a program, enabling them to pursue and persist in their post-secondary education."

## Meet Trevor Toone

### Principal of Columbia College (1999-2018)

In 1991, Columbia College made history by becoming one of the first private institutions to be granted formal membership in the BC Transfer System, having developed articulation agreements with BC universities for many years prior to being included in the BC Transfer Guide.

Trevor supported the work of BCCAT over several years, including sitting as a member of the Transfer & Articulation Committee (2003-2017), which oversees BC's 66 articulation committees. He offers some reflections about his own experience of the BC Transfer System below.

## Trevor's Story

My own formal education was completed at the universities of Sussex and East Anglia - both fairly typical English institutions at that time; if one chose to switch institutions, then you started at the bottom, all over again. The idea of transferring credits/courses from one institution to another was unknown.

So it was a great surprise to me when I encountered the BC Transfer System when I started teaching at Columbia College. While I was initially impressed with the flexibility the System brought to the table, I certainly did not, at first, appreciate the full breadth of the transfer system.

My view initially was that the transfer arrangements in place allowed students to complete a degree at one of BC's big universities after starting at a smaller college (such as Columbia). For international students, the benefits were clear. The availability of transfer pathways enabled these students to adjust to life in Canada in a smaller, more intimate environment before transferring to a larger institution.

Later, as I became more familiar with the BC Transfer System and BCCAT, I came to fully appreciate the remarkable flexibility of the post-secondary educational environment in BC. A student is not penalized if they need to relocate or change their mind about a program, enabling them to pursue and persist in their post-secondary education.

I had the opportunity to learn about BCCAT when Columbia College operated from the BCIT Downtown Campus, as BCCAT staff were our upstairs neighbours (1997-2013). During that time, I came to know Frank Gelin (Executive Director) and Finola Finlay (Associate Director, Transfer & Articulation) very well, and they recruited me to stand as a member of the Transfer & Articulation Committee for several years. The experience helped me to understand better the many wrinkles in the System that BCCAT works with/through/around. In all the many meetings I attended, the focus was consistent. "**What is best for students?**" is the overarching theme that has guided BCCAT over several decades now, and it is this commitment that has seen the BC Transfer System develop into an exemplary transfer system and model for other jurisdictions.

"For international students, the benefits of transfer were clear. The availability of transfer pathways enabled these students to adjust to life in Canada in a smaller, more intimate environment before transferring to a larger institution."

" 'What is best for students?' is the overarching theme that has guided BCCAT over several decades now, and it is this commitment that has seen the BC Transfer System develop into an exemplary transfer system and model for other jurisdictions."

