THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA| OKANAGAN

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12 September 2007

Memo to: **Okanagan Senate**

From: **Admissions and Awards Committees**

RE: **Degree Recognition at UBC: Applicants from a College or University (approval)**

Please find attached a proposal from Undergraduate Admissions to further define and clarify Degree Recognition at UBC.

Motion: *That the Senate approve proposal from Undergraduate Admissions to further define and clarify Degree Recognition at UBC.*

The University of British Columbia

Memorandum

April 21, 2007

Prepared by: **Michael Bluhm, Acting Associate Director, Undergraduate Admissions**

On behalf of: **Dr James Berger, Chair, Senate Admissions Committee**

For Discussion: **Senate Admissions Committee (April 25, 2007)**

Recommendation to further define and clarify Degree Recognition at UBC

Introduction

With respect to applicants from other colleges and universities, the UBC Academic Calendar currently states, "*Applicants with prior credit from a recognized university or college will be admitted on satisfaction of the appropriate admission requirements…*" The word "recognized" has come under some scrutiny of late as the meaning of the term has changed with the post-secondary landscape.

Many countries have well-established, usually governmental, accrediting agencies. Within those countries, membership in the appropriate accrediting body serves as the recognition UBC policy requires. In Canada however, no such accrediting body exists. For years, the general term 'recognized' served the purpose in a relatively simple structure of post-secondary education in Canada consisting primarily of publicly funded colleges and universities awarding distinct credentials for distinct purposes. Historically, colleges offered associate degrees, diplomas and certificates. Universities offered degrees. Over time, there has been significant blurring of the borders between colleges and universities including the development of highly organized transfer articulation systems such as BCCAT allowing students to transfer freely from one type of institution and credential to another. Continuing evolution of the post-secondary system fuelled by efforts to increase capacity, choice, and mobility, has lead to new types of institutions and new definitions of existing institutions. Now colleges, university-colleges, and universities exist side-by-side all offering many types of credentials. And perhaps a more significant change in the system has been the increasing number of institutions operating under private and for-profit funding structures. We have reached a point where it is necessary to further define what is meant by 'recognized'.

In March 2007, the UBC Senate Admissions Committee hosted a colloquium on the topic of degree recognition with speakers from the BC Ministry of Advanced Education, the Degree Quality Assessment Board, and the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer, as well as participants from the UBC campus community and sister institutions. At the request of the Senate Admissions Committee, this colloquium was to serve as an opportunity to gain insight into the existing mechanisms by which institutions gain approval and/or acceptance to offer new

degree programs. While remaining conscious of the issue being trans-national, our discussions focused primarily on the current situation in British Columbia.

See attached: Summary of Discussions
Recommendation
Resources

Summary of Colloquium on Degree Recognition

Dr Gary Poole, Director of the Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth was asked to moderate the event. Dr. Poole began by providing a pedagogical model that emphasized the importance of competencies and outcomes in comparing programs, credentials, and providers.

Dorothy Rogers, Manager of the Quality Assurance unit of the BC Ministry of Advanced Education provided us with a historical account of the Degree Authorization Act and Degree Quality Assessment Board put in place in 2003. Under new legislation, all new degree programs in the province must seek approval by the Minister of Advanced Education. The DQAB is charged with the task of assessment and recommendation of degree program approval to the Minister. The new legislation allows for private and out-of-province public institutions to offer degrees in the province after thorough assessment, a much more rigorous process than before this new legislation was in place. The Ministry of Advanced Education considers the DQAB assessment process and recommendation as sufficient in lieu of accreditation for degree programs to be offered in BC.

Roger Blackman, Vice Chair of the Degree Quality Assessment Board described the process the DQAB has in place for institutions requesting approval of new degree programs. This process is a careful examination of proposed programs and the institutions proposing to offer them. Expert panels, generally consisting of presidents and deans of existing colleges and universities in the province, perform organizational and program reviews. The Board operates with transparency by publicly posting the complete degree assessment process as well as full individual program proposals, and soliciting comments and feedback from interested parties. Upon completion of the assessment process, the DQAB provides a recommendation to the Minister who ultimately approves or denies authorization. Institutions who gain such authorization are then subject to periodic review for quality assurance.

Frank Gelin, Executive Director of the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer provided us with a national perspective and an account of what is happening in other provinces. Dr. Gelin drew attention to a historical tendency for many Canadian universities to default to requiring membership within the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada as de facto accreditation. However, recent discussions on a national level have lead to a policy statement issued by the Council of Ontario Universities stating that applicants from provincially assisted universities in Ontario should be considered for admission to programs on an individual basis and selection should be based on a merit system.

Finola Finlay provided us with a historical account of the development of the BCCAT system as well as the relationship BCCAT has with the Ministry with respect to new degree programs seeking entry to the BC Transfer System. Particularly relevant was the account of BCCAT's development of a quality assurance mechanism in conjunction with The University President's Council in 2002. Upon development of this quality assurance mechanism, the project was put on hold in anticipation of the pending Degree Authorization Act and subsequent DQAB. Once the DQAB was in place, BCCAT conducted a line-by-line comparison of the two quality assurance mechanisms and concluded that the DQAB process was as or more rigorous and comprehensive than the process they had previously drafted. At that time, BCCAT agreed that DQAB approval would suffice as approval to request articulation within the BC Transfer System.

Calendar Change Proposal Form
UBC and UBC Okanagan

Approval Date for Vancouver: April 25, 2007 **Approval Date for Okanagan:** May 11, 2007 **Effective Session:** Immediate **Year for change:** 2007	**Date:** April 24, 2007 **Contact Person:** Michael Bluhm, Acting Associate Director, Undergraduate Admissions **Phone:** 604-822-9489 **Email:** michael.bluhm@ubc.ca
	Current URL from Web Calendar: Vancouver: http://www.students.ubc.ca/calendar/index.cfm?tree=2,25,72,0 Okanagan: http://okanagan.students.ubc.ca/calendar/index.cfm?tree=2,25,0,0
Proposed Calendar Entry: *Applicants from a College or University* > ***Introduction*** Applicants with prior credit from a recognized **degree program** ~~university or college~~ will be admitted on satisfaction of the appropriate admission requirement as outlined below. Courses successfully completed in prior study, where appropriate, may satisfy requirements of the program of study to which an applicant is admitted. ~~A student~~ **Applicants** with ~~an~~ unsatisfactory standing at a college or another university will not be admitted. **Recognized Degree Programs in Canada:** **In British Columbia, recognized degree programs are those authorized by the Ministry of Advanced Education by recommendation of the Degree Quality Assessment Board.** **Recognized degree programs offered in other Canadian provinces include, but are not limited to, those offered by institutions with membership in the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC). Degree programs from other Canadian provinces not offered by AUCC member institutions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.**	**Present Calendar Entry:** *Applicants from a College or University* > ***Introduction*** Applicants with prior credit from a recognized university or college will be admitted on satisfaction of the appropriate admission requirement as outlined below. Courses successfully completed in prior study, where appropriate, may satisfy requirements of the program of study to which an applicant is admitted. A student with an unsatisfactory standing at a college or another university will not be admitted. **Rationale for change/addition:** The term "recognized university or college" is ambiguous. There is no universal set of criteria that makes a university or college recognized. The proposed language clarifies, where possible, what recognized means.

Recognized Degree Programs from outside of Canada: **In the United States, recognized degree programs include, but are not limited to, those offered by institutions with regional accreditation from one of the following accrediting bodies: Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, New England Association of Schools and Colleges, North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, National Association of Independent Schools. Degree programs from the US not offered by a regionally accredited institution will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.** **Degree programs offered in other countries may be recognized if they are offered by institutions authorized to do so by the national government or a government-approved accrediting body and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.**	