

# An Introduction to the BC Council on Admissions & Transfer and the BC Transfer System

2nd Annual Student Pathways in Higher Education Conference  
**February 28 – March 2, 2013**

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# Presentation Overview

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- ▶ **The BC Transfer System**

- ▶ History, trends, cultural context, transfer mechanisms

- ▶ **Council**

- ▶ History, Membership, Governance, Committees, Work Plan

- ▶ **Provincial Articulation Committees**

- ▶ Mandate, Structure

- ▶ **System Activities**

- ▶ Policies, Research, Outreach
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# BC Transfer System: History

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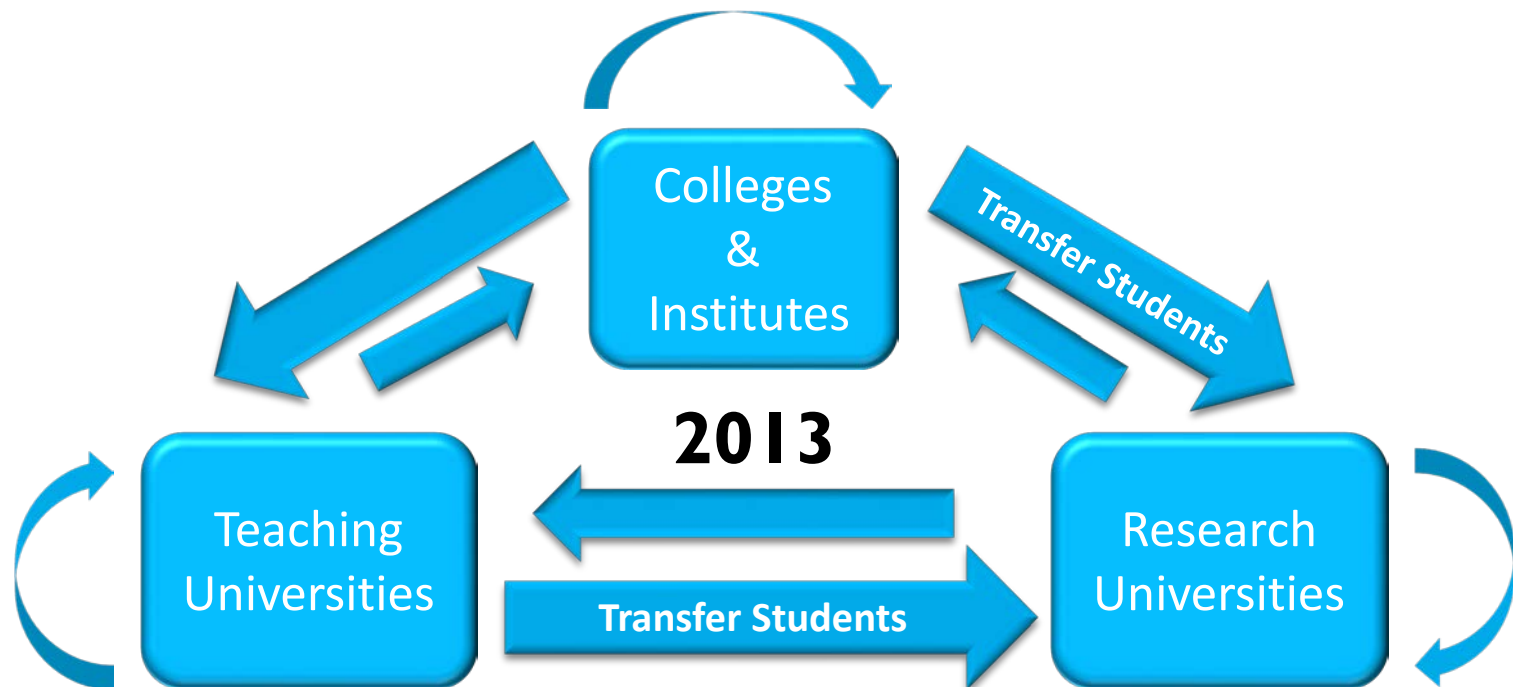
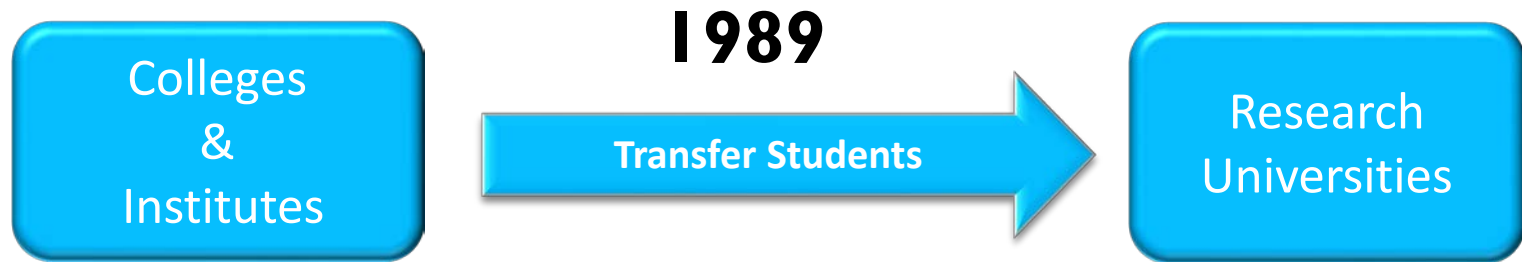
- ▶ Developed in 1960s based on the California model
- ▶ Initially a binary Transfer System model:
  - ▶ specific sending colleges and receiving universities
- ▶ Transfer began as a self-regulated system
- ▶ BCCAT formed in 1989 to coordinate system
- ▶ Now a multi-directional Transfer System model:
  - ▶ complex degree-granting environment
  - ▶ high levels of student mobility
  - ▶ all member institutions (public and private) send and receive

<http://bccat.ca/system/history/>

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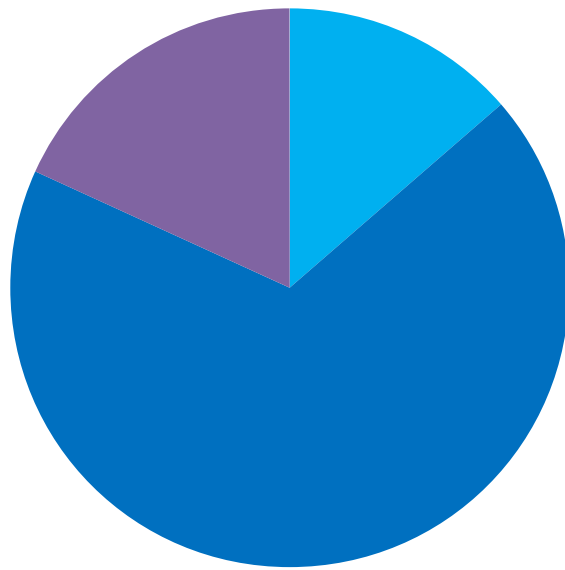


# BC Transfer System: Student Transfer



# BC Transfer System: Degree Granting

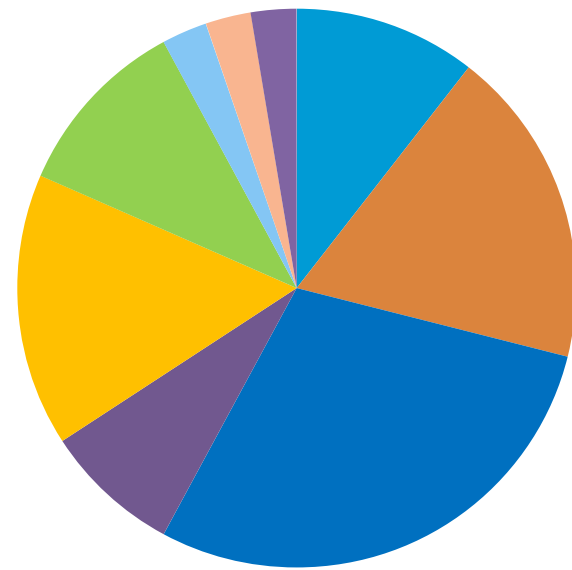
1989



**3 of 22  
Baccalaureate  
Degree  
Institutions**



2012



**30 of 38  
Baccalaureate  
Degree Institutions**

- 4 Public RI Universities
- 7 Public TI Universities
- 11 Public Colleges
- 3 Public Institutes
- 6 Private Colleges
- 4 Private Universities
- 1 Private Institute
- 1 Non-BC Public University
- 1 Non-BC Public College

# BC Transfer System: Key Trends

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1. Changes in institution mandates and roles
  - Greater number of public and private degree-granting institutions
2. Greater student diversity: social, economic, and demographic
  - Immigrant and first generation post-secondary learners
  - Aboriginal/Indigenous/First Nation
  - International
  - Part-time
3. More complex student mobility patterns
4. More student education planning variables
  - ▶ Urban and rural demand for programs and seats

# BC Transfer System: Cultural Context

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- ▶ Institutions are autonomous and self-governing
- ▶ No standardized or common core curriculum in academic areas
- ▶ Considerable cross-sector discussion and collaboration
- ▶ Expectation by students and parents that credit transfer is possible
- ▶ Development of a range of innovative transfer mechanisms:
  - ▶ Course to course articulation agreements (85,000+) facilitated by faculty articulation committees (68)
  - ▶ Block transfer agreements (900+)
  - ▶ Provincially regulated Associate Degree frameworks in Arts and Science
  - ▶ Degree partnerships with guaranteed admission pathways (50+)
  - ▶ Flexible Pre-major agreements in traditional disciplines / programs

# Transfer Mechanisms

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## What Transfers?

- Individual courses
- Dual credit secondary courses (AP/IB)
- Associate Degrees
- Diplomas and Certificates (block transfer)

## What Doesn't?

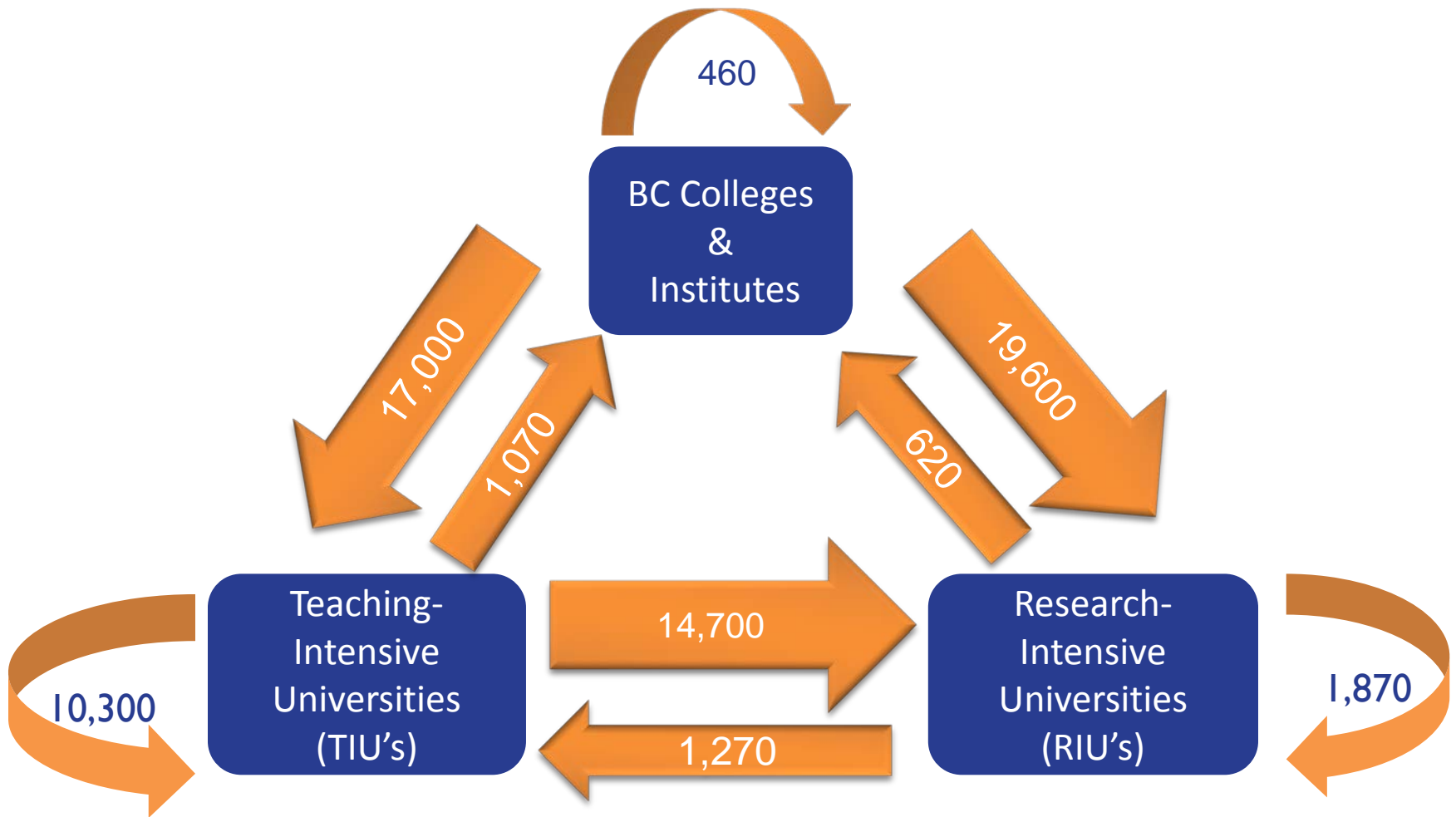
- Courses with low grades
- Courses taken too long ago
- Equivalent courses taken twice
- Courses failed





# Articulation Agreements between Sectors

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Source: BC Transfer Credit Evaluation System 2012

# Transfer Mechanisms: Associate Degrees

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- ▶ Developed to ensure quality of university transfer programs and later used as transfer vehicles.
- ▶ A provincial credential providing 60 credits (2 years) of transfer credit at receiving institutions.
- ▶ Courses used in Associate Degrees must transfer to RIUs.
- ▶ Under provincial review in 2013.

[bccat.ca/system/associatedegreeview/](http://bccat.ca/system/associatedegreeview/)

## **Associate of Arts Degree**

- ▶ Requirements include Arts courses, English, Mathematics, Science, Social Sciences, and Humanities.

## **Associate of Science Degree**

- ▶ Requirements include Science courses, English, Mathematics, Arts.

[bctransferguide.ca/associate/requirements/](http://bctransferguide.ca/associate/requirements/)

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# Transfer Mechanisms: Flexible Pre-Majors

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- ▶ **Problem:** Student has chosen a major and plans to transfer. However, different receiving institutions have different pre-major requirements.
- ▶ **Solution:** Articulation committee develops a Flexible Pre-Major agreement that allows students to complete lower level requirements at participating institutions and directly enter the major program at participating receiving institutions.
- ▶ **Agreements** developed in English, Psychology, Anthropology, Sociology, Computing Education, Economics.

[bccat.ca/pubs/FPMFinalReport.pdf](http://bccat.ca/pubs/FPMFinalReport.pdf)

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# Council

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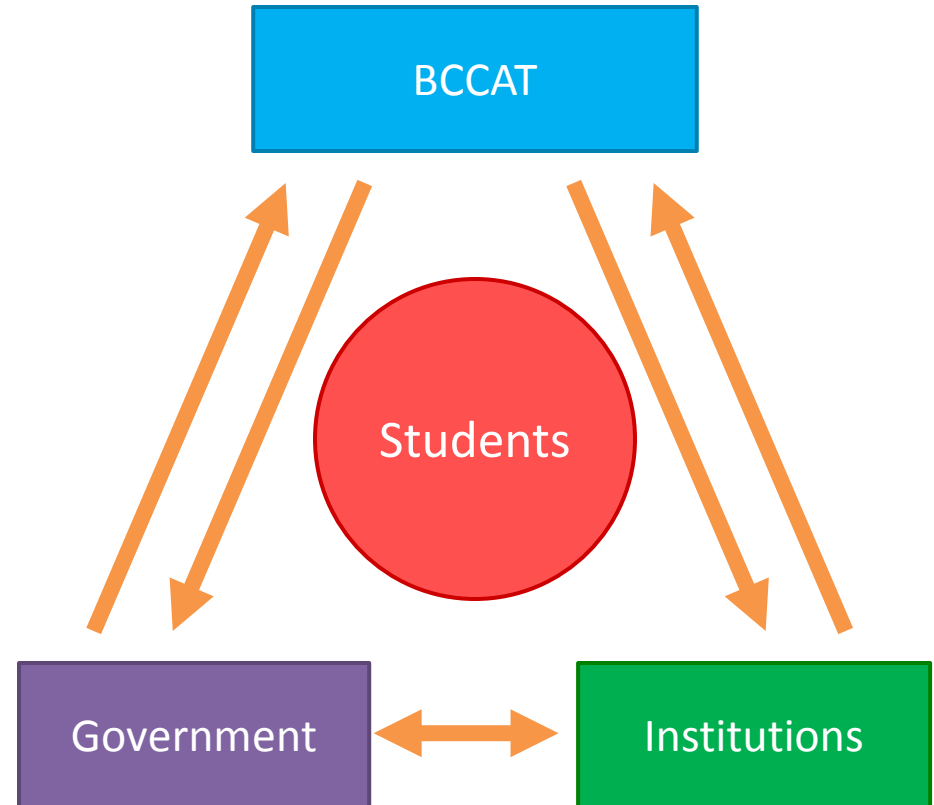
- ▶ History, Membership, Governance, Committees, Work Plan



# Council History and Mandate

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- ▶ Founded in 1989
- ▶ Provides system leadership by enabling articulation, transfer, and admission arrangements
- ▶ An “arms-length” agency of the Ministry of Advanced Education
- ▶ No direct regulatory authority
- ▶ Respects institutional autonomy



# Council Membership

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- ▶ 2 Co-Chairs (including Executive Director)
- ▶ 10 senior administrators from public post-secondary institutions
- ▶ 4 faculty/staff from colleges/institutes/universities
- ▶ 1 student representative
- ▶ 1 representative from school superintendents association
- ▶ 1 representative from private post-secondary sector

**Representatives from not of the system. . .**

[bccat.ca/about/council/](http://bccat.ca/about/council/)

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# Council's Approach

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## Student Focused

- ▶ Principles and services focus on student experience and planning

## Consultative & Proactive

- ▶ Relationships with educators ensure relevant expertise informs BCCAT

## Trusted & Thorough

- ▶ System data, analyses, and resources are objective, valid, and useful

## Visible & Collaborative

- ▶ Web services are visible, well-used, and shared with system partners

## Adaptable & Responsive

- ▶ Resources adapt to the needs of students and institutions



# Standing Committees of Council

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## Admissions

- ▶ Examines issues pertaining to capacity, demand, and student mobility
- ▶ Recommends policies and practices that facilitate admission processes for direct entry and transfer students

## Research

- ▶ Recommends to Council a research agenda which supports the mandate and objective
- ▶ Provides guidance to research undertaken by other committees

## Education Planner Advisory

- ▶ Provides recommendations and direction regarding the Education Planner website
- ▶ Comments on site enhancements, management, and marketing

## Transfer & Articulation

- ▶ Provides advice on transfer and articulation policies and practice
- ▶ Oversees articulation committees and projects designed to improve or enhance transfer





# Key Components of Council Work

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## Articulation

- ▶ Enable inter-institutional relationships—sending and receiving agreements and policy
- ▶ Complement course transfer—Associate Degrees, Flexible Pre-Majors, course grids, matrices
- ▶ Enhance interprovincial transfer—learning outcomes, quality assurance

## Admissions

- ▶ Advocate for transfer spaces
- ▶ Support K-12 to PSE transitions
- ▶ Promote program partnerships

## System Research

- ▶ Research student transfer, admissions, mobility, and success
- ▶ Examine mobility patterns—Student Transitions Project collaboration
- ▶ Determine why students move

## Communications

- ▶ Bccat.ca, bctransferguide.ca, educationplanner.ca
  - ▶ Research and system issues publications
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# Provincial Articulation Committees

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- ▶ Mandate, Structure



# Provincial Articulation Committees

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Exist “with the purpose of expanding education opportunities for students by facilitating students’ transfer of credits from one institution to another.”

- ▶ Represent the range of programs offered within the BC Transfer System (68 committees—academic, professional, applied, trades, developmental)
  - ▶ Operate under the oversight of the Council’s Transfer & Articulation Committee
  - ▶ Representatives from each institution offering a program meet once per year at member institutions
  - ▶ Have no legal status and do not have the authority to direct institutions or make decisions on their behalf
  - ▶ Discuss transfer, curriculum, assessment, pedagogy, program changes
  - ▶ Share institutional information, apply for grants, work on projects
  - ▶ *A forum for conversations that may not otherwise occur...*
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# System Activities

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▶ Policies, Research, Outreach



# Council-Approved Policies

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- ▶ Principles and Guidelines for Transfer (updated 2010)
- ▶ **BC Transfer System**
  - ▶ Membership in the BC Transfer System (2012)
  - ▶ Membership of Private Institutions in the BC Transfer System (2012)
  - ▶ Membership of Alberta Institutions in the BC Transfer System (2012)
  - ▶ Use of BCCAT Logos by BC Transfer System Members (2012)
- ▶ **Other**
  - ▶ Recording Block Transfer Agreements with PCTIA-Accredited Institutions (2008)



# Research on Transfer Student Success

## BCCAT research consistently shows . . .

- *BC transfer students . . . are just as successful at university as are direct entrants, and have the grades to prove it*

Lambert-Maberly (2009), *BC College Transfer Students Admitted to UBC*

- *. . . transfer students are able to graduate with approximately the same number of credits as secondary school students, accounting for both total credits . . . as well as credits completed at receiving institutions*

Pendleton (2011), *Credits to Graduation*

*“It seems unlikely . . . that another entity would have the credibility that BCCAT has enjoyed with the institutions. . . . the issues addressed by BCCAT research would not have been addressed had the Council not existed.”*

John Waterhouse (2010), *An Assessment of BCCAT Research*



# Recent Research Highlights

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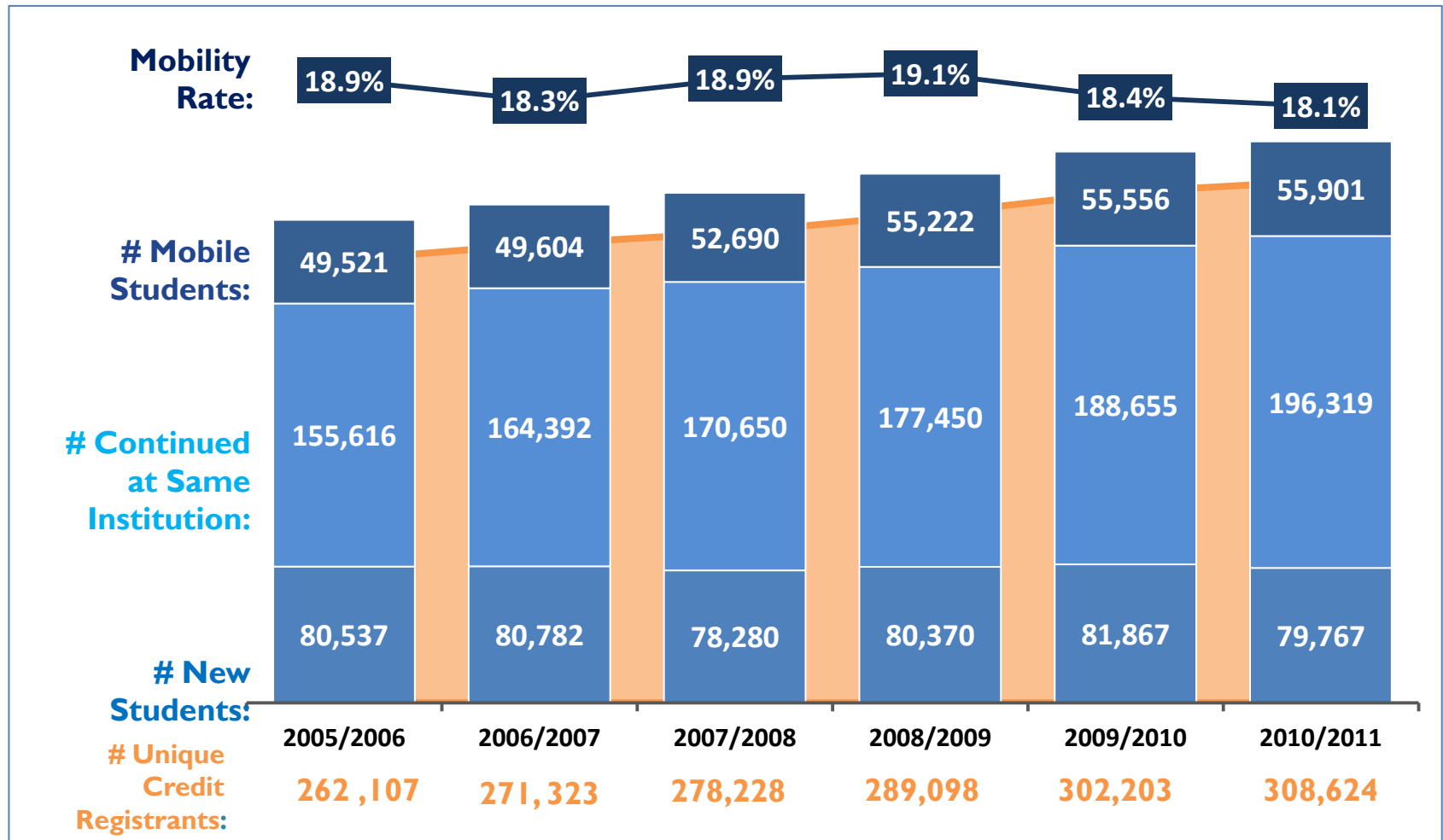
- ▶ Student Transfer, Success, and Mobility: A Synthesis of Research (2013)
- ▶ Survey of Movers: Students who Move Between BC Public Post-Secondary Institutions (2013)
- ▶ The Mosaic of Post-Secondary Institutional Attendance (2012)
- ▶ 2011 Admissions and Transfer Experiences of Students Continuing their Studies in British Columbia (2012)
- ▶ Collaboration with the Student Transitions Project
  - ▶ Simultaneous Enrollment in Multiple BC Public Post-Secondary Institutions (2012)
  - ▶ Post-Secondary Student Mobility (2012)
  - ▶ International Students in BCs Education Systems
  - ▶ Post-Secondary Credential Completion of BC Grade 12 Graduate

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▶ [www.aved.gov.bc.ca/student\\_transitions/](http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/student_transitions/)

# Student Mobility Trends:

## Student Transitions Project





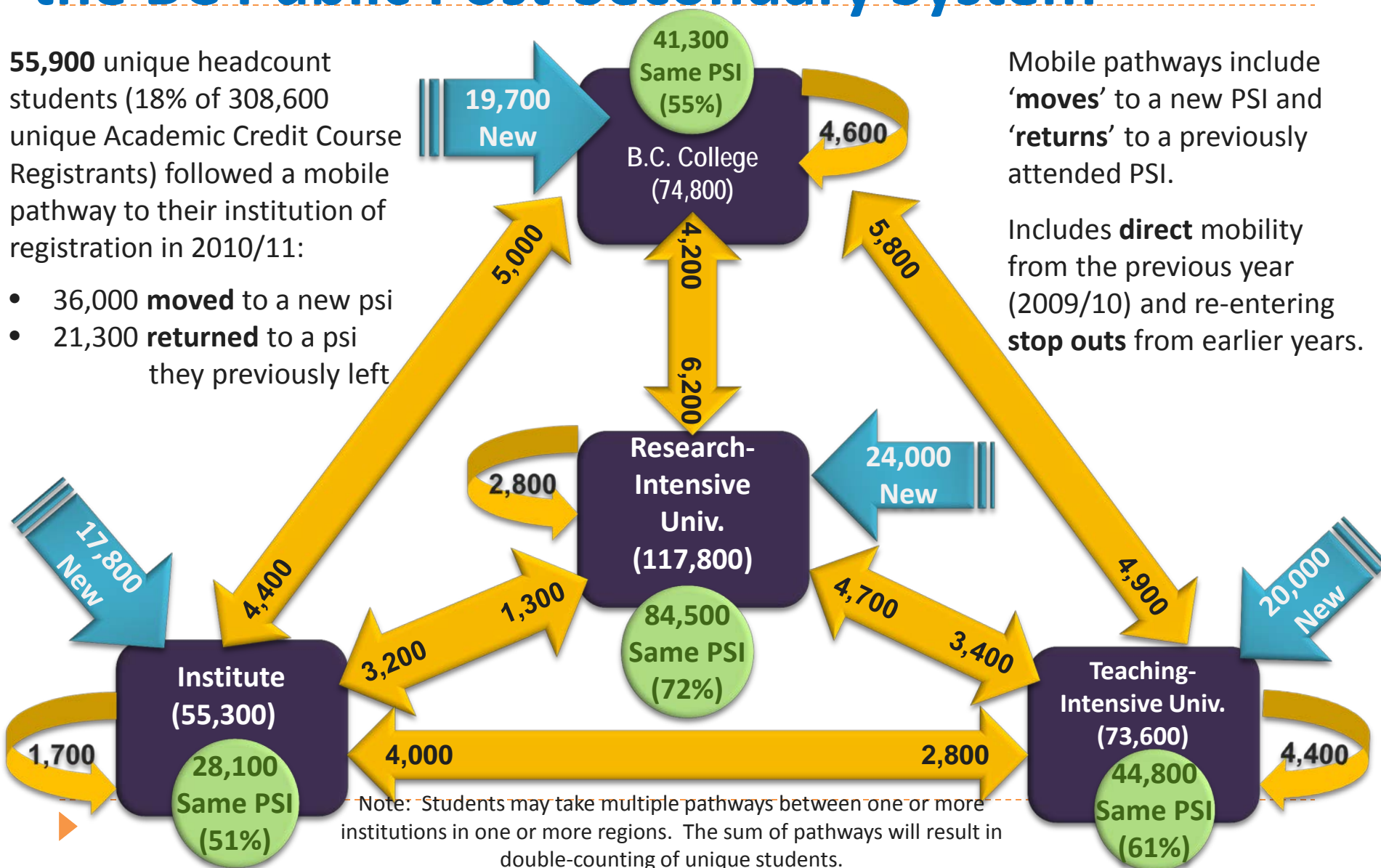
# Student Mobility Between Sectors in the BC Public Post-Secondary System

**55,900** unique headcount students (18% of 308,600 unique Academic Credit Course Registrants) followed a mobile pathway to their institution of registration in 2010/11:

- 36,000 **moved** to a new psi
- 21,300 **returned** to a psi they previously left

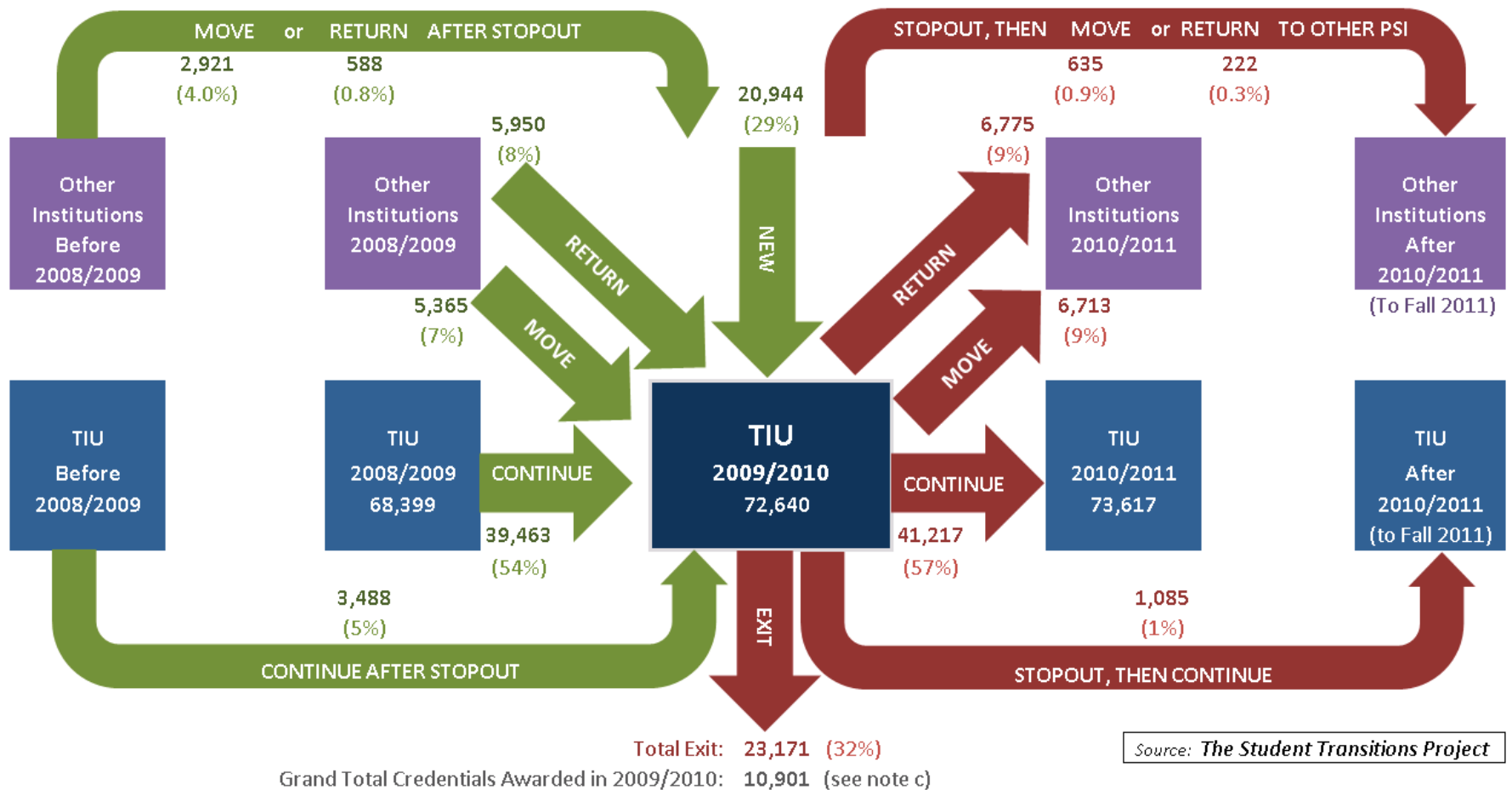
Mobile pathways include 'moves' to a new PSI and 'returns' to a previously attended PSI.

Includes **direct** mobility from the previous year (2009/10) and re-entering **stop outs** from earlier years.



# Student Pathways for All TIUs (2009/10):

## Where did they come from? Where do they go next?



# BCCAT Website: [bctransferguide.ca](http://bctransferguide.ca)

- ▶ 85,000+ course, 900 block, and 50+ degree program agreements updated dynamically
- ▶ All agreements are **guaranteed**
- ▶ Searchable databases
  - ▶ Course-to-course
  - ▶ Block transfer
  - ▶ Program-specific
  - ▶ Advanced Placement
  - ▶ International Baccalaureate
- ▶ Almost 1M unique visitors in 2012
- ▶ Transfer Help and FAQ

The screenshot shows the Bctransferguide.ca website. The header includes the logo, navigation tabs (HOME, ABOUT US, SEARCH, BLOCK, AP AND IB GUIDES, BC TRANSFER SYSTEM, TRANSFER HELP, RESOURCES), and a search bar. The main content area features a 'COURSE SEARCH' section with four search methods: By Sending Institution, By Receiving Institution, By Course Load, and By Program. Each method has a description and a 'Go' button. Below this are four informational boxes: 'HOW TRANSFER WORKS', 'TRANSFER FROM OUTSIDE OF BC', 'FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS', and 'THE BC TRANSFER SYSTEM'. The footer contains links for details on education planning, funding by the British Columbia government, and development/maintenance by BCCAT.

# Transfer Credit Evaluation System (TCES)

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- ▶ Each institution has a TCES account and Transfer Credit Contact person
- ▶ Institutions make and receive articulation requests through the TCES, which tracks and records them
- ▶ Results of agreements are published on the BC Transfer Guide
- ▶ Course updates and maintenance of agreements is automatic
- ▶ Driven by a MS Sequel Server relational database
- ▶ Institutions can connect via web service and pull data from the BC Transfer Guide
- ▶ TCES acts as a course outline repository
- ▶ TCES can be modified to be adopted in other jurisdictions



# BCCAT Websites: bccat.ca

- News and emerging Issues
- Research reports
- Policy and discussion papers
- Handbooks and Practice Guides
- Information to facilitate BC Transfer System
- Resources for Articulation Committees

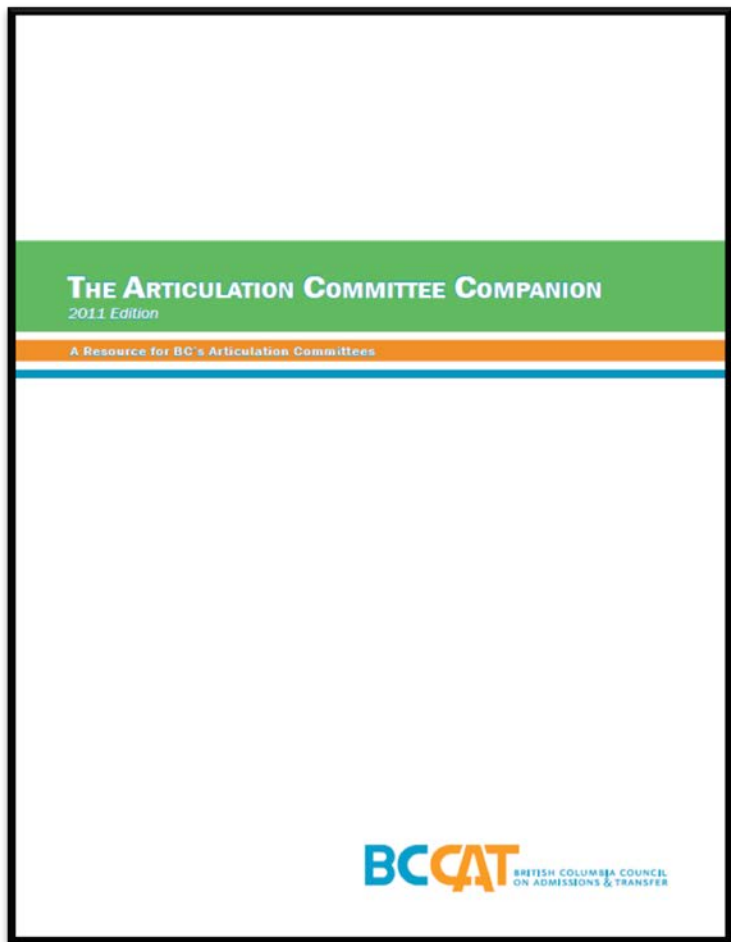
The screenshot shows the BCCAT website with a blue header and orange navigation bar. The 'WHAT'S NEW' section features three articles:

- Engage - Fall-Winter 2011**: A brief review of the Fall/Winter 2011 issue of Engage, discussing the BC Transfer System consultation and updates on Education Planner and other projects. Includes a 'Download document...' link.
- BCCAT: Then and Now**: A commemorative article for BCCAT's 100th meeting, featuring reflections from Dr. Dan Birch, Dr. John Dennison, Ms. Finola Finlay, and Dr. Frank Gelin. Includes a 'Download document' link.
- Transfer Credit Appeals in BC Post-Secondary Institutions (Special Report)**: A report describing policy and process steps for students to appeal credit transfer decisions. Includes a 'Download document...' link.
- Flexible Pre-Majors: Final Report of the FPM Working Group**: A final report developed by the Flexible Pre-Major (FPM) Working Group, intended as a reference and guide for articulation committees. Includes a 'Download document...' link.

On the right, there is a large 'engage' banner for the Fall-Winter 2011 issue, a 'CONTACT US' section with address and contact information, and links to 'EDUCATIONPLANNER.CA' and 'BCTRANSFERGUIDE.CA'.

# Resources and Guidebooks

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- ▶ *Articulation Committee Companion, 2011* [under review]
- ▶ *How to Articulate Handbook, 2013*
  - ▶ Online Articulation Information Centre in development
- ▶ *New Members Resource Book, 2010*
- ▶ *Best Practice Guide for Receiving Institutions, 2008* [under review]





# BCCAT Website: educationplanner.ca

The screenshot shows the Education Planner website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Search', 'Plan', 'Confirm', and 'Save & Share' tabs. The 'Search' tab is active. Below the navigation bar, there's a large image of the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology. To the right of the image, there's a search bar with the text 'Enter search text' and a 'Search Programs' button. Below the search bar, there's a section titled 'Search' with a 'By Program' dropdown and a 'Search' button. To the left of the search bar, there's a 'Plan' section with a 'By Words' dropdown and a 'Search' button. Below the search bar, there's a 'Confirm' section with a 'Who Offers What' dropdown and a 'Search' button. Below the search bar, there's a 'Save & Share' section with a 'Try WOW credential search game' button. Below the search bar, there's a 'Learn how to use the Education Planner' section with a '7 Steps to Get You Started' button. Below the search bar, there's a 'BC Post-Secondary Tweets' section with a list of tweets. Below the search bar, there's a 'We Hear You' section with a 'Will you be getting a student loan?' poll and a 'Vote' button. Below the search bar, there's a 'see all results' button.

Education Planner is a publicly funded resource that allows you to compare post-secondary programs in BC. Education Planner helps learners make well-informed decisions about their education and career options.

- ▶ Searchable database of **2,100+ programs** in BC
  - ▶ Public and private institutions, apprenticeships, and graduate programs
- ▶ Saves students from navigating 30+ websites
  - ▶ Links to institutional websites
- ▶ Personalized learning and career plan tools
- ▶ Save and share information through social media
- ▶ Over 1M unique visits in 2012

# BC Transfer System

- ✓ **The most comprehensive and adaptive credit equivalency system in Canada**
- ✓ **A fully automated online network of guaranteed multi-directional credit equivalencies**
- ✓ **Significant savings for students and government by facilitating cost-efficient graduation**
- ✓ **Effective in mitigating student attrition and facilitating multiple student pathways to credential completion**
- ✓ **Enables credit equivalency across public and private post-secondary member institutions**

*“Not coincidentally, BC and Alberta have the most highly developed transfer systems in the country, and the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) could be a model for ONCAT.”*

Trick et al. (2012), *Academic Reform: Policy Options for . . . Education in Ontario*



# Questions and Discussion

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[bccat.ca](http://bccat.ca)

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