

Research Results

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Mobility of BC Transfer Students – Fall 2007 to Calendar Year 2008

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Introduction

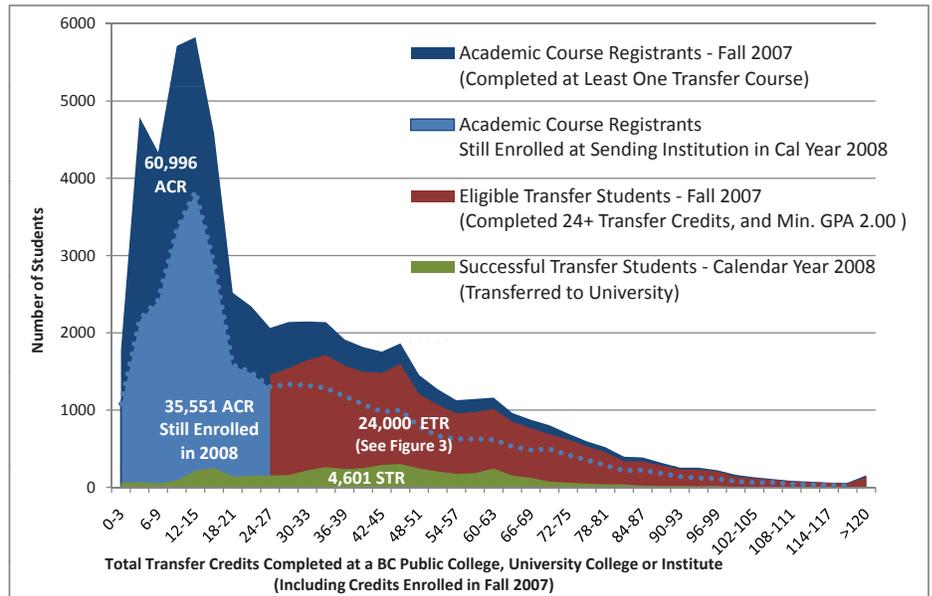
This newsletter highlights research results on the Mobility of Transfer Students (MTS), a branch of research conducted under the auspices of the Student Transitions Project (STP). In this annual study, students enrolled in the Fall of 2007 in BC colleges, university colleges¹, and institutes were followed into calendar year 2008 to identify those who transferred to a BC university, including information about their transfer credits, academic qualifications, and movement between programs and institutions. This information is also used to make predictions on the expected volume and destinations of transfer students in calendar year 2009.

Volume of Transfer Students

In this study, students are classified according to their likelihood of transfer to a BC university (see **Definitions** on page 3). There are three groups of students identified in this research:

- 1. Academic Course Registrants (ACR).** In the Fall of 2007, a total of 60,996 students were taking at least one university transferable course in a BC public college, university college¹, or institute (see **Figures 1 and 4**). This is a relatively large and broadly defined group, but monitoring this group does provide a leading indicator on the expected volume of Eligible Transfer Students (described below). More than half (61%) of the Academic Course Registrants have taken fewer than 24 transfer credits. In addition, many of these students completed some university transfer courses as part of an applied or career program, with no intention of transferring to a BC university.
- 2. Eligible Transfer Students (ETR).** There are 24,000 students in this group, a subset of the 60,996 Academic Course Registrants. These students have sufficient transfer courses (24 credits or more) and academic qualifications (grade point aver-

Figure 1: Transfer Students by Credit Volume



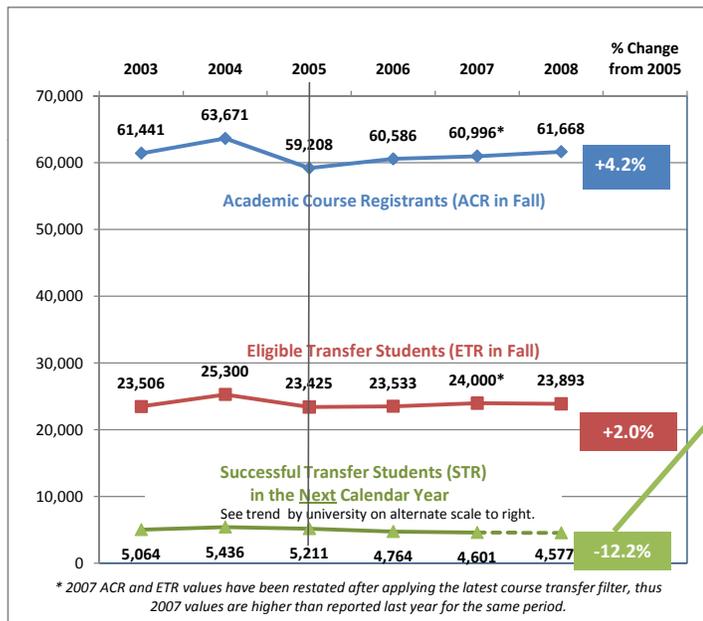
age of 2.00 or higher) to seek university admission, although not all who are eligible will seek admission to a BC university.

- 3. Successful Transfer Students (STR).** A total of 4,601 students transferred from a BC college, university college, or institute to a BC university in calendar year 2008 with BC College or Associate Degree as a basis of admission. Of these, 3,715 were enrolled at their sending institution in Fall 2007 and 886 last enrolled prior to Fall 2007.

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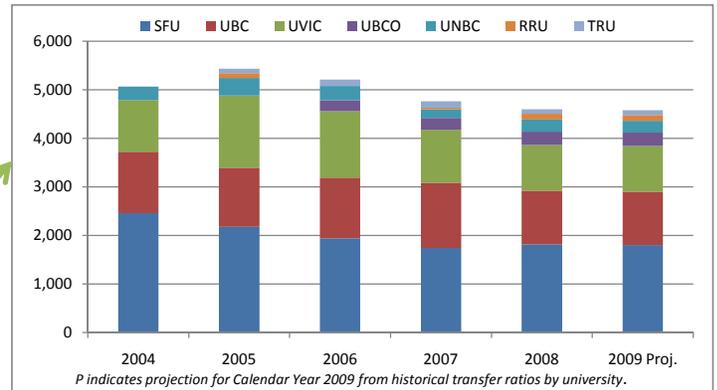
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Figure 2: Trends in Academic Course Registrants and Eligible Transfer Students (Fall 2003 to Fall 2008) and Successful Transfer Students to University in the Next Calendar Year (2004 to 2009)



SUCCESSFUL TRANSFER STUDENTS, BY CALENDAR YEAR AND DESTINATION UNIVERSITY

Year	SFU	UBC	UVic	UBCO	UNBC	RRU	TRU	TOTAL STR
2004	2,463	1,258	1,071	-	272	-	-	5,064
2005	2,180	1,214	1,486	-	362	102	92	5,436
2006	1,944	1,249	1,365	226	294	0	133	5,211
2007	1,744	1,339	1,094	241	182	34	130	4,764
2008	1,814	1,105	946	273	248	120	95	4,601
2009P	1,805	1,099	941	272	247	119	95	4,577
Chg '06 - '09P	-139	-150	-424	+46	-47	+119	-38	-634
Proj. % Chg.	-7.2%	-12.0%	-31.1%	20.4%	-16.1%	N/A	-28.9%	-12.2%



Transfer Student Trends and Predictions

The volume of Academic Course Registrants and Eligible Transfer Students in British Columbia reached its lowest point in the Fall of 2005; however, by the Fall of 2008, this decline has been almost completely restored. As shown in **Figure 2**, a 4.2% increase in Academic Course Registrants and a 2.0% increase in Eligible Transfer Students have resulted in student volumes in these two groups surpassing Fall 2003 levels and approaching the peak volumes of Fall 2004.

The trend in Successful Transfer Students has been moving in the opposite direction: in calendar year 2008, the volume of students transferring to BC universities declined 3% (-163 students over the previous year), and in the three years from calendar year 2006 to calendar year 2008, the volume of students transferring to BC universities has declined 11.7%, with an overall decline estimated to reach -12.2% by the end of calendar year 2009, all other conditions being equal. These anticipated declines from calendar year 2006 to 2009 tend to vary across BC universities, with the University of Victoria showing the largest anticipated decline (-31%) and UBC, Okanagan showing an increase (+20%).

As a result of increases in the volume of Eligible Transfer Students coinciding with decreases in the volume of Successful Transfer Students to university, the transfer ratio (or STR/ETR) has declined to 19%² this year, from the peak of 23% in calendar year 2005. The Mobility of Transfer Students (MTS) Subcommittee is interested in these trends, especially in light of recent changes to institution designations in BC.

The Subcommittee will continue to monitor and report this information in future.

Destinations of Eligible Transfer Students by Credit Volume

The destinations in calendar year 2008 for all 24,000 Eligible Transfer Students from Fall 2007 are summarized by credit volume in **Figures 3 and 4**:

- The largest group (51%) remained at their own institution, increasing from 49% two years ago.
- The next largest group did not enroll the following year, representing 32% of Eligible Transfer Students (12% had a credential and 20% did not).
- A small proportion (4%) switched to another BC public post-secondary college, university college, or institute.
- The remaining Eligible Transfer Students (13%) transferred to university: 11.2% had a college transfer or associate degree basis of admission (these are the Successful Transfer Students or STR's) and 1.3% had a different admission category. Despite being eligible to transfer to university at 24 credits, the peak volume of students transferred with 45 to 48 credits.

Shares of Eligible Transfer Students Staying at their Home Institution Are Increasing

The share of Eligible Transfer Students who remain at their home institution has increased from 49% two years ago to 51% this year. Four institutions (all of which were recently designated as Special Purpose Universities) retained more than half of their eligible transfer students in calendar year 2008: Thompson

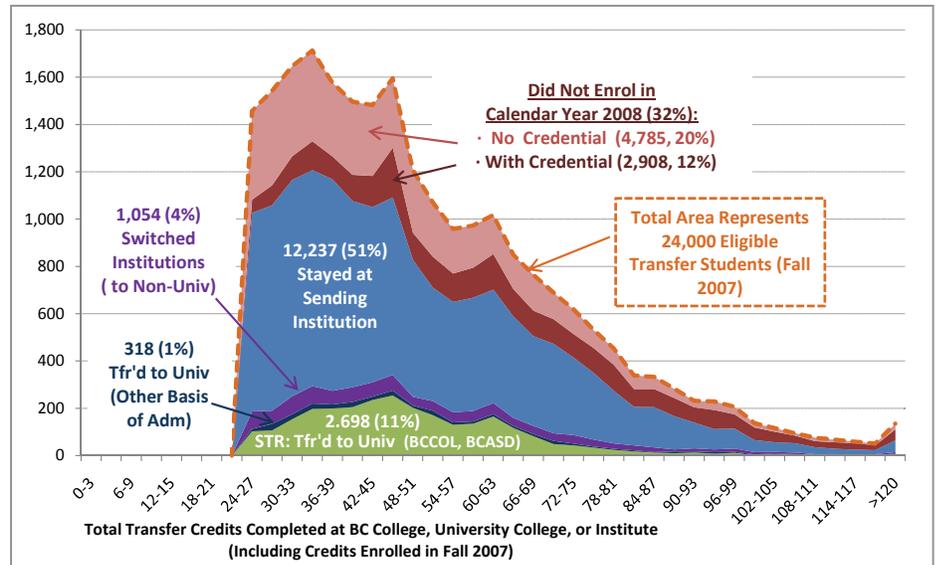
Rivers University (66%), Vancouver Island University (65%), University of the Fraser Valley (65%), and Kwantlen Polytechnic University (55%). Each of these institutions, plus other large BC institutions (with at least 1,000 ETR's), retained roughly 2% to 3% more of their ETR's this year, relative to two years ago. Only one notable exception was identified: Okanagan College retained a smaller share of Eligible Transfer Students this year (41%) compared to two years ago (57%), as more students are now transferring from Okanagan College to UBC, Okanagan.

Eligible Transfer Students by Program

The largest proportion (11,580 or 48%) of the 24,000 Eligible Transfer Students in Fall 2007, were enrolled in an Arts and Sciences program at their home institution. Business and Management is the second largest source of Eligible Transfer Students, representing 6,224 students or 26% of all Eligible Transfer Students in Fall 2007.

The Transfer Ratio (19%), or the number of Successful Transfer Students in Calendar Year 2008 expressed as a proportion of Fall 2007 Eligible Transfer Students, is much higher for students in some programs than others (see Figure 5). For example, the Transfer Ratio is relatively high for students enrolled in Engineering, Electrical, and Electronics (49% of 250 ETR's) and Arts and Sciences (28% of 11,580 ETR's). By comparison, only 7% of 6,224 Eligible Transfer Students in Business and Management actually transferred to a university, suggesting that Business students are completing their credential at their home institutions (Figure 5 shows that 57% of Business students remained enrolled at their home institution).

Figure 3: Destinations of Fall 2007 Eligible Transfer Students in Calendar Year 2008, by Credit Volume



* Total STR is 4,601 in calendar year 2008 (19% of ETR), but Figure 3 only includes 2,698 or 11% of students deemed eligible in Fall 2007 (i.e., excluded are STR's from prior terms and STR's who were ineligible in Fall 2007 (with GPA < 2.00 or credits < 24), but subsequently earned more credits or higher GPA during calendar year 2008 to transfer to university).

Of those who did transfer to university, 64% remained in the same program area at university. Students in Nursing (98%), Engineering (83%), and Arts and Sciences (71%) had relatively high rates of transfer to the same program area at university, compared to students in Business and Management (40%).

Among all 24,000 Eligible Transfer Students in 2007, a total of 7,693 students did not enroll the following year. The rationale for not re-enrolling can partially be explained by the fact that 38% of these non-enrollees had obtained a credential from their home institution. The proportion of non-enrollees with a credential tends to vary by program (20% in Arts and Sciences versus 48% in all other program areas combined).

Figure 4: Destinations of Fall 2007 Eligible Transfer Students in Calendar Year 2008, by Credits Earned at Sending Institution

Total Transfer Credits Earned at Sending Institution	ACR: Academic Course Registrants (Fall 2007)	% Distrib of Total ACR Across Credit Ranges	ETR: Eligible Transfer Students (Fall 2007)	Eligible as % of Potential Transfers (ETR/PTR)	STR: Successful Tfr Students to University (CalYr 2008)			Other Transfers to Univ ^c	Left to Other BC Public PSI	Stayed at Sending Institution	% ETR Who Stayed at Sending Institution	% Non-Enrollees With Credential		
					From Fall 2007	From Prior Terms	TOTAL STR							
0	1,754	3%		0%	43	18	61							
1 To 15	24,314	40%		0%	454	163	617							
16 To 30	11,555	19%	4,156	36%	628	186	814	20%	50	177	2,350	57%	1,264	17%
31 To 45	9,471	16%	7,808	82%	1,132	174	1,306	17%	100	327	4,098	52%	2,226	27%
46 To 60	6,356	10%	5,401	85%	876	173	1,049	19%	61	213	2,572	48%	1,740	39%
61 To 75	4,142	7%	3,629	88%	426	112	538	15%	48	177	1,867	51%	1,156	47%
76+	3,404	6%	3,006	88%	156	60	216	7%	59	160	1,350	45%	1,307	66%
Grand Total	60,996	100%	24,000	39%	3,715	886	4,601	19%	318	1,054	12,237	51%	7,693	38%

a) Total credits earned at sending institution includes cumulative credits completed and credits enrolled in for Fall 2007.

b) The 4,601 total Successful Transfer Students (STR) to university in calendar year 2008 includes 1,903 who transferred from prior terms and/or were not deemed "eligible" transfer students in Fall 2007.

c) Other transfers to university include students admitted to university under a basis of admission, other than BC College or BC Associate Degree.

Figure 5: Destinations of Fall 2007 Eligible Transfer Students in Calendar Year 2008, by Sending Program Area

Program at Sending Institution	ETR: Eligible Transfer Students (Fall 2007)	STR: SUCCESSFUL TRANSFER STUDENTS TO UNIVERSITY (BCCOL and BCASD's in Calendar Year 2008)										Other Transfers to Univ. ^c	Left to Other BC Public PSI	Stayed at Sending Institution	% Who Stayed at Sending Institution	Did Not Enrol (CalYr 2008)	% Non-Enrollees With Credential
		SFU	UBC	UVIC	UBCO	UNBC	RRU	TRU	TOTAL STR	Tfr Ratio (STR/ETR)	% Tfr to Same Pgm Area						
Engineering, Elec., Electronics	250	14	68	26	7	2	4	1	122	49%	83%	16	6	88	35%	84	52%
Arts and Sciences	11,580	1,342	850	586	238	155	16	57	3,244	28%	71%	203	582	5,407	47%	3,410	20%
Nursing	865	2	3	149 ^a	2	30	0	1	187	22%	98% ^a	31	29	594	69%	150	35%
Legal and Social	1,675	148	4	45	1	8	9	1	216	13%	43%	9	57	919	55%	540	51%
Other	2,376	62	59	74	12	14	38	14	273	12%	n/a	23	128	1,221	51%	907	52%
Visual, Perf. and Fine Arts	1,030	19	49	41	2	3	0	3	117	11%	47%	7	74	472	46%	401	44%
Business and Management	6,224	227	72	25	11	36	53	18	442	7%	40%	29	178	3,536	57%	2,201	55%
Grand Total	24,000	1,814	1,105	946	273	248	120	95	4,601	19%	64%	318	1,054	12,237	51%	7,693	38%

- a) Of the 149 students who transferred from nursing to UVic, 148 were classified in "unknown" programs. These students are assumed to have entered "nursing" at UVic.
- b) ** Indicates that values below 5 have been masked.
- c) Other transfers to university include students admitted to university under a basis of admission, other than BC College or BC Associate Degree.
- d) The 4,601 total Successful Transfer Students (STR) to university in calendar year 2008 includes 1,903 who transferred from prior terms and/or were not deemed "eligible" transfer students in Fall 2007.

Conclusion and Looking Ahead

The declining pool of Academic Course Registrants and Eligible Transfer Students has recovered in BC and will likely continue to rise along with overall enrollments in the province; however, the number of students who transfer to university continues to decline. These trends likely reflect the recent changes in the BC public post-secondary environment, including the recent creation of special purpose universities and further expansion of degree programs in the non-university sector, resulting in more options for degree completion.

Given the recent changes in BC's post-secondary landscape and the impact these changes may have on the volume and direction of student movement between all BC public post-secondary institutions, the Mobility of Transfer Students Subcommittee has agreed to revisit its research methodology in 2009/10 to ensure that the reporting and prediction on the volume of transfer students and other student movement between institutions is consistent with the planning needs of BC's post-secondary institutions, government, and other stakeholders interested in post-secondary student mobility.

Definitions

An Academic Course Registrant (ACR) – formerly called Potential Transfer Students or PTR – is any student who is enrolled in or has completed at least one course listed in the BC Transfer Guide. The student's intentions or grades are immaterial for inclusion in the Academic Course Registrant group.

An Eligible Transfer Student (ETR) is any student who is enrolled in or has completed at least 24 credits in courses listed in the BC Transfer Guide and has a GPA of at least 2.00. Not all Eligible Transfer Students will seek university admission in the following year, nor would they necessarily meet specific entrance requirements, but they are more likely to enter university in the subsequent year.

A Successful Transfer Student (STR) is any student who was admitted to university on the basis of having completed a minimum number of credits in courses in a college, university college, or institute that are transferable to BC universities.

This study also uses a **Transfer Ratio** to estimate the subsequent year's (i.e., calendar year 2009) volume of Successful Transfer Students, assuming all other conditions remain unchanged. The Transfer Ratio is the number of Successful Transfer Students divided by the number of Eligible Transfer Students from the previous Fall.

- 1 Institutional designations in this study are those that were in place for the time period of this study (Fall 2003 to Fall 2007 for sending institutions and Calendar Year 2004 to 2008 for receiving institutions).
- 2 The Transfer Ratio (19%) reported here includes BCIT. In some cases, the MTS research excludes BCIT from this ratio because the BCIT's course offerings result in a large number of ETR's with few STR's. If BCIT was excluded, the Transfer Ratio would be 20%.

Mobility of Transfer Students Subcommittee

This study on transfer student mobility was conducted under the auspices of the Student Transitions Project (STP) and was funded by BCCAT as part of its Admissions Committee work plan. Research directions were provided by the Mobility of Transfer Students Subcommittee of STP whose membership includes representatives across post-secondary sectors:

Kathleen Bigsby, Director, Institutional Analysis and Planning, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

Bob Cowin, Director, Institutional Research and Planning, Douglas College

Jacy Lee, Director, Institutional Research and Planning, Simon Fraser University

Hugh Judd, Data Warehouse Coordinator, Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development

Joanne Heslop, Manager, Student Transitions Project

Devron Gaber, Associate Director, BCCAT (Chair)

Jean Karlinski, Research Coordinator, BCCAT

More information is available at: www.aved.gov.bc.ca/student_transitions/mobility-subcommittee.htm

Designated representatives from each of BC's public post-secondary institutions have access to additional information on the mobility of transfer students, including Excel pivot tables and dynamic visual mobility worksheets.