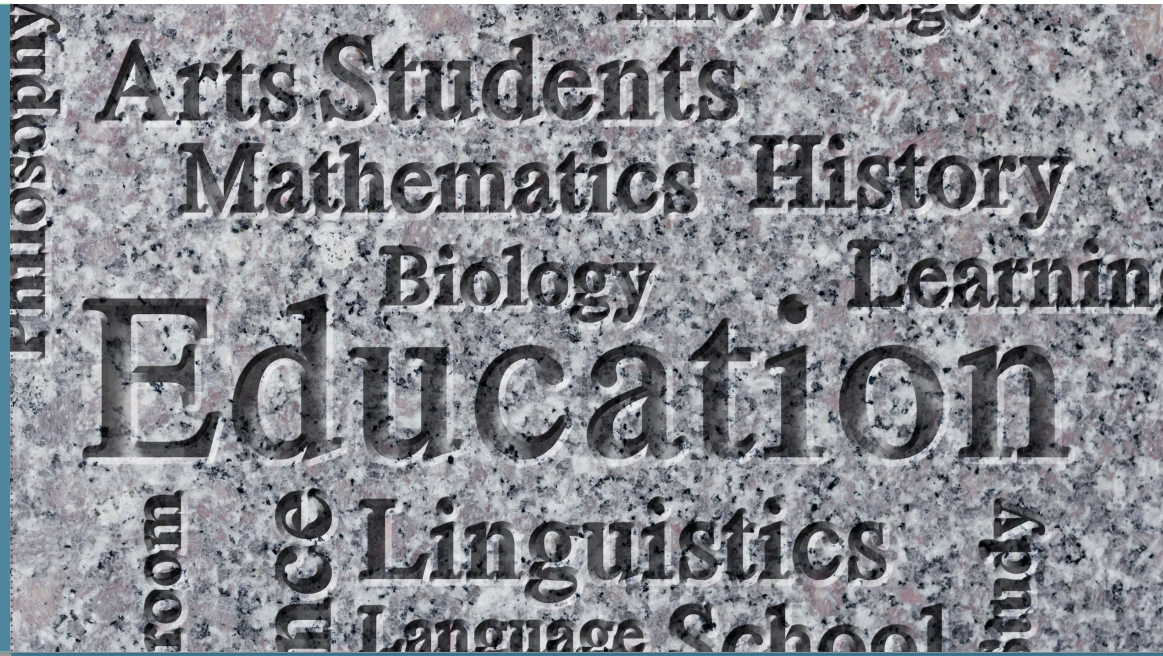


Issues and Challenges in
Interdisciplinary
Course and Program
Transfer in BC

*Prepared for BCCAT by Dr. Michelle Rhodes
January 2019*



BCCAT

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BC COUNCIL ON ADMISSIONS & TRANSFER
709 – 555 Seymour Street, Vancouver BC Canada V6B 3H6
bccat.ca | bctransferguide.ca | 604 412 7700 | info@bccat.ca

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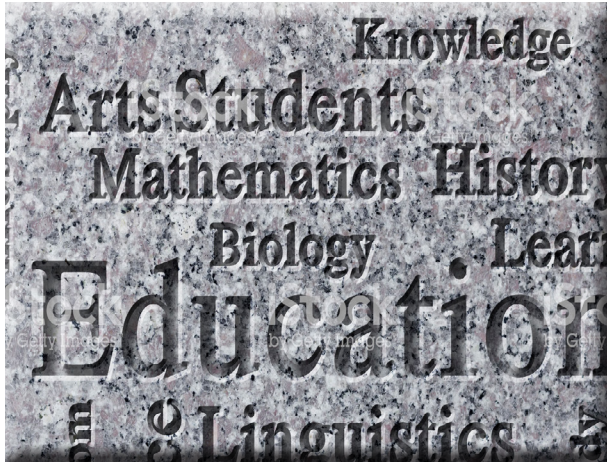
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BC TRANSFER SYSTEM MEMBER INSTITUTIONS

Institution	Code in BCTG Listings
Acsenda School of Management	ASM
Alexander College	ALEX
Athabasca University	AU
BC Institute of Technology	BCIT
Camosun College	CAMO
Capilano University	CAPU
Coast Mountain College	CMTN
College of New Caledonia	CNC
College of the Rockies	COTR
Columbia College	COLU
Coquitlam College	COQU
Corpus Christi College	CCC
Douglas College	DOUG
Emily Carr University of Art and Design	EC
Fairleigh Dickinson University	FDU
Fraser International College	FIC
Justice Institute of BC	JIBC
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	KWAN
Langara College	LANG
LaSalle College Vancouver	LCV
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	NVIT
North Island College	NIC
Northern Lights College	NLC
Okanagan College	OC
Quest University	QU
Royal Roads University	RRU
Selkirk College	SELK
Simon Fraser University	SFU
Thompson Rivers University	TRU
Thompson Rivers University, Open Learning	TRU-OL
Trinity Western University	TWU
University Canada West	UCW
University of BC – Okanagan	UBCO
University of BC – Vancouver	UBC
University of Northern BC	UNBC
University of the Fraser Valley	UFV
University of Victoria	UVIC
Vancouver Community College	VCC
Vancouver Island University	VIU
Yorkville University	YVU
Yukon College	YUKO

NOTE: Non-BC Transfer System member institution referred to in this report:
Columbia Bible College.



Issues and Challenges in

Interdisciplinary Course and Program Transfer in BC

Executive Summary

Interdisciplinary programs have significantly increased in scope and scale over the past several decades, including those in British Columbia. The nature of these programs creates unique challenges for transfer and articulation processes that rely heavily on disciplinary expertise and review; these challenges are complicated by the fact that interdisciplinary programming varies so dramatically in type, structure, and subject matter between institutions. The result is that students moving between institutions and into and out of interdisciplinary programs face added uncertainty in the transfer process.

This study investigated complex organizational and procedural questions related, individually, to interdisciplinarity and transfer, and collectively to interdisciplinary credit transfer and student mobility, with a goal of examining how the forces of transfer and interdisciplinarity interact.

Through a review of course-level transfer patterns in seven program areas, this study found that most interdisciplinary credits will transfer as interdisciplinary credits, but often into different interdisciplinary programs; only in two of the seven program areas selected were interdisciplinary credits more commonly converted to disciplinary credits. Current structures for assessing interdisciplinary transfer credit requests are highly decentralized, with these courses often being sent to multiple departments and faculty before a final evaluation is made. Strategies to reduce this course roulette are needed, although these are ultimately intra-institutional conversations.

Given the complexity and diversity of interdisciplinary curricula, targeted efforts are needed to improve information about the criteria used by each institution in evaluating transfer credits. Evaluation of transfer credit is largely content-driven, with important consideration given to other factors, such as learning outcomes, level of instruction, and assignments and textbooks. To improve credit transfer of interdisciplinary courses, this study proposes a further shift away from this emphasis on content in favour of learning outcomes; implementation of effective structures to facilitate block transfer; and more support for faculty involvement in the transfer credit evaluation process, possibly including support for annual or biannual articulation meetings of representatives of general, liberal and interdisciplinary degree-level programs.

PART I: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Introduction

Interdisciplinary programs have significantly increased in scope and scale over the past several decades (e.g., Katz, 2001; Jacob 2013, Graff, 2015; Mody, 2017), including those in British Columbia. Indeed, Kleinberg (2008, para. 1) argues that “One could even claim that the twenty-first-century university marks the ascension of interdisciplinarity as the dominant educational paradigm.” The Association of American Colleges and Universities (2011, para. 1) refers to “interdisciplinary learning as a 21st century imperative.” The nature of these programs creates unique challenges for transfer and articulation processes that have relied heavily on disciplinary expertise and review.

In BC, where the foundation of transfer and articulation is largely discipline to discipline, interdisciplinary courses and programs challenge existing credit transfer assessment practices. Both because interdisciplinary curriculum can elude easy or clear (re)categorization into disciplinary equivalency during transfer credit evaluation, and interdisciplinary programming varies so dramatically in type, structure and subject matter from one institution to the next. The result is that students moving into and out of interdisciplinary programs and between institutions face added uncertainty in the transfer process.

The question of how interdisciplinary courses and programs transfer presents an immediate and practical problem—one driven by the need to ensure transparency in student transfer. The more complex and subjective question is about how interdisciplinary transfer should occur. For instance, what role should the disciplines—and disciplinary experts (e.g., faculty)—continue to play in the transfer decision-making process? This question is not merely philosophical. It reflects an emerging disconnect between two major trends in Canadian higher education: new interdisciplinary program development—much of which reflects the mix of expertise and talent specific to individual institutions—and increasing levels of student mobility between institutions.

While BC’s post-secondary institutions have continued to develop programming that draws from multiple disciplines, not all of this new programming is equally problematic for student mobility: curriculum structure, course delivery, and program frequency (i.e., how many institutions offer a given program) all affect transferability. Locating inconsistencies in transfer patterns is necessary in order to identify which interdisciplinary programs are most likely to present issues for transfer students. The absence of clear pathways for transfer—and of established practices for addressing interdisciplinary course transfer—can pose conundrums to those institutions that are traditionally engaged in sending functions: community colleges, as well as four-year teaching-intensive institutions that have historically seen many of

The question of how interdisciplinary courses and programs transfer presents an immediate and practical problem, one driven by the need to ensure transparency in student transfer.

their students transfer to larger, research-intensive universities. At institutions that experience a high level of outgoing transfer, the development of interdisciplinary programming may represent a strategy for student recruitment and retention, a more efficient use of resources, or a means of capitalizing on faculty specializations. However, decisions regarding course and program development and structure may also be weighed against transferability considerations.

This report examines the patterns of inter-institutional transfer at the course and program levels in interdisciplinary fields. The primary purpose of this research project is to investigate transfer pathways for interdisciplinary curricula that have developed between institutions within the BC Transfer System. Institutions outside the BC Transfer System are not included as part of this study.

Specifically, this report addresses the following questions:

- How do interdisciplinary courses and programs transfer between institutions, and how fluid is this process?
- How are interdisciplinary courses and programs that are unique to institutions assessed by institutions receiving transfer requests? and
- What possible roles could BCCAT play in supporting interdisciplinary transfer and articulation?

A fourth question, examining who is responsible at institutions for assessing courses and programs that do not fit cleanly within disciplines, had to be abandoned due to methodological problems, which will be addressed briefly in the final section (see “Opportunities for Further Research”).

This research utilizes quantitative data from course-level and block transfer articulations, as well as qualitative data from surveys of participants in interdisciplinary program development and transfer decision-making. Not all interdisciplinary programs offered in BC institutions were included for detailed analysis. Instead, a purposive sample of programs was selected.

Methodology

Existing pathways for interdisciplinary course and credit transfer within the BC Transfer System have not previously been studied in BC. The diversity of interdisciplinary course offerings and program structures complicates attempts to undertake such a study systematically.

This study involves multiple research techniques aimed collectively at providing a nuanced picture of how interdisciplinary curriculum is defined, patterned and assessed in light of transfer and articulation needs. The report comprises the following sections:

- A brief overview of the emergence of interdisciplinary programming in BC post-secondary education, including an examination of the term *interdisciplinary* and the related terms *multidisciplinary*, *transdisciplinary* and *cross-disciplinary*;
- A review of institutional use of the term interdisciplinary in courses, programs and organizational units across the BC Transfer System;

- A quantitative assessment of existing course and program agreements in a sample of program subject areas; and
- A review of transfer data collected for this study, including results of a survey distributed to key informants involved in transfer and articulation of multi- and interdisciplinary programs.

Multi- and interdisciplinary programs exist at most institutions, but the degree to which students transfer between institutions is expected to vary by program. This study does not include or analyze data pertaining to the volume of current student transfers in or between these programs.

This study is not concerned with promoting interdisciplinarity or advocating for new interdisciplinary programming, the merits and structure of which are for individual institutions to assess. It is also beyond the scope of this study to answer the question of who or what should drive transfer of interdisciplinary curricula. Such questions will require a longer process of consultation among institutional leaders, articulation committees and the broader post-secondary community.

In order to understand how interdisciplinary courses and programs are currently reflected in the transfer process in BC, a quantitative assessment of existing course and program agreements was completed as part of this study. Data collection included identification and assessment of course-by-course credit agreements and block transfer agreements (BTAs) for a sample set of program subject areas, selected through purposive sampling to capture a wide range of relevant transfer activity, as follows:

- Programs featuring the term “interdisciplinary” (or similar) in their title;
- Subject areas of both great and less frequency of offering by BC institutions;
- Subject areas of both long standing and emerging fields in BC; and
- Both applied and more traditional liberal arts program areas.

Using these criteria, seven program subject areas were identified for inclusion in both course-level transfer credit and program-level block transfer review, as follows:

1. Arts, Humanities and Unspecified Interdisciplinary Studies
2. Asian Studies
3. Environmental and Resource Programs
4. Gender/Women’s and Sexuality Studies
5. Global/International Studies
6. Indigenous/First Nations Studies
7. Peace/Social Justice Studies

Data were collected from late June through early August 2017, using the BC Transfer Guide (www.bctransferguide.ca). A partial list of courses was also initially provided to the researcher by BCCAT.

Table 1 identifies the scope of inclusion of available data at both course and program levels.

TABLE 1: The Scope of the Quantitative BC Transfer Guide Data Collection

Subject Area	Course-Level Agreements Included	Program-Level Agreements (BTAs) Included
Arts, Humanities and Unspecified Interdisciplinary Studies	All	All
Asian Studies	All	All
Environmental and		
Resource Programs	Selective sample of 100- and 200-level courses	Excluded forestry, earth sciences, environmental health programs
Gender/Women's and Sexuality Studies	All	All
Global/International Studies	All	All
Indigenous/First Nations Studies	All	All
Peace/Social Justice Studies	All	All

A brief overview of the development and prevalence in BC of each of these selected program subject areas appears later in this report.

Defining Interdisciplinarity

No consensus exists as to the best way to define interdisciplinarity. The term has been used to describe a wide diversity of curricula and research program arrangements and goals. It has been applied to programs that have both long had or only recently assumed disciplinary stature within institutions (such as geography and communications) further complicates matters.

The simplest definitions of interdisciplinarity speak to the synthesis or integration of at least two disciplinary fields, often to address a central question or problem (Newell & Klein, 1996; Simon & Graybill, 2010). Klein (1999, p. 9) differentiates between instrumental interdisciplinarity, which is conducted in pursuit of a particular purpose, and critical interdisciplinarity, which involves efforts to “restructure knowledge in fields of practice.” This latter form involves a more seamless “intermingling [of] disciplinary knowledge to the extent that no one discipline is recognizable” (Reybold & Halx, 2012, p. 325).

Interdisciplinarity in all its forms relies on the involvement of disciplinary expertise. In seemingly contradictory fashion, interdisciplinary curricula and research exist both in opposition to disciplinary identity and as natural extensions of disciplinary practice. Interdisciplinarity seeks to transcend the “natural” limits of each contributing discipline, integrating theoretical and methodological approaches drawn from multiple fields. Within an interdisciplinary course, for instance, a learner should recognize that environmental, cultural, and social challenges cannot be easily addressed through a single discipline alone, but instead inherently require a diversity of approaches (National Academy of Sciences, 2004). Thus, interdisciplinary practice is often an expressed rejection of the perceived creation of silos within the institution (Jacobs, 2013).

It is often suggested that these silos, organized around established disciplines, stifle innovation and impede problem-solving, whereas interdisciplinarity, as a predictable result of both academic tradition in general and disciplinary evolution more specifically, is innovative and creative. To understand how this is so requires consideration of how disciplines are conceived, nurtured and transformed. As disciplines build their own internal specializations, and as practitioners build relationships with academics in other disciplines based on these shared interests, interdisciplinary practice and theory can emerge. As Graff (2015, p. 5) argues, “Interdisciplinarity is part of the historical making and ongoing re-shaping of modern disciplines.” This process is circular, as new interdisciplinarity represents learning opportunities for the disciplines, challenging and expanding them to incorporate more diverse components into their own curriculum and research. Interdisciplinary cross-fertilization is symptomatic of institutions in transition, growing and diversifying over time and around new lines of inquiry. As Klein (1999, p. 17) notes, “it is a both/and, not an either/or world.” Interdisciplinary opportunities extend from shared and unifying themes and priorities. All academics are engaged in a constant process of exploratory thinking and practice; such emergence of new connections and directions is central to the process of knowledge construction and core to the purpose of post-secondary institutions.

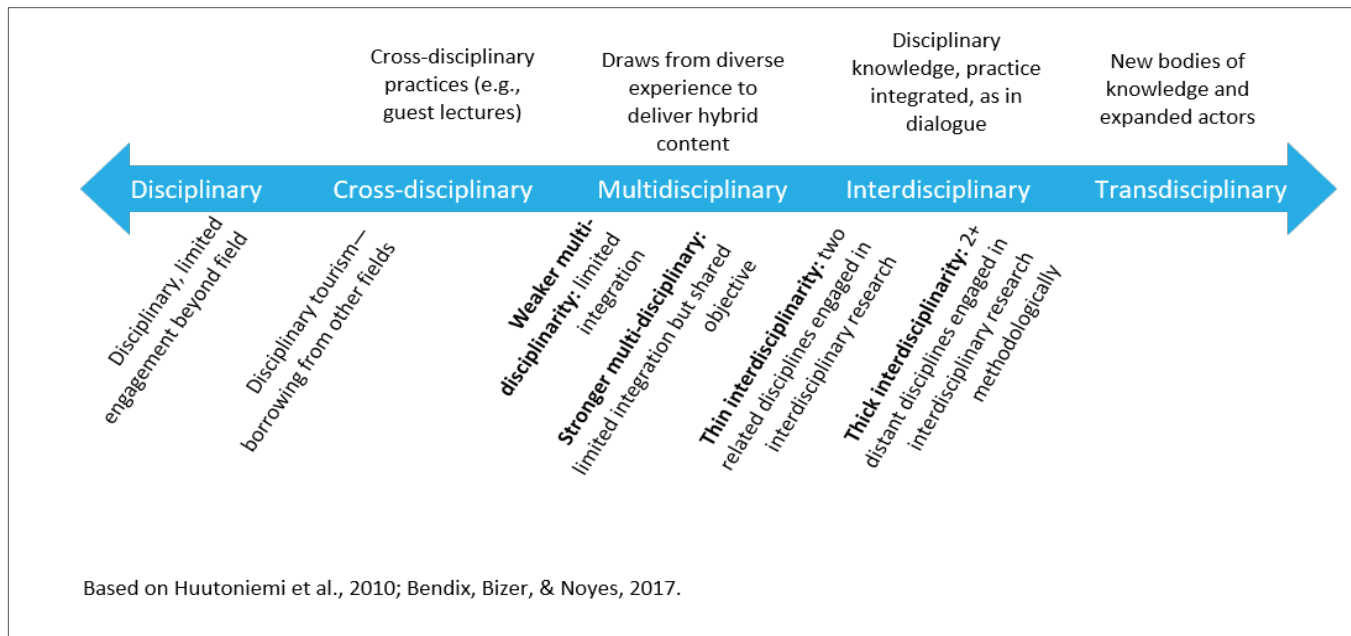
One timely example of this process playing out in Canada relates to Indigenous studies programs, which are growing in number and scope. Even basic knowledge of Indigenous epistemologies, methodologies, and pedagogies are absent from most disciplines (Augustus, 2015); deeper processes of decolonization are more fully explored within dedicated Indigenous studies programs and selectively within a handful of disciplinary and other interdisciplinary programs. As Canadian universities and colleges rise to meet their responsibilities in light of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, both by implementing Indigenization guidelines and processes and by supporting the growth of Indigenous studies programs, disciplines will have to reflect on how their bodies of theory and practice may be stretched and reshaped.

Pre-professional areas of study—many of which often have interdisciplinary roots—are not typically classified as interdisciplinary when data are collected on program type and enrollment. Nonetheless, as fields like communications and criminology show, the line between interdisciplinary and pre-professional is fuzzy, if not altogether absent. Pre-professional programs, sometimes referred to as “applied” programs, are designed to support students planning for a particular career field. Many but not all are interdisciplinary in nature; those that are represent one strong and highly organized expression of a particular type of interdisciplinary practice—that focused on addressing a common set of problems and practices related to specific industries or professions. They involve multiple methodological approaches, and are often informed by a diversity of disciplinary practices.

Finally, it is useful to think of disciplinarity as existing along a spectrum, as seen below in [Figure 1](#).

Interdisciplinarity in all its forms relies on the involvement of disciplinary expertise. In seemingly contradictory fashion, interdisciplinary curricula and research exist both in opposition to disciplinary identity and as natural extensions of disciplinary practices.

FIGURE 1: Spectrum of Integration for Plural Disciplinary Curricula



More undergraduate courses and programs are likely to be classified as cross-disciplinary or multidisciplinary than as interdisciplinary. Cross-disciplinary engagement, at one end of the spectrum, has the lowest degree of integration among disciplines: students benefit from exposure to multiple and possibly contrasting disciplinary perspectives on a topic, often through guest lectures, films or other supports, but the level of integration with other disciplinary material is low or absent.

At the mid-point on the spectrum is multidisciplinary, the most common and recognizable form of integration of disciplines within undergraduate course and program delivery. Multidisciplinary courses and programs are structured so as to pool knowledge and begin developing informational linkages between different disciplinary contributions (Huutoniemi, Klein, Bruun, & Huukinen, 2010); they use a structural organization that can be managed through already-familiar tools, such as team-teaching. In its weakest forms, multidisciplinary does not necessarily attempt to utilize shared or fused approaches to research, or to pursue shared or fused analysis of findings (Huutoniemi et al., 2010); in somewhat strong forms, multidisciplinary leads to a plurality of perspectives being presented together, as the best way for students to understand the nature of a central problem. Methodologies are more likely to remain distinct, and the different perspectives and approaches are more likely to be delivered by disciplinary specialists in discipline-specific courses. For example, a first-year multidisciplinary seminar course that explores the topic of vampires in popular culture may be team-taught by an historian, an anthropologist and an English instructor.

Finally, transdisciplinarity, at the furthest end of the spectrum, embraces full integration when possible. Researchers work not only to solve a problem, but also to consider the inseparability of the problem's constituent parts; they seek out the spaces and information between the disciplines (Bernstein, 2015). Integration, in other words, occurs at all stages of the research process, and this can result in the erasure of boundaries between the academy and non-academic populations. Indigenous and community-based learning, the practice of citizen science, and participatory action research are examples of such linked practices.

In this report, interdisciplinary transfer patterns are assessed using the definitions below.

Cross-disciplinary: Course-level curriculum that is primarily single discipline but that introduces other disciplinary content or approach(es) to a given question. Learners are asked to consider a problem in light of these perspectives but the perspectives are not meaningfully integrated. Often taught by single (disciplinary) instructor.

Multidisciplinary: Courses and programs that incorporate distinct disciplinary theories and concepts from two or more fields. At the course level, multidisciplinary usually involves differentiated activities (lecture, labs, exercises) within the classroom. Disciplinary elements remain separate and independent of one another, even when linked. At the course level, commonly team-taught.

Interdisciplinary: Courses and programs in which a diversity of tools, concepts, and theories from two or more fields are integrated to such a point that they cannot be extricated from one another easily. The product of this integrative approach is unique from what would be generated collectively by the contributing disciplines acting alone. Interdisciplinary courses may be identified as special topics or university seminar or capstone courses.

Transdisciplinary: Courses and programs reflective of a movement that rejects the use of disciplines as the starting point and organizing framework for knowledge development, and involves bringing in “political, social, and economic actors, as well as ordinary citizens” into the research process (Darbellay, 2015).

The Growth of Interdisciplinarity and Multidisciplinary Programs in North America

The increasing development of interdisciplinary programs has occurred as a response to a combination of changes occurring within and acting upon higher education. In some cases, interdisciplinary programs are nearly as old as some disciplines most commonly found in colleges and universities. Disciplinary structures began to solidify within North American universities during the late 19th and first half of the 20th centuries. Peterson (2008, p. 42) writes, “In this sudden transformative surge, college curricula both expanded and became fragmented into many separate pieces.” As part of this surge, interdisciplinary programs emerged to address new areas of research and problem solving (Klein, 2014), including urban studies and international relations (Frickel & Ilhan, 2017; Jacobs, 2013).

Seemingly more established or older disciplines evolved during this time from hybridization of previously unique areas of study—in other words, they were among the first interdisciplinary fields. Biology, for instance, “claimed to be the science of life” but was the result of mergers among botany, physiology and zoology (Graff, 2015, p. 21). Today, these areas are often viewed as subfields rather than as parent fields of biology. “Humanities” claims status as both an umbrella for multiple disciplines (philosophy, classics, history) and, somewhat contradictorily, as a separate integrated, interdisciplinary field. The emergence of criminology and communications out of sociology during this time reflects an increasingly professionalized and applied orientation among some interdisciplinary offshoots (Graff, 2015; Jacobs, 2013).

By the 1960s, new interdisciplinary directions were established in women's, ethnic and environmental studies, as well as in different area studies (e.g., American Studies, European Studies). Women's studies in particular emerged as a critique of existing disciplinary approaches, in response to the neglect of women's contributions to various fields, and out of growing political civil rights and anti-imperialist activism (Jacobs, 2013; Katz, 2001; Newell & Klein, 1996; Peterson, 2008). During this period, cultural studies scholars began investigating the diverse approaches aligned with social history and theory, textualism and identity. These practitioners rejected easy categorization and contested traditional models of humanities and liberal arts curricula while building arguments for transformative social change (Graff, 2015).

The development of research and curricula in interdisciplinary sciences usually reflected an approach built upon cross-disciplinary co-operation and collaboration. Adopting such an approach allowed researchers to tackle emerging environmental, health, and psychosocial challenges and questions that emerged out of the anxieties of the Cold War era (Mody, 2017). Cognitive science pulled together researchers from fields such as psychology, linguistics, anthropology and neuroscience (Graff, 2015). Growing concerns over profound ecological changes and the impact of technology on ecosystems contributed to the development of environmental and, later, sustainability studies and sciences (AACU 2011; Newell & Klein, 1996; Simon & Graybill, 2010), while new engineering and chemical nanotechnologies allowed for the growth of material science (Graff, 2015).

The number of interdisciplinary programs in North America has continued to grow, albeit at a somewhat slower pace than seen fifty years ago; and such programs continue to evolve, as evidenced by the revisioning of many women's studies programs, many of which have expanded to address research and curricula that encompasses "the nature of masculinity as well as femininity[,] ... sexuality [and] ... questions involving gay and transgendered experiences" (Jacobs, 2013, p. 211). University of British Columbia's (UBC) undergraduate major in Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice reflects the convergence of multiple trends in interdisciplinarity witnessed from the 1960s on, interlinking conversations about decolonization, textual studies, regional dimensions, and cultural identities and positionalities.

Concurrently, pre-professional and applied programs—many of which often have interdisciplinary roots—have also multiplied in number and scope. Jacobs (2013, p. 204) notes that "applied fields are prone to a high degree of splintering, that is, a tendency to subdivide internally."

The Growth of Interdisciplinarity and Multidisciplinary Programs in BC

BC's post-secondary education system reflects national and North American trends in the development of interdisciplinary undergraduate curricula. The scope of interdisciplinary curricula within institutions varies widely, depending on institution size, mandate, geography and history; however, most interdisciplinary curricula development has been thematic in nature.

As in other provinces, the post-secondary sector in BC is affected by two contradictory forces: first, a push to reduce program duplication across the college and university system; and second, a desire by teaching-intensive universities and some colleges to increase their profile, number of programs delivered, and student enrolments. Multi- and interdisciplinary programming is one response to the call for differentiation. These programs utilize existing resources in

potentially new ways, but within the practical limits created by workload, pressures of transfer (for colleges in particular), and limited financial resources.

About half of BC public institutions (12 out of 25) offer non-thematic interdisciplinary studies credentials and courses (Table 2), and a few organize their interdisciplinary programs into dedicated organizational units (e.g., schools or centres). Most interdisciplinary curricula development is thematic in nature: only six of the BC Transfer System member institutions offer interdisciplinary credits that are not specific to a thematic program area.

TABLE 2: Dedicated Interdisciplinary Studies Programs, Courses and Departments in BC Institutions

Interdisciplinary Studies Credential or Major	Interdisciplinary Studies Courses	Dedicated Interdisciplinary Studies Departments/Offices
Capilano (Liberal Studies)	Camosun (IDS)	
Quest (Bachelor of Arts and Sciences)	Capilano (LBST)	Langara
Royal Roads (BA)	Douglas (IDST)	Okanagan College
Selkirk (Diploma)*	Royal Roads (INDS)	Royal Roads (College)
TRUUBC Vancouver (BA major)*	TRU (IDIS)	University of Victoria
UNBC (graduate only)	UFV (IDS)	

* As per the definitions used in this study, the UBC BA major in Interdisciplinary Studies and the Selkirk Diploma in Interdisciplinary Studies are multidisciplinary programs. They do not include mandatory interdisciplinary coursework.

Table 2 does not include interdisciplinary studies programs or departments with a specific focus (e.g., leisure studies, Asian studies, gender studies), although these more specialized programs may be managed within an interdisciplinary studies department.

The larger, research-intensive institutions (e.g., UBC, SFU, UVic) have the greatest capacity to develop interdisciplinary programming. This is partially a result of both faculty diversity—which allows for (while not guaranteeing) disciplinary boundary jumping—and the flexibility to pursue and support interdisciplinary research that is reflected in curricula. Smaller institutions may be able to develop multi- and interdisciplinary programs that support regional needs or reflect historic concentrations of faculty expertise (such as with Capilano University’s Music Therapy degree program and Selkirk College’s Peace and Justice Studies program). However, a student seeking a major in a specialized interdisciplinary field, such as Medieval Studies, would be limited to UBC or similar-sized institutions.

BC’s most interdisciplinary institutions, measured as a percentage of the regularly offered curriculum, are Quest University and Royal Roads University. Quest is also one of the newest private institutions in the province—it is a non-profit, secular school offering an entire curriculum designed from the outset to support interdisciplinarity, incorporating block scheduling and problem-based learning. However, Quest’s student body is relatively small—about 700 students in 2015—and thus, in terms of enrolment numbers, its impact within the BC system is limited.

In contrast, Royal Roads University (RRU) is actively engaged in transfer and articulation through block transfer agreements (BTAs), although it, like Quest, does not maintain course-by-course articulation agreements through the BC Transfer Guide. RRU offers a Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies and a limited number of program areas, all interdisciplinary: environmental studies, business, tourism, communications and justice. RRU offers third- and fourth-year but not lower-level undergraduate courses; its interdisciplinarity provides it with the institutional flexibility to provide students who have completed two years of undergraduate study with laddering opportunities that are far less fixed in structure than they would be if RRU's majors were single discipline.

Colleges and teaching-intensive universities offer interdisciplinary courses and sometimes full programs as well, but the numbers of these are held in check by several forces. BC's colleges provide courses and programs for a wide diversity of student types, including a large percentage who will not continue on to complete a degree. This is consistent with college systems in the rest of Canada and the US (Walker, 1999; Lundberg, 2012; Marshall, 2008). University transfer constitutes only a piece of the program mix at these colleges, and demand for college programs is often linked to geography, since students are less likely to travel for college-based programs (Milian, Davies, & Zafira, 2016). In contrast to many other North American post-secondary systems, including Canada's largest—Ontario—BC and Alberta “view the college and university system as more of a continuum” (Marshall, 2008, p. 9), and college curricula designed for university transfer demonstrates a high conformity with program requirements and the “professional norms” (Milian et al., 2016, p. 27) of the disciplines in place at nearby universities.

The desire exists among teaching-intensive universities and colleges to develop more innovative, interdisciplinary programming for many reasons, including evolving ideas about student learning pathways and needs (Lundberg, 2012). Another factor is also faculty training: increasingly, college and university instructors have engaged in interdisciplinary research as part of their own graduate work. The push for differentiation among institutions and programs and competition for students has also meant the development of new multi- and interdisciplinary course options. Further, as the larger research institutions have continued to build new programming, colleges have tried to replicate some of this in order to serve their students who continue on through transfer.

BC's private institutions—and specifically faith-based universities—face a different set of challenges related to transfer and interdisciplinarity. Course-by-course transfer can be more difficult when the originating institution is strongly faith-based and religious instruction is integrated into disciplinary courses—itsself arguably a form of interdisciplinarity. In such cases, block transfer arrangements are potentially more effective in supporting transfer. For instance, Columbia Bible College (CBC)—which sits outside the BC Transfer System—integrates religious thought into almost all of its courses, and as a result, these courses would transfer to its nearest neighbour, UFV, as RELS—religious studies courses, or as GE (general elective) credits, regardless of disciplinary content. To facilitate a transfer pathway, the two institutions recently developed a block transfer arrangement to allow students from CBC to move into UFV's Bachelor of General Studies (BGS) program; this has involved the development at CBC of courses that have more secular content.

A Brief Overview of Selected Interdisciplinary Programs in BC

A brief overview of the development and prevalence in BC of the seven program subject areas selected for this report follows. Most interdisciplinary programs are organizationally and theoretically situated, at least in part, in arts programs; unsurprisingly, then, most program subject areas selected for analysis are arts-dominant.

Arts, Humanities and Interdisciplinary Studies

The broadest category is that of arts, humanities and interdisciplinary studies, including liberal studies. As a whole, these courses do not adopt a particular subject area or problem. Arts and humanities courses are more narrowly defined by their inclusion of methodologies, theories, and concepts drawn, respectively, from the broad scope of arts fields and, more specifically, from humanities disciplines. The results can be courses that are broad in their content. Douglas College, for instance, offers two very different courses using the HUMS prefix: HUMS 1400 is an interdisciplinary urban studies course, while HUMS 2274 explores “The Nature of the Sacred”. Courses designated as interdisciplinary rather than as humanities or liberal arts are more likely to incorporate material from outside of the humanities and social sciences.

Asian Studies

Asian studies were among the most dominant form of interdisciplinary programs in the 1960s-1980s, but their popularity has waned since then. Like other area studies programs (e.g., Canadian studies, South Asian studies, American studies), BC’s Asian studies programs developed in response to both academic interest and the cultural and economic needs of post-secondary institutional catchment areas. Asian studies programs are in place at Camosun, KPU, Langara, UBC and UVic. (UFV has a small South Asian studies program, but it draws almost entirely from contributing disciplines and thus is not included here.) Nonetheless, the distribution of Asian studies programs in the province—with a heavy concentration in the Lower Mainland and Victoria—reflects the significance of Asian diasporas to these parts of the province.

Area studies programs typically draw heavily from the social sciences and history, as well as (for non-western regional foci) from language courses. (The same is often true for some types of Indigenous programs, which will also integrate language training and study.) BC’s Asian studies programs mirror these tendencies, as does the resulting distribution of transfer credit.

Environmental and Resource Programs

Nearly all BC institutions offer curricula that can be classed as “environmental,” which means that this potential sample is quite large. Environmental programs are now so widespread as to be considered among a core program area for most institutions. Many programs, especially those offered at the colleges, are specialized and pre-professional in nature, while most of those offered at a university draw upon traditional arts, sciences, engineering, planning and/or pre-professional fields. Within the last category, significant differences are found among Environmental Studies, Natural Resource Protection, Environmental Engineering, Environmental Science, and Resource and Environmental Management areas.

The provincial Environmental Articulation Committee includes representatives from technical and applied programs, institutions with doctoral programs, institutions with no dedicated environmental studies degree or diploma but with environmental curriculum offered through the disciplines, and others. The diversity of environmental programs by type and focus makes categorization of the data across institutions difficult.

Gender/Women's and Sexuality Studies

Women's studies programs emerged out of political activism of the 1960s and 1970s and have continued to expand and transform since that time to encapsulate broader approaches to gender, and to include sexuality and social justice studies. This field is one of the most frequently represented interdisciplinary arts-dominant fields across North American post-secondary systems, including BC's. However, not all of the province's universities or colleges have diverse gender studies offerings. Several institutions offer only one or two interdisciplinary gender or women's studies courses: this list includes CNC, KPU, NIC, NLC, CMC, Selkirk and UFV. COTR gender courses are primarily housed in anthropology. NVIT offers a specialized First Nations Women's Studies program. UBC, OC, Langara and UVic have large programs with high levels of internal specialization.

Global and International Studies

Global and international studies programs are increasing in number, and these programs have replaced area studies programs at many institutions. Institutions that offer courses in this field, including Camosun, CAPU, COTR, Douglas and UFV, generally offer only a few dedicated interdisciplinary courses. Global and international program credentials are offered by UNBC, UFV, VIU and others, but these rely heavily on disciplinary courses rather than on dedicated interdisciplinary ones.

Indigenous/First Nations Studies

The scope of Indigenous programs has expanded across BC's colleges and universities over the past two decades, with increasing supports and resources to provide the specific programmatic and professional contexts needed. The field of Indigenous/Aboriginal/First Nations studies developed out of anthropology and other social science fields, but these programs are increasingly transdisciplinary in nature, engaging with and incorporating direction from Indigenous communities. Many Indigenous programs are career-oriented, developed to assist students in learning to work with and within Indigenous communities.

Curricula in these program areas vary widely in type (traditional academic, pre-professional), focus (liberal arts and sciences, human services, technical), and specialization. Indigenous and First Nations Studies programs selected for further analysis in this study include those with course designations ABST (Aboriginal Studies), FNST (First Nations Studies), ING/INST/IST (Indigenous Studies), and IPK (Indigenous Peoples Knowledge). The sampled population does not include specialized and Indigenous-focused pre-professional programs (e.g., Camosun's Indigenous Family Support Worker certificate or NEC's Aboriginal Justice Certificate). (Note: One additional program, NVIT's FNWS [First Nations Women's Studies], is included in this study as part of the gender and sexuality studies sample.)

Peace and Social Justice Studies

This field has the smallest number of sampled programs. Only four institutions offer courses that have been evaluated for transfer in this program subject area: Corpus Christi College (Texas), Langara, Selkirk and UFV. RRU and JIBC also offer programs in this field, but neither has courses reflected in the BC Transfer Guide. Programs go by various names, including Peace Studies (Selkirk), Peace and Conflict Studies (Langara, UFV), and Social Justice and Peace Studies (CCC).

This data set also differs from that of other programs in that one private institution—CCC—has a disproportionate influence on the results. Of the 196 course transfer agreements reviewed in this program subject area, 66 were for 8 courses offered by this one private college. These courses have been reviewed by colleges and institutions across BC's Transfer System.

Transfer of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Curriculum

Multi- and interdisciplinary curricula have the potential to complicate the transfer experience for undergraduate students. Students who move between institutions face any number of stress-inducing adjustments, and their academic performance at their new institution has been shown to suffer relative to that at their original institution as a result. Loss of credit is one contributing factor to this phenomenon, sometimes referred to as “transfer shock” (Baker, 2016; Gerhardt & Ackerman, 2014).

Receiving transfer credits towards programs that they had not anticipated entering—a pattern that occurs regularly with interdisciplinary course credit—can cause transfer students additional stress: they must weigh new program directions, make compromises in program choice, or accrue credits in excess of those needed for graduation. This means that students planning on transferring may also face high opportunity costs in choosing to complete multi- or interdisciplinary credits that do not clearly align with a recognized program elsewhere. The lack of “fit” between interdisciplinary courses and programs between institutions can slow down the transfer process; it can result in significant inconsistencies in how credit is allocated; and it can mask preconceptions evaluators may have about specific sending institutions and/or their students.

The pathway transfer credits take depends, among other factors, on the structure of a course or program undergoing assessment, on the degree of integration a course demonstrates and on the degree to which disciplinary experts are involved in the review of credit. At its core, the process of credit transfer relies on faculty evaluation, as “faculty ‘own’ the system [i.e., curricula] by which equivalency is established” (Compton, Tafel, Law, & Gufstafson, 2012, p. 48). And yet, clear “ownership” of interdisciplinary courses in particular may not always be evident or easily determined: any given interdisciplinary course may require multiple sets of eyes for a thorough review.

The following patterns in transfer of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary credits were anticipated ([Table 3](#)).

TABLE 3: Anticipated Pathways for Transfer

Transfer Over As		Credit Type at Originating Institution		
		Disciplinary Credits	Multidisciplinary Credits	Interdisciplinary Credits
Disciplinary Credit	Assigned	Most likely	Unlikely	Unlikely
	Unassigned	Likely	Likely, when sending program is constituted of clearly identifiable disciplinary content	Possible, if disciplinary program is sufficiently broad in scope and content and if receiving institution lacks comparable interdisciplinary program
Multidisciplinary Credit	Assigned	Possible, if course shares thematic specialization with multidisciplinary program	Likely, when comparable program and courses in place	Likely, when comparable thematic program in place
	Unassigned		Likely, when comparable program in place	
Interdisciplinary Credit	Assigned	Unlikely	Possible, when comparable program exists with strong overlap with disciplinary content	Likely for core and introductory courses common to many institutions
	Unassigned	Unlikely	Possible, when comparable program exists with dedicated interdisciplinary curriculum	Likely for specialized courses within same or comparable thematic area
General Elective Credit		Unlikely	Possible when receiving institution lacks thematic equivalents in comparable disciplinary, multi-disciplinary, or interdisciplinary programs	
No Credit		Unlikely	Possible, particularly in 'university studies' courses and in pre-professional credits seen as vocational in nature	

As indicated in **Table 3**, single-discipline courses are expected to transfer as equivalent to assigned or unassigned disciplinary credit at other institutions, although upper-level disciplinary courses, which tend to be more specialized, are more likely to receive unassigned disciplinary credit (i.e., not course specific, e.g., PHYS 3xxx).

Multidisciplinary courses will tend to transfer to like multidisciplinary programs in cases where the courses or programs are broadly represented at many institutions (e.g., environmental science/studies, gender studies). Multidisciplinary courses that reflect an area focus (e.g., gender studies, media studies) will be unevenly articulated to other disciplinary and multidisciplinary programs through traditional transfer credit review processes; a higher possibility exists that courses will articulate to the “nearest neighbour” discipline, based on content and theoretical approaches,

when a receiving institution does not have a comparable program (e.g., a gender studies course may articulate as a sociology course). In cases where neither a comparable disciplinary nor a multi-/interdisciplinary program is in place at the institution into which a student is transferring, a course may receive 'general elective' (GE) credit.

Interdisciplinary courses are the most likely to be transferred inconsistently between programs and institutions, given the nature of how disciplinary inputs are synthesized and based on how close evaluators perceive the content to be to existing (inter)disciplinary course offerings at the institution into which a student is transferring. Courses may articulate as a "nearest neighbour" discipline, based on subject matter rather than on theoretical approaches or methodology (e.g., an environmental management course may articulate as a geography course at an institution where geography is the primary program offering environmental curriculum). As with multidisciplinary courses, the highest possibility exists that courses will articulate as GE courses when a receiving institution does not have a comparable program; in some cases, particularly in applied, pre-professional, and/or "university studies" type courses, a receiving institution may award no credit for these courses.

PART II: PROGRAM SAMPLE AND ANALYSIS

In order to understand how interdisciplinary courses and programs are currently handled in the transfer process in BC, a quantitative assessment of existing course and program agreements was completed. Data collection included identification and assessment of both course-by-course credit agreements in seven program subject areas, and a review of block transfer agreements (BTAs) for programs in these same seven subject areas.

Course-Level Agreements

Designations for courses in each field included in this study are found in Appendix I. Each course was then categorized by the nature of the transfer credit awarded, if any. Each program subject area's courses were analyzed to identify pathways of transfer—namely, whether interdisciplinary courses are awarded disciplinary or interdisciplinary credit at receiving institutions. The results are categorized as follows:

1. Same or comparable interdisciplinary program: Assigned credit (e.g., ASIA 327)
2. Same or comparable interdisciplinary program: Unassigned credit (e.g., ASIA 3xx)
3. Other Interdisciplinary program: Assigned credit (e.g., GNDR 3363)
4. Other Interdisciplinary program: Unassigned credit (e.g., GNDR 3xxx)
5. Disciplinary program: Assigned credit (e.g., POSC 3211)
6. Disciplinary program: Unassigned credit (e.g., POSC 3xxx)
7. General Elective or General Studies credits (GE or GENS)
8. No credit
9. Other arrangement (e.g., Individual Assessment)

When credit was awarded in a field of study other than the one at the originating institution, the program in which the credit was received was noted: examples include other defined program areas (e.g., gender studies) as well as broader designations (e.g., general elective credit, arts credits and so on).

Following data collection and categorization of course-to-course evaluations, descriptive statistics were compiled.

Findings and Analysis

The course-level credit transfer decisions for interdisciplinary courses in the sample program subject areas were reviewed in full for six of the seven programs; for the seventh, environmental studies/science courses, only a sampling of credit transfer decisions was reviewed. Table 4 lists the total number of “course articulations”—the number of transfer decisions made for courses in each of these areas. A course may receive transfer credit (i.e., be articulated) at multiple institutions; each articulation decision for that course is included in the totals. In the case where credit may be awarded at the receiving institution in more than one program (e.g., a course may transfer as either GNDR 1xx or HIST 1xx), the course is counted once.

More detailed course-level findings for each of these areas may be found in Appendix II.

TABLE 4: Count of Unique Course Transfer Articulations in the Course Transfer Sample

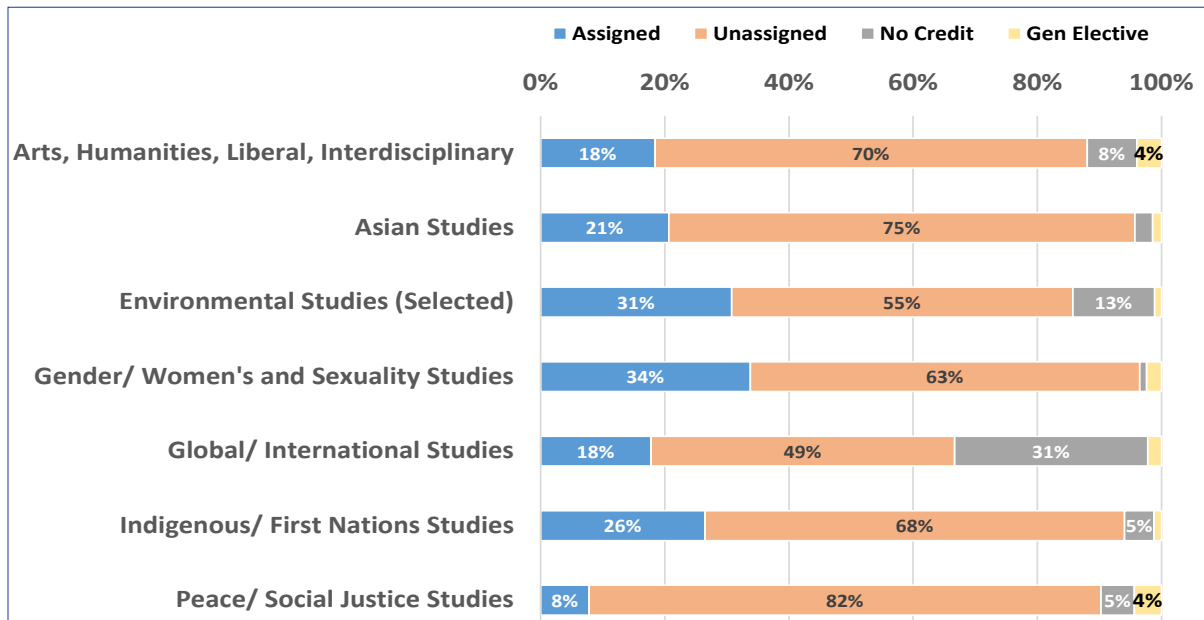
Program Area	Course Observations	Percent
Arts, Humanities, Liberal Studies and Unspecified Interdisciplinary credits	326	12%
Asian Studies	488	18%
Environmental Studies (Selected)	180	7%
Gender/Women’s and Sexuality Studies	788	30%
Global/International Studies	88	3%
Indigenous/First Nations Studies	582	22%
Peace/Social Justice Studies	196	7%
Total Observations	2,648	100%

Source: BC Transfer Guide 2017.

Of the seven fields listed above, the largest program areas evaluated—as determined by the number of course articulations—were gender/women’s and sexuality studies, Indigenous studies and Asian studies. These three areas are significantly different in scope and purpose, but they share long-running institutional histories in the BC post-secondary sector; as a result of their popularity in BC’s colleges and universities, the number of course transfers is high.

The distribution of interdisciplinary credits awarded by receiving institutions differs significantly depending on program area (Table 5 and Figure 2) if grouped by the categories of the transfer award described above. Following Figure 2 is further analysis of each program area’s course transfer patterns.

FIGURE 2: Totals for Assigned and Unassigned Credit in Interdisciplinary Course Transfer Pathways



Note: Totals by subject area may not equal 100% of total observations, as credit is sometimes assigned in more than one field. The percentages may not equal to numbers in Table 5 due to rounding. The graph omits Gender/Women’s and Sexuality Studies courses in the “Other” Pathway (1% of total).

Source: BC Transfer Guide 2017.

Almost half (45%) of **arts, humanities and interdisciplinary studies credit** will transfer into comparable arts, humanities and IS credit (Table 5), with the vast majority of this being unassigned credit. Another 32% will transfer to disciplines, and just over 11% will transfer for credit in other interdisciplinary fields (e.g., urban studies, religious studies). This diversity of approaches encapsulated in arts, humanities, liberal and interdisciplinary studies is also reflected in the transfer for disciplinary credits. History credit is the most common award for interdisciplinary course transfer credit requests, but geography, sociology, anthropology and English are also well-represented, which may reflect the high degree of internal complexity of these programs, and the origins of interdisciplinary program development in particular in sociology, anthropology, and geography.

A full 12% of courses with **arts, humanities, liberal studies or interdisciplinary studies** designations will receive either general elective credit (4%) or no credit at all (8%) through the transfer process. Institutions that transfer many of their students out will have to weigh the value of the course and the interdisciplinary experience against the potential loss of credit through transfer; it may also be likely that institutions awarding no credit for certain interdisciplinary courses are less likely to receive transfer students from the sending institutions offering the curricula.

The small number of **Asian studies** programs overall contributes to the comparable low percentage (26%) of transfer credits being awarded within the same interdisciplinary field. In fact, a much higher percentage (40%) of credit allocated is in other interdisciplinary fields such as international and religious studies. Institutions apply arts and humanities nomenclature to Asian studies transfer courses with high frequency as well. Another 30% of courses are awarded disciplinary credit—most frequently history. Three quarters of the Asian area courses are articulated with unassigned credit (Figure 2).

TABLE 5: Interdisciplinary Course Transfer Pathways

	Total*	Same Program Area		Different Interdisciplinary		Discipline-Specific		No credit	General Elective	Other	Total
		Assigned	Un-assigned	Assigned	Un-assigned	Assigned	Un-assigned				
Arts, Humanities, Liberal and Interdisciplinary	326	2%	43%	4%	7%	12%	20%	8%	4%	0%	100%
Asian Studies	489	11%	15%	5%	35%	4%	26%	3%	1%	0%	100%
Environmental Studies (Selected)	182	16%	26%	1%	11%	14%	18%	13%	1%	0%	100%
Gender/Women's and Sexuality Studies	796	29%	40%	0%	11%	4%	12%	1%	2%	1%	100%
Global/International Studies	90	8%	8%	0%	13%	10%	28%	31%	2%	0%	100%
Indigenous/First Nations Studies	589	19%	34%	1%	13%	7%	20%	5%	1%	0%	100%
Peace/Social Justice Studies	205	0%	0%	3%	40%	4%	42%	5%	4%	0%	100%

* In cases where courses may be awarded credit in more than one area (e.g., a course transfers as either GNDR 1xx or HIST 1xx), both pathways are recorded. Courses that receive no credit or credit through individual arrangement are not reflected here. For these reasons, total pathways observed will differ slightly from total course observations recorded in Table 4, and totals may not equal 100% of total observations.

Selected **environmental studies** courses transferred into other environmental programs at other institutions approximately 52% of the time, with another 28% of transfers resulting in the allocation of discipline credit. Disciplinary credit was most commonly awarded in geography and biology. This is a discipline with a high percent (almost a third – 31%) of pathways with assigned courses (Figure 2). However, the breadth of the discipline and its subdisciplines presents certain issues.

One **environmental studies** course that demonstrates some of the challenges associated with environmental credit transfer is Langara's ENV 2100: Applied Environmental Studies. This hands-on, applied learning course is a type common to environmental programs in general, as well as to nearest-neighbour disciplines such as geography and biology. The likelihood of interdisciplinary courses receiving direct disciplinary credit is quite high in this subject area. ENV 2100, for example, can be used at Langara towards a diploma or associate degree in environmental studies; it is awarded credits at other institutions in environmental programs—in arts and sciences, in geography and, as an elective, in social sciences and sciences (Table 6).

TABLE 6: Interdisciplinary Credit Pathways for Langara’s ENV 2100 by Receiving Institution

Transfers As	Institution
Environmental and Earth Science credit (assigned or unassigned)	DOUG, SFU, UNBC
Environmental Studies credit (assigned or unassigned)	TRU, TWU, UVic
Geography assigned credit	CAPU, OC
Geography unassigned credit	UFV
Social Science Elective credit	TRU
Science Elective credit	UBC
No credit	VCC

Source: BC Transfer Guide 2017.

A preliminary assessment of a sample course-level transfer of core, introductory environmental credits, in this case SFU’s REM 100, demonstrates how environmental courses sometimes transfer as disciplinary credit. REM 100 is a core course common to most institutions (Table 7). However, because the course is variously delivered by environmental studies, earth sciences, geography, and resource management programs, the articulation pathways are less clear-cut than they otherwise might be. For instance, while the course transfers to Douglas College as a science elective, Douglas’ similarly named course, EAES 1201: Global Environmental Change, transfers to SFU as REM 100.

TABLE 7: How Interdisciplinary Credits are Assessed: SFU’s REM 100 Global Change Course

Transfers As	Institution
Environmental Studies assigned credit	CAMO
Geography assigned credit	CAPU, LANG, TRU-OL, UNBC
Geography unassigned credit	OC, UFV
Science Elective credit	DOUG

Source: BC Transfer Guide 2017.

The majority of **gender/women’s and sexuality studies** course transfers are at the 100-level and for introductory courses. They are marked by high levels of intra-program area transfer. This pattern helps account for the very high rate of transfer (69% of total) between similar interdisciplinary programs. Overall, almost 34% of course transfer credits in this field are for assigned interdisciplinary gender studies credits, the highest percent of all programs in this study (Figure 2). By contrast, only 16% of these interdisciplinary courses transfer with disciplinary credit, and the majority of this credit is allocated in sociology and anthropology. Given the foundational role these disciplines have played in the development of gender studies programs in North America, this pattern is to be expected.

Taken as a whole, **global and international studies** programs rely heavily on interdisciplinary to disciplinary transfer—close to 40% of all interdisciplinary course credits are categorized as disciplinary credits at the receiving institutions (Table 5). Relative to other programs in this study, 16% of courses will transfer into the same type of interdisciplinary credit at another institution, while 13% transfer to another interdisciplinary area, and most of these ones with

broad designations, such as arts, humanities or interdisciplinary credit. The strong focus on international development within these programs also means that they draw heavily from two contributing disciplines in particular: political science and geography.

Relative to the other program areas reviewed in this study, **global and international studies** had the highest percent (roughly 32%) of courses receiving no credit. This high percentage results from both the sample population size and the use of international placements. Only five institutions have Global and International Studies programs whose courses have been evaluated for transfer. Just four courses—three in COTR’s Global Studies program and one in UFV’s Global Development Studies program—account for almost all course evaluations that were denied credit. These four courses are practicum or pre-practicum courses. Nonetheless, this issue should be a concern from the perspective of how the loss of credit can affect student mobility and success.

The frequency of **Indigenous** curricula at BC’s post-secondary institutions means that credit transfer within this field is often between like programs. More than half (53%) of Indigenous courses receive credit in another Indigenous program or field of study. The second largest course transfer pathway is directly into disciplines as unassigned credit, with Indigenous courses reclassified as humanities, arts, liberal studies, or social sciences credits. Only one in twenty course transfer agreements (5%) results in no credit being awarded.

The highest degree of interdisciplinary-to-disciplinary course transfer is found in **peace and social justice studies**, perhaps due primarily to the infrequency with which courses and programs in this field are offered. Just under half (46%) transfer to a specific discipline, while another 40% receive unassigned interdisciplinary credit in a different and often broader field, such as humanities, liberal studies, arts, social sciences or global and international studies. Those credits receiving disciplinary designation are overwhelmingly assigned political science course equivalency. Around 5% of peace and social justice studies course transfer agreements resulted in no credit being awarded, with 4% resulting in students receiving general elective credit. This is the program area with the smallest percent of assigned credit (5%) among the subject areas in the study (**Figure 2**), with almost no pathways leading to the same interdisciplinary program area.

As shown above, multi- and interdisciplinary programs pose a particular set of circumstances that make transfer on a course-by-course basis difficult. Disciplinary courses that form part of a multidisciplinary program will most likely transfer into the same or related disciplines at another institution. However, the second institution may not have the same program, or it may be structured differently; therefore, reliance on course-by-course articulation alone may result in transfer credit allocations outside a student’s desired program of study, or in credit awards that are insufficient to meet the new program’s requirements.

Block Transfer Agreements (BTAs)

Block transfer agreements (BTAs) help reduce levels of inconsistency both within and between institutions, and they reduce the burden of transfer management on educational partners (Carter, Coyle, & Leslie, 2011). BTAs allow transfer students to receive a “block” of credits equivalent to a certain number of courses at the sending institution; these credits can, in turn, be used to meet program requirements at the receiving institution, or to recognize equivalency for

purposes of entry into a program (McQuarrie 2014). Block transfer thus can allow students a higher level of certainty than course-to-course transfer that their credits will transfer, particularly those students planning to transfer with a large number of credits (i.e., 30-60).

For students beginning their educational program with the intention of transfer, BTAs also reduce the level of risk in course selection. BTAs not only require that partner institutions negotiate how much credit will move from one institution to the next, but they also involve identifying allowances and exceptions to program requirements at the institution receiving the transfer credits—a step that is critical for students moving into and out of multi- and interdisciplinary programs.

Understandably, negotiating BTAs between multi- and interdisciplinary programs and disciplinary programs is time-intensive due to the larger number of exceptions to program rules and requirements that would be expected. This is especially so if the one of the programs involved in the agreement is an applied, pre-professional one. However, these tools are particularly worthwhile in jurisdictions in which a large percentage of students attend multiple institutions in the process of completing their degrees (Lang, 2009; Stern, 2015).

Uncertainties associated with course-to-course transfer agreements may make BTAs more attractive for similar programs. BTAs listed in the BC Transfer Guide for the seven subject areas as of August 2017 were reviewed for this study, to assess the degree to which this tool was used in supporting interdisciplinary program student mobility. The full list of the sampled BTAs is found in Appendix III.

The list of agreements was drawn with the following conditions attached:

- Programs listed could be either sending or receiving programs: thus, the BTAs could connect a disciplinary program with an interdisciplinary program, with transfer moving in either direction.
- Among Associate of Arts programs, only those without specialization were eligible for inclusion, and only if they were paired with a program in one of the seven subject areas selected (by which criteria, only one AA program is among the data).
- Some programs listed as current were discarded from the survey after it was determined that the program is no longer being offered.
- Several programs went through name changes: when this was the case, the most recent name of the program was recorded.
- Expired agreements were not recorded, and agreements established prior to 2010 were excluded.
- Private institutions were included in this portion of the study: only five recorded agreements involve a private college as sender or receiver, or both; only one agreement linked two private institutions. Agreements involving private schools represent just 2.3% of the total sample.

Using these parameters, a total of 77 BTAs were recorded for this analysis, which is 6% of the total number of BTAs (1,207) listed in the BC Transfer Guide as of August 2017. The vast majority of the BTAs considered for this study (93%) were for programs in environmental studies (**Table 8**).

TABLE 8: Block Transfer Agreements by Program Area at Institution of Origin

Program Area	Number of Agreements
Arts, Humanities and Interdisciplinary Credits (topic non-specific)	1
Asian Studies	0
Environmental Studies [Science]/Resource Management (non-Forestry)	72
Gender/Women's and Sexuality Studies	1
Global/International Studies	0
Indigenous/First Nations Studies	1
Peace/Social Justice Studies	2
Total	77

The receiving programs in BTAs were highly varied based on the type and focus of the program at the institution of origin (Table 9).

TABLE 9: Block Transfer Agreements by Program at Receiving Institution

Program Area	Number of Agreements
<i>Degree-level, no major area specified</i>	
Bachelor of Arts	6
Bachelor of Science	3
Bachelor of Technology	1
Bachelor of General Studies	6
<i>Interdisciplinary Programs</i>	
Bachelor of Interdisciplinary or Individualized Studies	2
<i>Environmental Programs</i>	
Arts, Bachelor or Associate Degree, Environmental Program emphasis*	6
Science, Bachelor or Associate Degree, Environmental Program emphasis**	43
Other Bachelor-level Environment Programs	5
Total Environmental	54
<i>Social Justice Programs</i>	
Arts, Bachelor; Major, Justice	1
<i>Other Professional Programs</i>	
Bachelor of Professional Arts	3
<i>Other</i>	
Any Program (SFU only)	1
Total	77

*Environmental programs include Environmental Studies, Geography, or similar field.

**Environmental programs include Environmental Science, Environmental Management, Biology, or similar field.

Within environmental fields (including Bachelor degrees in Forestry and Natural Resource Management), more than half of receiving programs were pre-professional: the most common arrangement linked an applied two-year technology or management program with a four- or five-year Bachelor of Science program with an environmental science or resource management focus.

The applied emphasis of many interdisciplinary programs makes block transfer into unspecified arts and science Bachelor-level programs difficult to develop. Approximately 13% of the BTAs listed in the BCTG involve BGS programs. However, these figures mask the significant role of a single institution in this data: of the 154 BTAs involving the BGS, 148 (96%) are for transfer into TRU-OL's BGS (or 12% of the total of all BTAs in the Transfer Guide).

INSTITUTIONAL SURVEY

A survey was developed and distributed to articulation committee members in order to assess current knowledge and practices in the transfer of interdisciplinary courses. (See Appendix IV for full survey.) Articulation committees consist of faculty representatives for each institution that offers programming in a disciplinary or thematic area. Additionally, articulation committees may have other members (e.g., deans) or guests (e.g., representatives from the K-12 system, labour, industry or professional associations).

The goal of the survey was to identify the following:

1. the degree to which articulation representatives see interdisciplinary transfer as problematic (however, no comparison of issues of disciplinary and interdisciplinary transfer was possible);
2. who is responsible for evaluation of interdisciplinary courses, and on what criteria;
3. who should be responsible for such course evaluation; and
4. whether new interdisciplinary programs and courses are under development and expected in the next 1-3 years and, if so, whether transferability is a key influence in curriculum development.

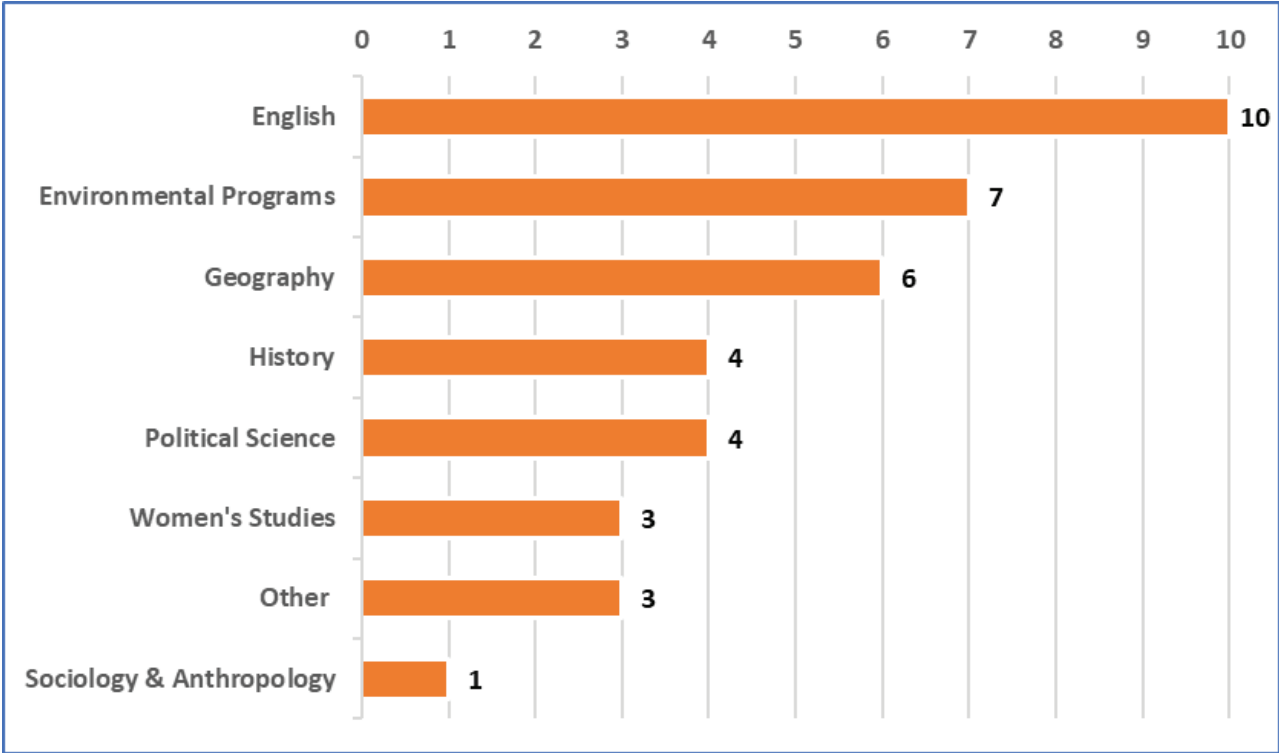
The survey was distributed to the following articulation committees: English, Environmental Programs, Geography, History, Sociology and Anthropology, Political Science, and Women's Studies. These committees were selected because they represent areas that overlap with the program areas in this study. Articulation committee chairs were contacted in late April and early May 2018 with a request for assistance in distributing the survey. Chairs were also asked to mention the survey as part of the general business portion of their meetings.

An online survey was developed, consisting of 20 multiple-choice questions, with multiple opportunities to add comments or to clarify answers. An initial deadline for survey completion was extended so as to encourage maximum response.

A total of 36 surveys was completed, which indicate a response rate of 21-24% of the estimated number of potential respondents (approximately 150-170 individuals).

The survey did not ask individuals to identify their specific institution to allow for a greater degree of anonymity; however, the institutional sector was sought (Figure 4). The highest number of responses was received from the attendees to English (10), Environmental (7), and Geography (6) articulation committee (Figure 3).

FIGURE 3: Number of Respondents by Articulation Committee

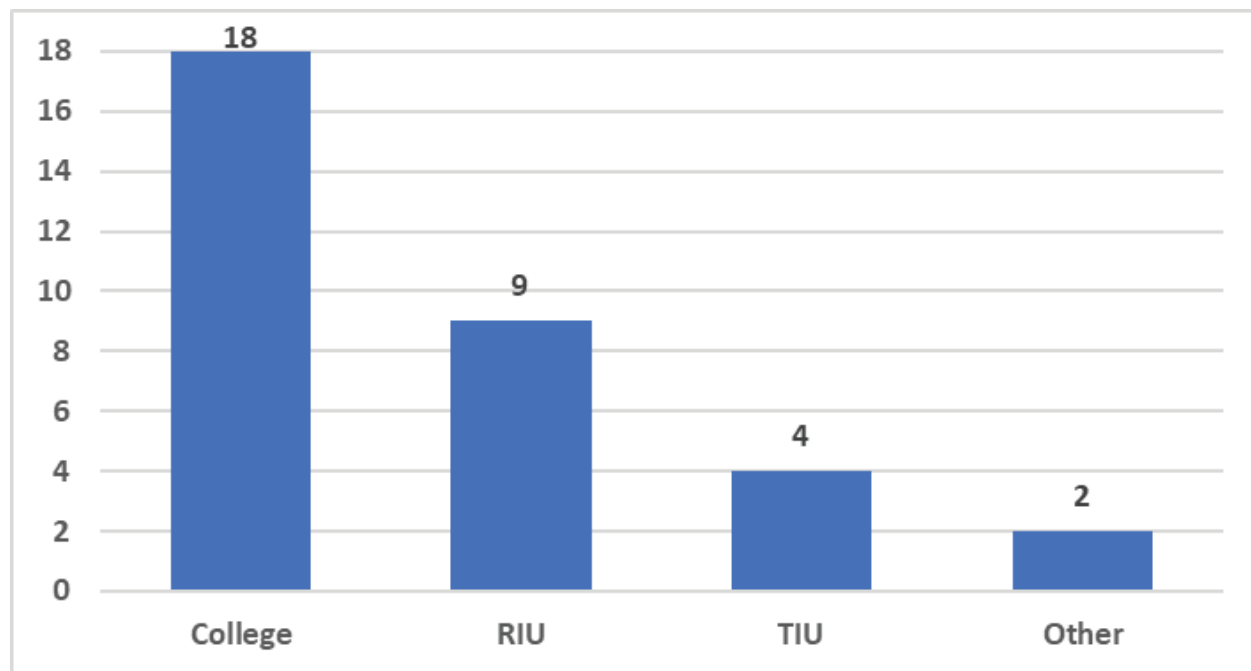


Note: "Other" includes one participant each from the Communications and the Applied Business Technology Articulation Committees, and one participant who did not attend articulation.

Almost two-thirds (66%) of survey respondents identified themselves as faculty members or department heads representing a disciplinary unit, and an additional 20% were faculty members or heads of an interdisciplinary program or unit. The remaining survey respondents had other roles at their institutions or organizations.

Respondents from a variety of institutional sectors participated in the survey: from colleges (55% of all respondents), research intensive universities (27%), teaching intensive universities (4%), with some responses from private PSIs (Figure 4). No responses were received from articulation committee members from public institutes.

FIGURE 4: Institution Sector by Survey Respondents



Notes: Colleges: Camosun, CMTN, CNC, COTR, Douglas, Langara, NIC, NLC, OC, Selkirk, VCC
RIU: SFU, UBC, UBC-O, UNBC, UVic
TIU's: CapU, Emily Carr, KPU, RRU, TRU, UFV, VIU
Other: Private, religious, or non-profit institution

Who Evaluates Interdisciplinary Transfer Credit?

The vast majority of respondents (27 out of 32) indicated that faculty are primarily responsible for evaluation of transfer credit at their institution—both disciplinary and interdisciplinary credit. In some cases deans, department chairs or a number of faculty within a department get involved in the assessment. The role of consultation within a department grows higher in assessing interdisciplinary courses. So does the role of dean/unit chair. Two respondents indicated that their institution relied on transfer evaluators who answer to the Registrar. A course may be sent to multiple faculty evaluators before a decision is made.

The current approach is viewed by many as appropriate: respondents showed a high level of support (65%) for a continued faculty role in interdisciplinary credit evaluation, even if faculty are not from interdisciplinary programs, or if a department is not interdisciplinary. Some support for transfer committees was evidenced, with 6 of the 31 respondents indicating that a committee consisting of deans and/or faculty should be responsible for evaluating interdisciplinary courses.

"[We] need people with holistic perspective doing the evaluation, content specialists can often be too narrowly focused." [*College respondent*]

"The system is working but it needs continual work and improvement." [*College respondent*]

"While transfers are basically determined by the Chair of the department, who may or may not consult with faculty who have the expertise, it seems that it would be better to have a committee of faculty members, especially when it comes to interdisciplinary work. For Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies, we work as a committee to determine transfers but other interdisciplinary committees that I sit on do not (Asian Studies, International and Intercultural, Environmental Studies)." [*College respondent*]

How is Interdisciplinary Transfer Credit Assessed?

Interdisciplinary courses place differential demands on receiving institutions in the transfer process. As seen in the previous section, interdisciplinary courses and programs that are widespread in BC's institutions—e.g., gender/women's studies—demonstrate a high degree of consistency in transfer. In these cases, courses tend to transfer as equivalent interdisciplinary credits elsewhere.

Most respondents (93%; n = 28) indicated that their institution offers interdisciplinary programs or courses. Of those, roughly two-thirds (17 respondents) noted that their department or area offers one or more interdisciplinary course(s), including 8 respondents who answered that their area offers four or more interdisciplinary courses as part of an interdisciplinary or multi-disciplinary major or minor. These programs are managed in different ways, with just over half (52%; n=14) of respondents indicating that interdisciplinary programs are housed within disciplinary units. An additional third of respondents (9 responses) answered that their institution uses a mixture of structures, housing interdisciplinary programs in both disciplinary units and interdisciplinary centres or units. Only three indicated that most or all programs are housed in entirely interdisciplinary units. These findings are consistent with other responses to survey questions, in which faculty indicate that disciplinary faculty and chairs are heavily involved in interdisciplinary course transfer.

However, more than one-third of respondents represented academic units that do not offer interdisciplinary courses. For institutions that lack comparable courses or programs, the choice of how to award transfer credit will vary. The most common choices were the discipline-equivalent credit assigned when possible, based on overlap in course content, as well as general (unassigned) credit (**Table 10**).

TABLE 10: Criteria Used in Allocating Transfer Credit for Interdisciplinary Courses at Institutions Lacking Equivalent Programs

Criteria	Responses (n = 31; multiple choices were possible)
Discipline-equivalent credit assigned when possible, based on common learning outcomes	11
Discipline-equivalent credit assigned when possible, based on overlap in course content	23
Discipline-equivalent credit assigned when possible, based on course methods and evaluation	9
Credit assigned in similar* interdisciplinary program	10
General elective credit (e.g., social science or arts) assigned	18
No credit assigned	2

*An example of credit being assigned in a similar but not an equivalent interdisciplinary program would be Asian Studies coursework receiving transfer credit in International Studies.

Many of those answering this question also provided additional input on how the process works at their institution: in some cases, courses receive 1x or 2x credit; some are used as elective credits; and some disciplines are less “forgiving” than others in awarding credit (particularly in the sciences). Others noted that all of the criteria are important, plus others, such as level of instruction, and degree of overlap.

What Plans Exist for Expanding Interdisciplinary Offerings?

Eight out of 29 respondents (27% of all respondents) indicated that their department or area will be offering new interdisciplinary programs in the next 1-3 years (**Table 11**). Not all of these programs will rely on interdisciplinary courses as opposed to drawing from disciplinary offerings to build a multi-disciplinary program. However, the majority of respondents either were not aware of such plans (38%) or indicated there were no plans to expand current interdisciplinary offerings (35%).

TABLE 11: Number of Responses to the Question: "Is Your Department/Area Planning to Expand Interdisciplinary Programs in the Next 1-3 Years?"

Criteria	Responses	Percent of Total
Yes, and the program(s) will utilize or expand the use of primarily disciplinary courses	3	10%
Yes, and the program(s) will utilize or expand the use of primarily interdisciplinary courses	2	7%
Yes, and the program(s) will utilize a core of interdisciplinary courses with disciplinary electives	3	10%
No, we do not plan to add or expand any interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary programs	10	35%
Unsure/Do not know	11	38%
Total	29	100%

Note: the percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

The survey also asked whether or not transferability has factored into course development and design decisions. Of the 17 respondents who indicated that their department/unit offered interdisciplinary courses, 8 respondents indicated that transferability is a factor for course development. When asked whether or not transferability will factor into curriculum design moving forward, more than half (18 of 29) noted that it is very or somewhat important, while transferability was not important for almost all the rest (10 of the 29 respondents). Respondents' comments demonstrate different attitudes towards this issue:

"We are a 'transfer' institution so maximizing articulation often drives course development processes."

[*College respondent*]

"Most interdisciplinary programs are unique, and any good interdisciplinary program will have unique courses. It makes transfer difficult, but I don't see that as a significant problem." [*College respondent*]

"The proper answer is somewhere between very important and somewhat important. Transfer is very important to us, but other factors are as well (and depend on whether the course is part of a diploma or associate degree program here)." [*College respondent*]

"Depends on who you are asking. The majority of our department and our Dean's office would say that transferability is not important. Or at the least this would not be a consideration." [*Teaching-Intensive University respondent*]

Additional comments shed light on the difficulty in balancing curricular innovation, consistency, and transferability:

"The problem with interdisciplinary courses is that they lie in the land of the non-specific. This makes the courses suspect in many people's eyes. I feel these courses are essential and that there needs to be more flexibility in the curriculum defining a degree. Especially a Bachelor of Science. If a Bachelor's degree could be defined in a more fluid manner this would be easier. Fluid meaning adapting to the landscape of the particular degree and location. However, to do this Chemistry and Math and Physics and Biology have to be on board. And I'm unsure this will ever occur - or at least not for a very long time until a new generation pops up their head." [*Teaching-Intensive Institution respondent*]

"I'm not sure that I see this as a significant issue. Transfer is a good thing, but not at the cost of innovation. It would be wrong to not offer a course that's important to a program, just because it won't transfer as other than undefined credit. I think that there's a danger that transfer issues will cause our programs to stagnate." [*College respondent*]

In summary, the majority of respondents continues to see faculty as playing the primary role in evaluating transfer credit for interdisciplinary courses. The number of interdisciplinary offerings might continue to grow; however, a large proportion of respondents reported no plans for expanding them. Programs and departments would like to be able to develop courses that transfer, but not at the expense of supporting innovation and addressing program gaps and student needs.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The collation of data on course-level transfer and on BTAs shows both successes and shortcomings in the review of interdisciplinary curriculum. In spite of significant internal diversity, applied environmental programs have taken advantage of block transfer as a tool for facilitating transfer between institutions.

For interdisciplinary liberal arts and sciences programs, the highest levels of transferability between like programs exists for courses and fields with a long history within the province, namely gender and sexuality studies (including women's studies) and introductory courses in environmental studies and Indigenous studies. Many other interdisciplinary programs, however, are less well established and less common across the province (Appendix I). These include peace and social justice studies, global and international studies, and Asian studies—programs that are offered at relatively few institutions, and thus, understandably, lack dedicated articulation committees.

One of the notable findings from the review of course-to-course articulations is the frequency with which interdisciplinary courses transfer into different interdisciplinary programs. For instance, Asian studies courses sometimes articulate into religious studies or global studies programs, while peace and social justice studies courses transfer primarily into other interdisciplinary programs. What is less clear is whether this provides a benefit to a student who starts out in one interdisciplinary program before transferring—that is, what the uptake of these credit transfer agreements is in practice, in terms of student and credit mobility.

At the same time, interdisciplinary-to-disciplinary course transfer can pose its own problems. Of the seven liberal arts and sciences interdisciplinary programs evaluated here, none demonstrates a clear pattern by which most or all of an interdisciplinary program will transfer over into a single disciplinary field. Students who begin their educational program in global and international studies may have some success in transferring into a political science or geography program, given the high degree of overlap, but even in these cases, a student's interdisciplinary coursework is likely to be parsed among disciplines in the transfer process. This has the potential to leave a student with an excess number of elective credits and greater time and cost demands to complete more disciplinary requirements.

The survey findings show a strong preference for continued reliance on faculty expertise in the evaluation of transfer credit requests. Ideally, this expertise is embedded in similar interdisciplinary programs at the institution receiving the transfer student, but this may not always be available. Some support was evidenced for the use of faculty groups in evaluation—whether a whole department or a dedicated transfer committee—although committees may slow down the decision-making processes affecting students. Notably, a couple of respondents pointed to the need for greater flexibility in programs, particularly in the sciences, so as to accommodate different types of interdisciplinary courses.

Therefore, while innovation in interdisciplinary curriculum offers any number of benefits—including new forms of knowledge generation, new approaches to tackling complex problems, and the like—supporting interdisciplinary transfer will necessitate early student advising and discussions between institutions regarding receiving programs' flexibility in accepting interdisciplinary credit from outside program or disciplinary areas. While it is the student who is most affected by the ways that transfer credit is assigned to interdisciplinary courses, the focus for improving outcomes for students will need to be on faculty, given their valued role in transfer credit evaluation.

Limitations to the Study

Data for this study were collected over the course of one year, and do not represent a temporal analysis of changes in interdisciplinary transfer. A more detailed examination of past course-level transfer agreements may provide additional context to interdisciplinary transfer over a longer period of time. More valuable, however, will be follow up research in 3-5 years, to track changes in demand for and patterns in interdisciplinary transfer.

Further, the diversity of post-secondary institutions in BC means that this study's primary focus on interdisciplinary liberal arts and sciences programs underrepresents transfer opportunities and challenges among institutes (e.g., BCIT) and private and non-profit institutions (although consideration was given to transfer to and from such institutions when they provided or received credits in one of the seven program areas studied). A greater focus on the transfer of pre-professional programs would provide more opportunities to assess interdisciplinary transfer in this curriculum model.

Most notably absent from this study is reflection of the role of BC's largest research-intensive institutions, SFU and UBC, which are large producers of interdisciplinary credits, relatively few of which have been reviewed for possible transfer agreements. Very few course-level transfer agreements for SFU or UBC interdisciplinary courses were identified through the study's sampling methodology. Yet, students do transfer from these institutions to other schools in the province, and thus, we have an incomplete understanding at this point as to how the diversity of interdisciplinary curricula offered at these institutions is treated by the majority of institutions evaluating requests for transfer. Further research is needed.

The survey collected responses from a cohort of primarily faculty members who attend articulation committee meetings and therefore are engaged in discussions related to transfer. Institutional administrators, most notably deans, may offer different perspectives on the degree to which interdisciplinary transfer poses a problem. Also absent is the student perspective. This study maps out patterns seen in interdisciplinary transfer, and identifies the criteria and human resources used in transfer evaluation. A student-focused study, using a sample set of students who have completed significant interdisciplinary coursework prior to transfer, is needed. Such a study would determine whether students perceive their experience of transfer related to interdisciplinary courses as being a problematic one, a mere nuisance, or business-as-usual.

This study was designed in part to assess the processes in place for interdisciplinary course and program transfer evaluation. This includes identifying, when possible, who within an institution is responsible for evaluation decision-making. The evaluation routing information for more than 2,000 courses from the seven program areas identified was pulled by BCCAT in support of this study. It was quickly determined, however, that quantitative analysis of this data was not possible for a variety of reasons, including the following: evaluator information was not consistently available; many courses were forwarded to multiple evaluators for review at multiple dates; the position held by the evaluators (e.g., whether they were faculty members or advisors) was unclear; and in some cases, evaluation decisions were never recorded. Thus, it was determined that a qualitative methodology would be required to identify how evaluation processes and decision-making take place within institutions.

BCCAT'S ROLE

Interdisciplinary areas in environmental, Indigenous, and gender/women's studies are already represented through dedicated articulation committees. The other areas profiled here are not, as they are too small or less defined (e.g., arts and humanities). However, some value may be found in supporting joint or overlapping meetings between committees that share interdisciplinary curricula every second or third year, such as sociology/anthropology and women's studies, and political science and sociology/anthropology and peace studies.

The hardest interdisciplinary transfer cases to tackle also constitute the largest category: arts, humanities, liberal arts, interdisciplinary studies and social sciences. Courses in these broad-field areas lack clear disciplinary claims in the way that, for instance, political science shares with peace studies. Given that faculty are reluctant to cede their role in evaluating transfer credit, strategies to provide greater clarity and ease in interdisciplinary transfer should focus on the supports that faculty need.

The differences that exist in the criteria used to evaluate transfer credit may be one place to start additional conversations. Course content was the most common factor identified by survey respondents as being used in transfer credit evaluation, although most respondents indicated that other criteria were also relied upon. What is not discernible in this study is the degree to which interdisciplinary course review is consistent within institutions. Greater institutional transparency in stipulating what criteria are used—and how—in the evaluation of transfer credit would allow colleges and other institutions to anticipate how courses will fare in the transfer process. A consistent reliance on BCCAT resources such as the How to Articulate handbook and compliance with the *Principles and Guidelines for Transfer*¹ should be assumed; perhaps greater profile for and education about these resources is warranted.

Barring specific shifts among programs and institutions that specifically require or otherwise directly integrate interdisciplinary course options, interdisciplinary credit transfers are likely to continue to serve as electives in a student's diploma or degree program. Again, greater transparency is needed. How many credits can a student complete in interdisciplinary fields before these credits become effectively "surplus" within their destination programs? How flexible are some programs relative to others, in other words, in utilizing these transfer credits as electives? Consideration of majors will add still more complexity to this process. One avenue through which BCCAT could offer support is mapping first-year Arts (BA) and Science (BSc) requirements across institutions, to reduce the level of ambiguity in determining best pathways for transfer.

Finally, BCCAT can support the organization of annual or bi-annual meetings for representatives from broad-field interdisciplinary programs—general studies, liberal arts, interdisciplinary majors specifically. General studies programs, for instance, are not currently reflected in the articulation committee structures, yet general studies degree programs serve large numbers of students at multiple institutions in BC and Alberta (TRU-OL, UFV, Athabasca, UBC-O, SFU), including students who have interdisciplinary credits from multiple institutions. General and liberal studies degree programs are also the most flexible in accepting transfer credits and interdisciplinary credits, especially in the arts and sciences. Financial and organizational support for regular meetings could open the door to discussions on how to support transfer students with extensive interdisciplinary credits.

¹ See bccat.ca/system/principles. Accessed 11th September 2018.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Each of the previously identified limitations to this study provides opportunity for additional research, including an assessment of how interdisciplinary credits generated at the province's research-intensive institutions fare in the transfer process. Of further value would be assessments of student transfer numbers: how many are taking advantage of interdisciplinary BTAs, for instance?

One possible element of this study that was ultimately excluded is an assessment of how university and college strategic planning recognizes interdisciplinarity and transferability as institutional goals. A preliminary review of public college strategic planning documents revealed a strong emphasis on transferability; some two-year institutions also identified the value of interdisciplinary curriculum. Based on this preliminary finding, qualitative research might further explore if and how post-secondary administrators fuse these goals or, conversely, treat them as separate objectives.

Some of the most critical need for research relates to the flexibility of disciplinary programs over time with regard to interdisciplinary transfer. Interdisciplinary credits may convert into disciplinary ones through transfer, but that may not mean that students can use these credits to meet core, primarily lower-level requirements.

Further, we must recognize that this needs to be a two-way street. How do interdisciplinary programs view disciplinary credits? How could students who start their education in geology or geography programs, for instance, ladder into an environmental studies degree? Alternatively, how might students who start in pre-professional programs ladder into liberal arts programs within the same area? The number of successful BTAs between colleges offering pre-professional environmental programs and universities offering Bachelor-level environmental programs points to the possibilities in at least one area. As Indigenous studies programs grow in number and complexity, with more pre-professional programs designed for and with Indigenous populations in mind, might bridges develop between applied and transdisciplinary programs in this field?

Finally, qualitative study of the student experience in transferring with interdisciplinary credit would be of value to advisors and disciplinary departments. To what degree do transfer students see prior interdisciplinary coursework as a hindrance or extra cost, or, alternatively, as providing a valuable learning opportunity? These perspectives are needed in order to identify the priority moving forward. How great is the need for improving transparency and consistency in transfer? Is the greatest need in supporting students who have already completed these credits, to best use them in their subsequent diploma or degree programs? Such research could also shed light on student interest in four-year interdisciplinary or multi-disciplinary degree programs—such as General Studies, Liberal Studies, and Interdisciplinary Studies—and help determining whether more robust articulation support for such programs is required.

CONCLUSIONS

This study has investigated complex organizational and procedural questions related, individually, to interdisciplinarity and transfer, and collectively to interdisciplinary credit transfer and student mobility. British Columbia's long and much-lauded history of supporting transfer discussions, negotiations and information provides a rich, context- and geography-specific body of information to draw on to begin an examination of how the forces of transfer and interdisciplinarity interact.

The review of course-level transfer patterns in the seven program areas sampled in this study found that most interdisciplinary credits will transfer as interdisciplinary credits, but often into different interdisciplinary programs. In only two cases—with peace and global studies—were interdisciplinary credits more commonly converted to disciplinary credits. The differences in patterns witnessed between programs can be explained in part by the history of a given area of study and the number of institutions offering courses in a given field. Program areas that are more internally diverse in subject matter and approach, and those that include pre-professional programs, are relatively heavy users of the block transfer process.

Shifting consideration away from content towards learning outcomes, structures to facilitate block transfer, and more support for faculty involvement in the transfer credit evaluation process are all critically important when considering interdisciplinary curricula, including transfer between applied and traditional liberal arts programs in interdisciplinary fields, given that the career orientation of many pre-professional programs can draw extra scrutiny and resistance to awarding university credits.

As with all disciplinary credit transfer assessments, the evaluation of interdisciplinary credit transfer remains one vested primarily with faculty evaluators, a fact that will ultimately drive any decisions or supports in this area. The current structure of review is highly decentralized, with interdisciplinary courses often being sent to multiple departments and faculty before a final evaluation is made. Strategies are needed to reduce institutional inconsistency and uncertainty over how such courses should be directed for evaluation—although this requires internal conversations within each institution. Evaluation of transfer credit is largely content-driven with important consideration given to other factors, such as learning outcomes, level of instruction, and assignments and textbooks.

Few low-hanging fruit can be found in efforts to develop more streamlined processes, given the complexity and diversity of interdisciplinary curricula. However, targeted efforts can aim at improving information about what criteria are used by each institution in evaluating transfer credits, and at supporting annual or biannual meetings for representatives of general, liberal and interdisciplinary degree-level programs.

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APPENDIX 1: PROGRAMS AND COURSE DESIGNATIONS INCLUDED IN STUDY

	Arts/ Humanities /Interdisci- plinary	Asian Studies	Environ- ment/ Resources (selected)	Gender/ Women's and Sexuality Studies	Global/ International Studies	Indigenous/ First Nations Studies	Peace Studies
Athabasca			ENV			INST	
Camosun		ASIA		GSWS	GBST	IST	
Capilano	LBST			WGST	GLBS	FNST	
CCC							SJPS
CMTN		ASIA	ENV	WMST		FNST	
CNC				WMST		ABST	
COTR			ENST		GLST		
Douglas	HUMS IDST		EAES	GSWS	INTR		
FIC						FNST	
Kwantlen	IDEA	ASIA	ENV	WOMN		INDG	
Langara		ASIA	ENVS	WMST		ABST	PCCN
NIC				WMT			
NLC	HUMA			WGST			
NVIT			ENRT (Practicum)	FNWS		FNST	
Okanagan	IDST			GSWS		INDG	
Selkirk				WS		FNST INDG	PEAC
SFU		ASC	REM	GSWS		FNST	
TRU							
TRU-OL	HUMN			WOST*			
UBC	ASTU	ASIA		GRSJ			
UBC-O	CULT			GWST		INDG	
UFV	ARTS			WMST	GDS	FNST IPK	PACS
UNBC				WMST		FNST	
UVic		PAAS	ES	GNDR*			
VCC			EVSC REMA			INDG	
VIU	INTR** SSID	ASIA		WOST		FNAT	
Yukon				WGST			

*Receiving only

**Not included in data analysis

APPENDIX 2:

COURSE-LEVEL TRANSFER ARTICULATIONS TO 'NEAREST NEIGHBOUR' DISCIPLINE

The survey data gathered in the course of this research illuminates potential relationships between program type, frequency, and type of course credit received in response to transfer credit requests for interdisciplinary courses, including how often 'nearest neighbour' disciplinary evaluation—i.e., directing interdisciplinary curricula into discipline-based programs—results.

The 'nearest neighbour' data for six of the seven programs studied in this report are shown below. In all cases, figures reflect the number of course-level articulation pathways observed for the specified interdisciplinary course when articulated into another course or program area.

		Course Observations
<i>Arts, Humanities, Liberal and Interdisciplinary Studies</i>		
Other Interdisciplinary Programs	Religious Studies	15
	Media Arts and Communications	8
	Environmental	7
	Romance	3
	Fine and Performing Arts	2
	Latin American Studies	2
	Other Interdisciplinary (Gender, Urban, Global, etc.)	4
Disciplinary Programs	History	28
	Geography	14
	Sociology and Anthropology (often cross-listed)	11
	English and Writing	10
	Political Science	5
	Theatre	5
	Other	12
<i>Asian Studies</i>		
Other Interdisciplinary Programs	Humanities, Arts, Liberal Studies	73
	Global and International Studies	34
	Social Sciences	34
	Religious Studies	14
	Gender/Women's and Sexuality Studies	9
	Other Interdisciplinary Programs	11

Disciplinary Programs	History	112
	Political Science	13
	Sociology	12
	Anthropology	12
	Languages (e.g., Chinese, Japanese)	8
	English	2
<i>Gender/Women's and Sexuality Studies</i>		
Other Interdisciplinary Programs	Social Sciences	44
	Humanities, Arts, Liberal Studies	39
	Criminology and Criminal Justice	4
	Other Interdisciplinary	8
Disciplinary Programs	Sociology	47
	Anthropology	37
	English	10
	History	9
	Psychology	5
	Other Disciplinary	4
<i>Global/International Studies</i>		
Other Interdisciplinary Programs	Social Sciences	5
	Humanities, Arts, Liberal Studies	4
	Other Interdisciplinary	2
Disciplinary Programs	Political Science	25
	Geography	6
<i>Indigenous/First Nations Studies</i>		
Other Interdisciplinary Programs	Humanities, Arts, Liberal Studies	48
	Social Sciences	16
	Criminology and Criminal Justice	5
	Other Interdisciplinary (9 different designations)	16
Disciplinary Programs	Anthropology	62
	History	22
	Geography	18
	Political Science	15
	Sociology	11
	Social Work	11
	Biology	6

<i>Peace/Social Justice Studies</i>		
Other Interdisciplinary Programs	Humanities, Arts, Liberal Studies	24
	Social Sciences	24
	Global and International Studies	12
	Criminology and Criminal Justice	9
	Gender/Women's and Sexuality Studies	8
	Indigenous	4
	Religious Studies	3
	Environmental	1
Disciplinary Programs	Political Science	58
	Sociology	16
	Education	5
	Geography	3
	Anthropology	2
	English	2
	History	1

Source: BC Transfer Guide 2017 data.

APPENDIX 3: BLOCK TRANSFER AGREEMENTS FOR SELECTED PROGRAMS

The table below lists BTAs in six of the seven program areas used in the course-by-course analysis for the report. (See p. 27 for explanation for which programs were included.) Information in table was sourced from the BC Transfer Guide (2017).

- In cases where the name of a program has changed, the most recent name is included.
- Only those BTAs current as of 2017 or listed without end-date are included.
- When multiple agreements are in place between two institutions to allow a sending institution's program to transfer into more than one program at the receiving institution, the options are shown together within the table; however, each agreement is recorded separately for data collection purposes.

Sending Institution	Credential at Sending Institution	Receiving Institution	Program Transferred Into	Max. Credits Received
BCIT	Fish, Wildlife, and Recreation Diploma	RRU	BSc, Environmental Science	2 years
BCIT	Fish, Wildlife, and Recreation Diploma	SFU	Any program	24
BCIT	Fish, Wildlife, and Recreation Diploma	UNBC	BSc, Natural Resource Management	68
BCIT	Fish, Wildlife, and Recreation Diploma	UNBC	BSc, Environmental Science	Indiv Assessment
CAMO	Associate of Science Degree in Biology	RRU	BSc, Environmental Science BSc, Environmental Management	2 years
CAMO	Environmental Technology Diploma	RRU	BSc, Environmental Science BSc, Environmental Management	2 years
CAMO	Environmental Technology Diploma	TRU	BSc, Biology	45
CAMO	Environmental Technology Diploma	TRU-OL	Bachelor of Arts	60
CAMO	Environmental Technology Diploma	TRU-OL	Bachelor of General Studies	60
CAMO	Environmental Technology Diploma	UNBC	BA, Environmental Studies	30
CAMO	Environmental Technology Diploma	UNBC	BSc, Environmental Planning	60
CAMO	Environmental Technology Diploma	UNBC	BSc, Environmental Science	30
CAMO	Environmental Technology Diploma	UNBC	BSc, Natural Resources Management	77
CAMO	Environmental Technology Diploma	UVIC	BA, Geography	20 units
CAMO	Environmental Technology Diploma	UVIC	BSc, Biology	20 units

CNC	Natural Resources and Environmental Technology Diploma	UNBC	Bachelor of Natural Resources Management (Forest Ecology Option or Wildlife and Fisheries Option)	75
CNC	Natural Resources and Environmental Technology Diploma	UBC	BSF, Forest Resources Management or Forest Operations only	1 year exemption
COTR	Associate of Arts	RRU	Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies	2 years
COTR	Associate of Science (Environmental Science)	RRU	BSc, Environmental Management BSc, Environmental Practice BSc, Environmental Science	2 years
COTR	Associate of Arts	RRU	Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies	2 years
COTR	Environmental Studies Certificate	DOUG	Associate of Arts (Environmental Science)	30
COTR	Environmental Studies Certificate	UNBC	BA, Environmental Studies	Min: 30
DOUG	Associate of Arts (Environmental Science)	RRU	Bachelor of Science	2 years
KPU	Associate of Science	RRU	BSc, Environmental Management	2 years
KPU	Environmental Protection Technology Diploma	RRU	BSc, Environmental Management BSc, Environmental Science	2 years
KPU	Environmental Protection Technology Diploma	TRU	Bachelor of Science	60
KPU	Environmental Protection Technology Diploma	TRU-OL	Bachelor of Arts Bachelor of General Studies Bachelor of Technology	30 60 60
KPU	Environmental Protection Technology Diploma	UNBC	BA, Environmental Studies BSc, Environmental Science	30 30
LANG	Aboriginal Studies Diploma	AU	Bachelor of Professional Arts— Communications Studies	60
LANG	Arts and Science (Environmental Studies) Diploma	AU	Bachelor of Professional Arts— Communications Studies	60
LANG	Arts and Science (Environmental Studies) Diploma	RRU	BSc, Environmental Science	2 years
LANG	Arts and Science (Environmental Studies) Diploma	TRU	Bachelor of Natural Resource Science	60
LANG	Arts and Science (Environmental Studies) Diploma	TRU-OL	Bachelor of Arts Bachelor of General Studies	30 60
LANG	Arts and Science (Women's Studies) Diploma	AU	Bachelor of Professional Arts— Communications Studies	60
LANG	Associate of Arts in Environmental Studies	RRU	BSc, Environmental Management BSc, Environmental Science	2 years
LANG	Associate of Arts in Peace and Conflict Studies	RRU	BA, Professional Communications	2 years
LANG	Associate of Science in Environmental Studies	RRU	BSc, Environmental Management Bsc, Environmental Science	2 years

NVIT	Natural Resources Technology Diploma	UBC	BSc, Forest Management or Forest Operations only	One year exemption
NVIT	Natural Resources Technology Diploma (Fish, Wildlife, Grasslands, and Recreation)	UNBC	BSc, Natural Resources Management (Forest Ecology Management)	57
NIC	Environmental Assessment Technology Diploma	TRU	Bachelor of Science	45
NIC	Environmental Assessment Technology Diploma	TRU-OL	Bachelor of Arts Bachelor of General Studies	30 60
NWCC	Applied Coastal Ecology Diploma	RRU	BSc, Environmental Science BSc, Environmental Management	2 years
NWCC	Associate of Science	RRU	BSc, Environmental Science BSc, Environmental Management	2 years
NWCC	Associate of Science—Environmental Geosciences Option	RRU	BSc, Environmental Science BSc, Environmental Management	2 years
OC	Water Quality: Environmental Monitoring Technology Diploma	RRU	BSc, Environmental Science BSc, Environmental Management	2 years
OC	Water Quality: Environmental Monitoring Technology Diploma	TRU	BSc, Environmental Science	45
OC	Water Quality: Waste and Wastewater Treatment Technology Diploma	RRU	BSc, Environmental Science BSc, Environmental Management	2 years
OC	Water Quality: Waste and Wastewater Treatment Technology Diploma	TRU	BSc, Environmental Science	45
SELK	Integrated Environmental Planning Technology	RRU	BSc, Environmental Science BSc, Environmental Management	2 years
SELK	Integrated Environmental Planning Technology	TRU-OL	Bachelor of Arts Bachelor of General Studies	30 60
SELK	Integrated Environmental Planning Technology	UNBC	BA, Environmental Studies BSc, Environmental Science	30 30
SELK	Peace Studies	RRU	BA, Justice Studies	2 years
SELK	Recreational Fish and Wildlife Technology Diploma	RRU	BSc, Environmental Science BSc, Environmental Management	2 years
SELK	Recreational Fish and Wildlife Technology Diploma	UNBC	BSc, Natural Resource Management, Wildlife and Fisheries	71
TRU	Natural Resource Science	TRU-OL	Bachelor of General Studies	60
Yukon	Renewable Resource Management Diploma	UNBC	BSc, Natural Resources Management (Forest Ecology Management)	30

APPENDIX 4: SURVEY OF ARTICULATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS



RESEARCH PROJECT: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN INTERDISCIPLINARY TRANSFER IN BC

LETTER OF INFORMATION

Interdisciplinary courses often pose unique challenges when transferred between institutions in the BC Transfer System. BCCAT has commissioned a research study, designed to identify where and how these challenges occur, and to better understand how interdisciplinary course transfer requests are managed within institutions.

A survey has been developed in order to collect information from institutional representatives to several articulation committees. The questions are designed to gauge how institutions handle interdisciplinary transfer requests, the role played by disciplinary reviewers, and how articulation committees consider questions of interdisciplinary transfer.

The articulation committees selected to take part in this study were chosen because they represent interdisciplinary areas or are disciplinary areas that are related to one or more of the following fields: *Asian Studies; Gender Studies; Global or International Studies; Environmental Studies; Hospitality and Tourism; Indigenous Studies; Peace Studies.*

Participation in this survey is voluntary. This survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. No information identifying specific institutions or participants will be collected.

<https://www.surveymonkey.ca/r/RN7W8DD>

The survey will remain open until **June 1, 2018**.

If you have questions about the nature of this research project or the survey itself, please do not hesitate to contact me at the email below. Your participation in this survey is highly valued, and I thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Dr. Michelle Rhodes
33844 King Road
Abbotsford, BC V2S 7M8
604-504-7441, ext 4724
Email: michelle.rhodes@ufv.ca

Survey of Articulation Committee Membership

Interdisciplinary courses often pose unique challenges when transferred between institutions in the BC Transfer System. BCCAT has commissioned a research study in order to learn where and how these interdisciplinary transfer challenges occur, and to better understand how interdisciplinary course transfer requests are managed within institutions.

For the purposes of this study, interdisciplinary is defined as:

"courses and programs where a diversity of tools, concepts, and theories from two or more fields are integrated to such a point that they cannot be extricated from one another easily. The product of this integrative approach is unique from what would be generated collectively by the contributing disciplines acting alone."

A sample of seven interdisciplinary fields were used for this study: Asian Studies, Environmental Studies, Gender/Women's Studies, Global/International Studies, Hospitality, Indigenous Studies, and Peace Studies. This survey is being also distributed to articulation representatives in disciplinary areas related to these programs.

About the Researcher: Michelle Rhodes is a faculty member in the Department of Geography and the Environment at the University of the Fraser Valley.

Survey Information and Participant Rights

How This Study is Conducted: This study includes both survey data and an analysis of current transfer agreements for interdisciplinary courses. The survey is being distributed to institutional representatives to selected articulation committees. Your committee in particular is important because its program focus is one that includes some or all of the components of one or more interdisciplinary fields included in this study.

This survey will take between 15-20 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary. You may withdraw from this survey at any point until your final survey answers are submitted. Any partial surveys will not be included in the data analysis. Once your final survey answers are submitted, however, it is not possible to later withdraw your responses, due to the anonymous nature of the survey.

No personal or identifying institutional information is collected. All data will be kept confidential or anonymous. There are no foreseeable risks involved in this study.

After collation, raw data will be deleted from Survey Monkey in August 2018.

What Will Happen with the Survey Information? The survey information will be collated and analyzed as part of the final report to be submitted to BCCAT. This report will be subject to peer review. The final report will be available via BCCAT's website at a date to be announced by the organization. Your responses are valuable for helping to understand how interdisciplinary courses are and potentially could be handled in articulation processes.

Note: The online survey is hosted by "Survey Monkey" which is a web survey company located in the USA. All re-

sponses to the survey will be stored and accessed in the USA. This company is subject to U.S. laws, in particular, to the US Patriot Act. If you choose to participate in the survey you understand that your responses to the questions will be stored and accessed in the USA.

CONTACT FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE STUDY

If you have any questions about this study, please contact the principal investigator, Dr. Michelle Rhodes, via email at michelle.rhodes@ufv.ca.

CONTACT FOR CONCERNS

If you have any concerns regarding your rights or welfare as a participant in this research study, please contact the Ethics Officer at 604-557-4011 or Research.Ethics@ufv.ca. The ethics of this research project have been reviewed and approved by the UFV Human Research Ethics Board.

By completing the survey, I agree to participate in this study, titled Issues and Challenges in Interdisciplinary Transfer in BC.

1. Please indicate which of the following articulation committee(s) you are attending this year. (Check all that apply.)
 - a. English
 - b. Environmental Programs
 - c. Geography
 - d. History
 - e. Political Science
 - f. Sociology and Anthropology
 - g. Other (Please specify)

2. In what capacity are you serving as a representative to your articulation committee this year?
 - a. Faculty member or department chair of disciplinary program
 - b. Faculty member or department chair of multi- or interdisciplinary program (e.g., Environmental Studies or Women's Studies)
 - c. Dean or System Liaison
 - d. K-12 Educator [skip to q. 20]
 - e. Organizational representative (e.g., BCCAT) [skip to q. 20]
 - f. Other (please specify)

3. Please identify which category best describes the institution you are representing:
 - a. Public Institution: College (Camosun, CNC, COTR, Douglas, Langara, NIC, NLC, NWCC, OC, Selkirk, VCC)
 - b. Public Institution: Special purpose teaching university (CapU, Emily Carr, KPU, RRU, TRU, UFV, VIU)
 - c. Public Institution: Research-intensive university (SFU, UBC, UBC-O, UNBC, UVIC)
 - d. Institute (BCIT, JIBC, NVIT)
 - e. Private, religious, or non-profit institution

4. To the best of your knowledge, who within your institution is primarily responsible for evaluating how disciplinary courses are assigned disciplinary transfer credit?
 - a. Faculty with disciplinary or area expertise
 - b. Deans overseeing relevant subject areas
 - c. Transfer review committee
 - d. Transfer credit evaluator reporting to the Registrar (or equivalent)
 - e. Unsure/ Do not know
 - f. Other (please specify)

5. To the best of your knowledge, what are the primary criteria used to assess how disciplinary transfer credit between institutions is assigned within your disciplinary area(s)? Check all that apply.
 - a. Program/discipline-equivalent credit is assigned based on learning outcomes
 - b. Program/discipline-equivalent credit is assigned based on course content
 - c. Program/discipline-equivalent credit is assigned based on course methods and evaluation
 - d. Program/discipline-equivalent credit is assigned based on level of instruction (1000, 2000, etc.)
 - e. Program/discipline-equivalent credit when an equivalent course already exists in my program or area
 - f. Unsure/ Don't know
 - g. Other (please specify)

6. To the best of your knowledge, who is primarily responsible for evaluating how interdisciplinary courses from other institutions are assigned credit at your institution?
 - a. Faculty with disciplinary or area expertise
 - b. Deans overseeing relevant subject areas
 - c. Transfer review committee
 - d. Transfer credit evaluator reporting to the Registrar (or equivalent)
 - e. Other (please specify)

7. In your role as dean or faculty member/ chair, do you personally evaluate interdisciplinary courses for transfer credit?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

8. If an interdisciplinary course is being evaluated by your institution for transfer credit, but your institution does not offer an equivalent interdisciplinary program, which of the following occurs? (Check all that apply)
 - a. Discipline-equivalent credit is assigned when possible, based on common learning outcomes
 - b. Discipline-equivalent credit is assigned when possible, based on overlap in course content
 - c. Discipline-equivalent credit is assigned when possible, based on course methods and evaluation
 - d. Credit is assigned in similar interdisciplinary programs
 - e. General or area-based credit (e.g., Social Science or Science Electives, Arts, etc.) is assigned
 - f. No credit is assigned
 - g. Please share any additional comments on this question. (Optional.)

9. How often do you or your program/ department/ area see transfer requests to review interdisciplinary courses from other institutions/ students?
- We frequently (multiple times a semester) see requests for transfer credit for interdisciplinary courses
 - We occasionally (multiple times a year) see requests for transfer credit for interdisciplinary courses
 - We only infrequently (once or twice a year, or less) see requests for transfer credit for interdisciplinary courses
 - We do not usually see requests for review for interdisciplinary courses
 - Unsure/ Do not know
 - Please add any comments you may have related to frequency of requests received. (Optional.)
10. To the best of your knowledge, have transfer students entering your program/ area experienced frustrations or delays in having their interdisciplinary courses evaluated for transfer credit at your institution?
- Yes, we occasionally or frequently (multiple times per year) encounter transfer students who are frustrated that their interdisciplinary courses are not recognized for credit at our institution
 - Yes, we occasionally or frequently (multiple times per year) encounter transfer students who are frustrated that their interdisciplinary courses are not recognized for credit in our discipline
 - Yes, we seldom (once per year or less) encounter transfer students who are frustrated that their interdisciplinary courses are not recognized for credit at our institution
 - No, we do not encounter this issue
 - Unsure/ Do not know
 - Please provide any additional comments in response to this question. (Optional.)
11. Does your institution offer interdisciplinary courses or programs?
- Yes
 - No [skip to q. 16]
 - Unsure/ Do not know [skip to q. 16]
12. To the best of your knowledge, how are interdisciplinary course and programs managed within the institutional structure of your home institution?
- Most or all interdisciplinary courses and programs are 'housed' for administrative purposes within disciplinary programs
 - Some interdisciplinary courses and programs are 'housed' for administrative purposes within disciplinary programs, while others are housed in interdisciplinary programs or centres
 - Most or all interdisciplinary courses and programs are housed for administrative purposes in interdisciplinary programs or centres
 - We do not offer interdisciplinary programs or courses [skip to q. 16]
 - Unsure/ Do not know
13. Does your specific department/ area/ faculty offer interdisciplinary courses?
- Yes, we offer 4+ interdisciplinary courses as part of at least one interdisciplinary/ multidisciplinary major or minor

- b. Yes, we offer 4+ interdisciplinary courses, but these are not part of any interdisciplinary/ multidisciplinary major or minor
 - c. Yes, we offer fewer than 4 interdisciplinary courses as part of at least one interdisciplinary/ multidisciplinary major or minor
 - d. Yes, we offer fewer than 4 interdisciplinary courses, and these are not part of any interdisciplinary/ multidisciplinary major or minor
 - e. We do not offer interdisciplinary courses [skip to q. 16]
14. You indicated that your department/ area/ faculty offers more interdisciplinary courses. Please indicate which of the following statements is true. (Check all that apply.)
- a. Our department/ area considers whether or not an interdisciplinary course will transfer to other institutions when we develop this course.
 - b. Our department/ area has experienced difficulties in how our interdisciplinary courses transfer to other institutions.
 - c. Our department/ area only offers interdisciplinary courses that are common at other institutions (e.g., Introduction to Women's/ Gender Studies).
 - d. Our department/ area has not regularly experienced difficulties in interdisciplinary courses transfer out to other institutions.
 - e. Unsure/ Do not know
 - f. Please add any additional comments in response to this question. (Optional.)
15. Has your department/ area experienced frustrations or delays in the evaluation of your interdisciplinary courses for transfer credit at other institutions?
- a. Yes, frequently with multiple institutions that receive our transfer students
 - b. Yes, frequently with only one or two institutions that receive many of our transfer students
 - c. Yes, but only occasionally
 - d. No, we have not experienced frustrations or delays
 - e. Unsure/ Do not know
16. Is your department / area planning to add or expand interdisciplinary or multi-disciplinary programs in the next 1-3 years?
- a. Yes, and the program(s) will utilize or expand the use primarily disciplinary courses
 - b. Yes, and the program(s) will utilize or expand the use primarily interdisciplinary courses
 - c. Yes, and the program(s) will utilize a core of interdisciplinary courses with disciplinary electives
 - d. No, we do not plan to add or expand any interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary programs
 - e. Unsure/ Do not know
 - f. Please add any additional comments in response to this question. (Optional.)
17. Is your department / area planning to build or expand interdisciplinary course offerings in the next 1-3 years?
- a. Yes
 - b. No [skip to q. 19]

- c. Unsure/ Do not know [skip to q. 19]
18. When developing new interdisciplinary curriculum, how important is it that the course will transfer easily to other institutions?
- a. Very important: Whether or not a course will transfer to other institutions is a primary consideration in new course or program development at our institution.
 - b. Somewhat important: We consider how our courses will transfer to similar programs, but other considerations (e.g., program mix, faculty workloads, etc.) are more important.
 - c. Not very important: Transferability of courses is not a significant factor in our decision-making around developing interdisciplinary curriculum.
 - d. Unsure/ Do not know
 - e. Please provide any additional comments here. (Optional.)
19. For purposes of assigning transfer credit, who do you believe is in the best position to evaluate interdisciplinary course transfers at your institution?
- a. Individual faculty with content expertise, regardless of whether those faculty are in disciplinary or interdisciplinary programs
 - b. Department/ areas with the most similar content expertise and/or methodologies
 - c. Deans
 - d. A transfer committee, constituted of faculty and/or deans
 - e. A transfer committee, constituted of transfer evaluation staff/ advisors
 - f. A transfer committee, constituted of transfer evaluation staff/advisor and faculty or deans
 - g. Unsure/ Do not know
 - h. Other (please specify)
20. Please feel free to share any additional comments you may have related to the transfer of interdisciplinary courses between institutions.



BCCAT

Your guide through post-secondary education.