Hitting the Reset Button

The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Functions and Services of Registrars' Offices in BC Post-Secondary Institutions

BCCAT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES & FIGURES

Tables

Figures

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Post-secondary institutions in British Columbia (BC) and elsewhere were forced to react quickly and boldly when the COVID-19 pandemic arrived in early 2020 and caused at least two years of upheaval.

Initially, some observers were concerned that the pandemic had perhaps opened up a Pandora's box of unforeseen, unintended and untenable consequences for the future of higher education. Yet the pandemic also created opportunities for creative new approaches to internal systems and service delivery.
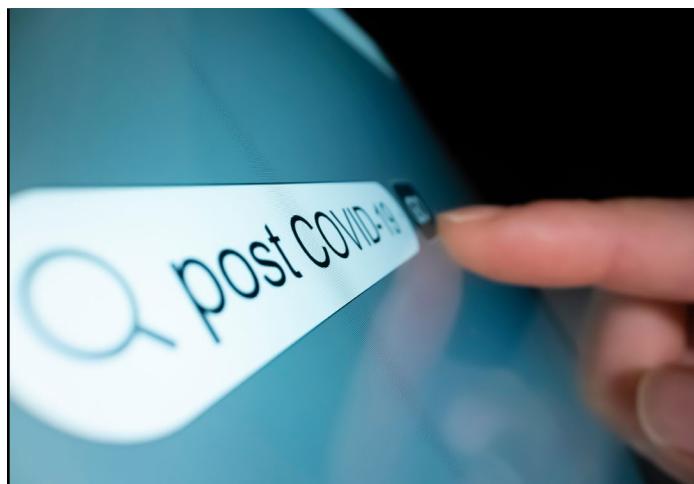
This study evaluates the impact of the pandemic on services provided by the Registrars' Office at BC public and private post-secondary institutions between April 2020 and April 2022.

The research included:

- a review of existing literature on how post-secondary institutions in BC and elsewhere responded to the pandemic in their Registrar's Office;

- an online survey of institutional members of the BC Transfer System to determine what policies, practices and services were altered in units within the Registrar's Office in response to the pandemic; and,

- interviews with 10 survey respondents to provide further context, examples and opinions.

The results indicate that the pandemic was one of the most significant phenomena that Registrars' Offices at BC post-secondary institutions have experienced in a generation or longer. While the Office of the Registrar was only one of many areas dramatically affected on most campuses, the impact of the pandemic on the work of Registrars' Offices was immediate, widespread, and, in some respects, permanent.

Although these impacts were broadly similar by institutional type and geographic region, not all services were affected to the same extent. The areas experiencing the most impact were recruitment, class scheduling and convocation. There was little impact on registration, catalogue/calendar production, transcript evaluation and production, and data security. Service delivery was largely impacted by moving operations to online delivery and by staff working at home. Policies and procedures were also temporarily amended at many institutions to address the evolving effects of the pandemic, with several institutions establishing administrative task forces to monitor and address conditions as these emerged.

The main pandemic-related challenges identified by participants were constant revising of plans and schedules, staff fatigue over time, and responding to student anxiety. The main successes were in the speed of response, commitment of staff, and departmental resilience. Most participants reported that their offices successfully met most of the challenges that were experienced.

The impact of the pandemic was linear, with Registrars' Offices having to respond quickly and nimbly at first and then making more gradual adaptations over time. However, the duration of the pandemic began to cause fatigue among staff. Some pandemic-related changes are likely to be temporary, such as changes to student orientation and convocation, while others may prove to be permanent, such as staff desire for hybrid work environments, more online service delivery, and increased use of electronic services.

The pandemic has also shone a new light on the operational work of the Registrar's Office within post-secondary institutions.

This study provides recommendations for institutional practice and further research.

- Institutions should continue to explore ways to improve service delivery in both online and in-person formats.

- Where changes in response to the pandemic resulted in improved service delivery, institutions should consider maintaining those changes.

- Institutions should consider continuing flexible staff work arrangements where feasible, but allow such arrangements to be guided by a balance of individual choice and institutional need.

- Research on the impact of the pandemic on students and instructional faculty would broaden the picture.

- A comparison of differences in impacts across a wider range of jurisdictions may be another direction for further study.

- Investigation of the long-term impacts of the pandemic may provide further insights.

INTRODUCTION

Context

Post-secondary institutions in BC and elsewhere were forced to react quickly and boldly as the CO-VID-19 pandemic exploded in early 2020 and caused at least two further years of upheaval.

The pandemic was an example of a "black swan" phenomenon (Taleb, 2007) – an unprecedented public health crisis caused by the interaction of key factors. The virus was highly contagious and extensively fatal, and at the start there were no vaccines (Krishnamurthy, 2020). Government authorities implemented extensive emergency measures to protect public health, including closing post-secondary institutions' physical locations.

COVID-19 ushered in dramatic and immediate changes to education at all levels. UNESCO estimates that the pandemic disrupted the learning experiences of over 220 million post-secondary students globally (UNESCO, 2021).

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In April 2020, BC post-secondary institutions closed their campuses almost overnight, sending students and staff back to their homes. Faculty members – many of whom had not taught an online course before (Caldwell, 2020) – were thrown into remote delivery of courses and programs designed for in-person classroom delivery. Staff had to transfer services such as academic advising from face-to-face appointments to online sessions, using platforms such as Zoom or Teams. Institutions adapted applications, grading systems and withdrawal deadlines to the new reality. Administrators rushed to close on-campus facilities, obtain new online platforms, adjust building maintenance plans, and establish task forces or committees to navigate the emergency.

The pandemic deprived most students of the on-campus experience (Johnson, 2021). It also affected the supply of and housing for international students (Sidhu, Cheng, Collins, Chong & Yeoh, 2021), reduced tuition revenue (Statistics Canada, 2020, Oct 8), and closed on-site ancillary services (Ansari, 2020).

Some observers suggested that the pandemic had perhaps opened up a Pandora's Box of unforeseen, unintended and untenable consequences that could harm the future of higher education in general. For example, a report from the European Commission (Farnell, Skledar Matijević & Šćukanec Schmidt, 2021) states:

> [T]here is a risk that COVID-19 could result in devastating consequences for higher education worldwide including: major financial cuts from the public sector, major tuition fee losses (especially in systems with significant numbers of fee-paying international students), potential closures of certain higher education institutions, and negative outcomes for underrepresented, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups (decreased access and increased drop-out). (p. 14)

Yet the pandemic also created opportunities for novel and creative approaches to internal systems and service delivery. Ken Coates, Canada Research Chair of Regional Innovation at the University of Saskatchewan, said:

> I think the pandemic has really challenged us to take a very, very different approach…. And I think we have to figure out how to look at our own evidence, figure out what's actually going on, and adjust accordingly. There will be some good lessons in all of this. We will learn how to do certain things differently (quoted in Neudorf, 2020, p. 1).

Objectives

The goal of this study is to explore pandemic-related modifications of registrarial services, including practices and policies, at BC post-secondary institutions. The study examines changes that were made in response to the pandemic, and whether institutions plan to continue with these revised practices and policies.

Methodology

The research sites for this study were the 39 member institutions of the BC Transfer System. The focus of the research was on services provided by units that are overseen by the Office of the Registrar. Registrar's Offices at different institutions do not all include the same service functions, but there is sufficient commonality to group these services together.

The research was conducted during the 2021-22 academic year, with the collected data covering the period from April 2020 to April 2022.

The study collected data through three methods:

- **A literature review** of existing publications and other relevant information sources on how post-secondary institutions sought to respond to the pandemic in their services and operations within the Registrar's Office;

- **An online survey** of institutional members of the BC Transfer System to identify policies, practices and services that were altered within the Registrar's Office in response to the pandemic; and,

- **Interviews** with 10 survey respondents. The interviews were designed to provide further context, examples and opinions on the impact of the pandemic on the services of the Registrar's Office.

LITERATURE REVIEW

It is hard to over-estimate the impact of the pandemic on society in general and post-secondary institutions in particular. Although post-secondary institutions have responded to other large-scale health emergencies in the recent past – such as SARS, Ebola and H1N1 – as well as to campus shootings and other crises, the COVID-19 pandemic was uncharted territory. Almost all aspects of institutional life and instructional delivery were transformed abruptly.

The literature, both in Canada and globally, has yet to substantively capture the impact of the pandemic on the operations of Registrars' Offices. There are very few research reports or observations on how services such as admissions, registration, advising, transcript production and convocation were affected by the pandemic.

There are some sources of information on how post-secondary institutions generally responded to the pandemic. These include the individual institutional regular updates posted on BCCAT's website. Pandemic updates for universities were also published by *University Affairs* magazine. In addition, two blogs by recognized higher education expert observers – Ken Steele and Alex Usher – produced regular commentary on post-secondary institutions' reckoning with the pandemic. But none of these sources specifically addressed how the pandemic affected the operations of the Registrar's Office.

Therefore, this review begins by considering macro-level effects of the pandemic that may have affected post-secondary institutions in general, and how these may have affected operations of the Registrar's Office. This analysis draws on data and observations from Canada, the USA, and elsewhere.

Macro-Level Effects

Enrollment

All post-secondary students are processed multiple times by the Registrar's Office, through applications, admissions, registrations, transcripts and convocations. Therefore, any factor affecting an institution's student enrollment can directly influence the quantity and complexity of the work flowing through units in a Registrar's Office.

In the USA, for example, enrollments for the Spring semester 2020 declined 3.5% from the same semester in 2019: a loss of 603,000 student enrollments (Sedmak, 2020). This represented the greatest enrollment decline in a decade (Hope, 2021). The downward trend in US enrollments continued as the pandemic progressed (Nadworthy, 2021). Community colleges were particularly affected, with annual enrollment in 2020 down 22.7% from 2019, and 69% fewer new students than in the previous year (Sutton, 2021). Much of the enrollment decline was because of financial difficulties faced by students, as well as fear of exposure to the pandemic (Belfield & Brock, 2020).

Elsewhere in the world, the pandemic's impact on post-secondary enrollment differed by global region and national affluence. In a UNESCO (2021) survey of member countries, 49% of respondents reported no decreases in enrollment. Increases in enrollment were reported by high-income countries in Europe and North America, and decreases in enrollment were reported by lower- and middle-income countries.

In BC, enrollment numbers actually increased at some post-secondary institutions. During 2020, enrollment expanded at the four largest institutions in the province. For example, UBC's annual student enrollment grew 2.9% in 2020, which exceeded the 0.2% increase reported in 2019, and BCIT's 2019 enrollments rose 2.6% in contrast to a 0.4% increase in the previous year (Van Santvoort, 2020). However, there were enrollment declines across all regions of the province. According to 2019-2020 data collected by the provincial Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training, most institutions in the Lower Mainland saw reduced enrollment.

For example, Kwantlen's enrollment decreased by 7.3% and VCC's by 14.5%. But some showed modest increases: for example, Capilano's increased 0.7% and UFV's increased 2.9% (Advanced Education and Skills Training, 2020).

Enrollments at institutions in other regions in BC showed declines: for example, Camosun's decreased 6.2%, Okanagan College's 4.8%, and UNBC's 3.5%. Similar trends occurred in other parts of Canada. In Ontario, for instance, direct entry applications to universities from high school students rose 6.2% on average (OUAC, 2022), although Ontario colleges fared less well, with a decline of approximately 6% in admissions in Fall 2021 (Colleges Ontario, 2021).

International Education

Not surprisingly, international student enrollments were especially affected by the pandemic. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) reported a 17% decrease in the number of international student study permits granted in 2020, compared with the year before. This was the first downturn in two decades for the annual number of study permits (Pajdo, 2022). Other countries experienced similar declines, although the numbers stabilized as the pandemic progressed (Moody, 2021).

Lockdowns around the world restricted mobility and travel, leaving many international students in Canada in limbo. As one UBC student said:

> I do have some friends who decided to stay [in Canada] and they're trapped and they can't leave because all the borders are closed. And they can't even enjoy their exchange anymore because all the shops and public transport [are] shutting down so I feel like it's definitely best to be home with family right now…. We can worry about having fun later. (White, 2020, para. 13)

International students also faced logistical challenges with visas, study permits, time zones, unreliable Internet services (Narang, 2020) and China's ban on Google technology (Sheehan, 2018). In addition, they encountered financial difficulties, including home currency fluctuations and lay-offs from part-time jobs (Coulton, 2020). Although international students were potentially eligible to receive the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), many discovered that they failed to meet all the requirements and thus did not qualify for this financial assistance (International Study, 2020). Post-secondary institutions found themselves ill-equipped to provide adequate international student support (Firang, 2020), partly because regulations and policies from agencies such as Immigration, Refugees and agencies such as IRCC continually changed as the pandemic evolved, leaving registrarial personnel striving to remain current.

Perhaps the most serious impact of the pandemic on international students was the cumulative effect of so many stress-ors. Many international students struggled with mental health issues (Yuen-Kwan Lai, Lee, Wang, Lai, Ho, Lam, Ip & Lam, 2020). While this situation mostly impacted the workload of counsellors and student affairs staff (Nath, 2021), staff in Registrar's Offices were often dealing with distraught international students when providing advice, negotiating fee payments and keeping track of current contact information.

Technology

When the pandemic hit, almost all post-secondary institutions pivoted overnight to provide emergency online instruction and services. This sudden move was historic. As Krishnamurthy (2020) noted, "Never in our history have entire student bodies been abruptly shifted from face-to-face to remote instruction through the use of digital technologies." (para. 4)

As the pandemic became more prolonged than initially anticipated, many wondered if the sudden transition would create considerable student animosity towards online delivery. In June 2020, for instance, an open letter from BC's research university Provosts to new and continuing students sought to reassure them that institutions understood students' anxiety about online delivery, and were committed to delivering excellent education nonetheless.

COVID-19 may well be the defining event for your generation of university students.... Most of you will experience an online learning environment this fall, except for those situations where in-person experiences are essential to learning outcomes and can be managed safely. While many of you and your parents have let us know you are grateful that we have prioritized your health and safety, we also know some of you are concerned about the quality of learning that will occur outside the conventional classroom or laboratory.

We are confident that our faculty and instructors will provide you with quality learning experiences that will help build relationships, develop a sense of community wherever you are located, and give you the academic foundations you need for your life ahead. We also want to reassure you that the thousands of committed staff who support you through counselling, academic advice, emotional and spiritual support, volunteer opportunities, career information, learning supports, financial aid, and in so many other ways are gearing up to stay connected and accessible in this new, primarily online environment. ("An open letter", 2020, para. 1-2)

Despite some initial hiccups, students largely adapted to studying online, using Zoom, Teams, Blackboard, and other forms of online communication to interact with professors and peers. Some studies indicated that most students were growing used to a "new normal" learning experience and wanted the choice to continue studying online, at least partially. For example, a Canadian Digital Learning Pulse survey of students (2020) found that 73% of respondents wanted access to fully online courses going forward. A survey of students enrolled in in-person classes found that 68% of responses desired enhanced use of technology in the future as part of their classes, such as digital materials and resources (Johnson, 2020). Online delivery was also recognized as supporting the learning experience of students who do not excel in the in-person class format (Thomas, 2020).

It is important to acknowledge that the move to online course delivery did not affect all students equally or in the same way. For example, students with disabilities often have extensive experience with learning technologies and adaptive equipment. When these students were using software on their own computers, functioning fully online during the pandemic was feasible, but when they required specialized equipment or staff support in an on-campus setting, many faced serious obstacles to their studies when campuses were closed (Severance, 2021).

> Despite some initial hiccups, students largely adapted to studying online, using Zoom, Teams, Blackboard, and other forms of online communication to interact with professors and peers. Some studies indicated that most students were growing used to a "new normal" learning experience and wanted the choice to continue studying online, at least partially

Impact on Staff

The pandemic's sudden arrival caused staff to hurriedly relocate from on-campus workplaces to makeshift home offices. As one career advisor observed:

One week I was shaking your hand in the hallway before your class and I was letting you know how excited I was for spring to arrive. Seemingly the next moment I was connecting from home via Zoom and telling you I wasn't sure how COVID-19 would impact your career goals. This isn't how I thought the spring term would go. (Lorenz, 2020, para. 1)

The full impact of COVID-19 was unknown at the beginning of the pandemic. The impact grew and continued until the pandemic dissipated into an endemic, with flare-ups as students, faculty and staff began returning to campus in early 2022.

Much of the stress caused by the pandemic was due to its relentless uncertainty. Lockdowns and various restrictions came and went, plans were made and abandoned, and directives and deadlines were continually altered. As one Registrar noted, the sheer inconstancy was precarious.

> The "new normal" everyone is talking about seems like constantly shifting sands in a sandstorm. We can't see too far ahead and the landscape and even our footing is shifting, causing us to be unstable and requiring us to deal with something new every day. I expressed to some staff that this is tiring. They responded with "Yes, and think about how our students feel." (McMillan, 2020, para. 1)

Effects on the Registrar's Office

Very few documented observations or published reports have examined the pandemic's impact on the operations and functions of the Registrar's Office in Canadian post-secondary institutions. Some pandemic-related articles in professional publications, such as *University Affairs* and *Communiqué*, include comments from Registrars. Recent conferences of Canadian post-secondary organizations, such as the Association of Registrars of the Universities and Colleges of Canada (ARUCC) and the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT), have included updates on the impact of the pandemic, but records of these sessions are not generally available on the Internet. Therefore, the discussion below relies mainly on the published results of a 2020 survey of US institutions by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO, 2020).

Recruitment and Admissions

Staff working in the recruitment and admissions areas of Registrars' Offices suddenly faced new challenges due to the onset of the pandemic. Post-secondary institutions that relied heavily on international students for enrollments lost potential students as a result of border closures, travel restrictions and visa issues. Recruiting processes for domestic students quickly pivoted away from face-to-face interviews and on-campus orientations to online-only services.

Data from Fall 2020, as reported by AACRAO, indicated that recruitment at post-secondary institutions was strongly affected but not on every dimension. Applications were down 37% from the previous year, but the percentage of withdrawals of applications (72%) was largely unchanged.

Part of the reason many post-secondary institutions weathered the effects of the pandemic on recruitment and admissions was their early decisions to broaden admissions policies and practices. For example, 62% of institutions in the AACRAO survey had relaxed, or were considering relaxing, required high school grades for admission, and 65% were extending deadlines for receiving high school transcripts.

The pandemic also prompted new ways for institutions to connect with enrollment leads and prospects. One example is "virtual open house days" that allowed applicants to participate in online campus tours, faculty welcomes and orientations to campus life.

In the Fall 2020 term, 34% of institutions in the AACRAO survey had moved to online delivery of their orientation sessions, and 50% were considering this change. In addition, 56% of institutions had already moved to online advising, with a further 25% considering this change.

Reports from Europe suggested that online delivery of recruitment-related services was particularly successful because it offered a digital-first experience to a new generation of students (Valerkou, 2021). Canadian institutions also adopted these digital strategies, with the possibility that these could become permanent. For example, Melissa Padfield, Vice Provost and Registrar at the University of Alberta, said:

The shift to online student recruitment is one of the best examples of a change that we are hoping to carry forward. Being unable to invite prospective students to our campuses or visit them in their high schools was challenging. As a result, we are piloting a digital viewbook – a promotional tool for telling prospective students all about our university – and last year ran a successful online open house, among many virtual engagements. (quoted by MacDonald, 2021, p.19)

Session Dates

When the pandemic started in the middle of the Spring 2020 semester, institutions realized that its impact would require changes to semester start and end dates, and other adjustments to the academic schedule.

In the AACRAO survey, 28% of responding institutions were considering, or had already implemented, ending the Spring semester earlier than normal; 27% anticipated that they would end the Fall semester earlier as well. And 28% were also considering or had already implemented a delay to the start of the Winter semester.

Internal Task Forces

Registrar's Office staff were often invited to join institutional task forces dealing with pandemic-related issues. A respondent to the ACCRAO survey describes how many interrelated decisions needed to be made on a rolling basis as the pandemic unfolded:

We have a number of task force working groups which are working well. A huge success was ramping up our online summer offerings, cutting our summer per credit price significantly and we are generating significant additional revenue as a result. Although our apps and accepts were down, before the pandemic hit we were running significantly ahead on deposits. We moved our deposit deadline to June 1 so we do not yet know where we will land. Fall registrations are down, but only by a few percentage points at this time. For the fall we are actively exploring how to significantly improve our delivery of online courses should we need to switch again mid-semester and also to allow for supplementing or substituting course delivery through this means. (AACRAO, 2020c, p. 16)

Grading Practices

Institutions also needed to adjust their grading systems and practices to accommodate situations where students' work had been compromised, truncated or interrupted by pandemic-related changes (Dembicki, 2020). Grading was most strongly affected in the Spring 2020 semester, but adjustments to grading systems continued through later terms as institutions grappled with the implications of instruction in various combinations of online and in-person delivery formats.

The 2020 AACRAO survey found that only 27% of responding institutions did not plan to make any changes to their current grading systems. Almost three-quarters of all responding institutions either had made changes or were considering changes. Of those considering making changes, 68% were considering allowing students to change one or more of their course letter grades to "pass/fail" or a similar grade, while 47% of respondents were considering extending the deadline by which students could select a grade option for the term.

Some respondents' comments reveal the complexity and diversity of institutional adjustments to grading systems.

Implementing a grading scale of P, D, F. Students will have until the end of April to select any classes that they want changed to that scale. Faculty will enter the actual grades, but then the Registrar's Office staff would change the ones to a P that the student designates and that fall in the A - C range.

We are considering a Pass/Fail option with 3 levels: grades A-C would be a P grade (does not calculate into the GPA and meets C or Higher pre-req requirements), grade of D would be an S grade (does not calculate in the GPA and does not meet C or higher Pre-req requirements), and a grade of F would remain an F (calculates into the GPA).

The following notation will appear on all transcripts: "A global health emergency during this term required significant course changes. Unusual enrollment patterns and grades may reflect the tumult of the time."

We defaulted all the courses that originally started as partially or fully face-to-face to the pass/fail grading option, and we gave affected students the ability to request to change one of more of their grades to Letter Grades. We have not yet made any changes to courses that were already offered online – but are reconsidering. (AACRAO, 2020a, p. 15)

The adjusted grading systems being used by post-secondary institutions as a result of the pandemic were extensive, creative and locally specific (Svrluga, 2020). Respondents to the AACRAO 2020 survey reported these examples of new grades or grading schemes:

CN: COVID-19 No Grade

Complete Credit, Credit, No Credit: CCR grade is equivalent to C- or higher grade, CR is a D grade.

COVID-Pass (CP) and **COVID-Fail** (CF)

CR: Full credit, meets all requirements)

GC: General credit, meets minimal passing requirements

NC: No credit

CR/NC: currently in discussion on splitting P grade into a P/P+ due to a new state mandate

CRT: Credit received, generally transferable; **CR** Credit received, may or may not be transferable

WV: Internal notation for a withdrawal within an extended period; transcript notation stays as a W

F*: Failing Grade that is not calculated into GPA

NC: No credit; already had a P/F grade and moved to P/NC

Pass/Fail: no numerical equivalents. Pass will receive credit, fail will not.

S: satisfactory. To be used with D and F.

WE: withdrawal with exceptional circumstance

YWC: withdrawal the student can select once they see their final grades

McQuarrie (2021) gave examples of how BC post-secondary institutions adjusted grades and grading practices. She also noted that, in addition to prompting some institutions to change final grade notations, the pandemic caused some instructors to reconsider their grading criteria or methods of evaluation for courses. For example, "a final examination, which could be difficult to administer securely or at a time that was feasible for every student, might be replaced with a case-based exam, a take-home exam, or an extended essay." (p. 5)

Transcripts and Other Documents

Moving the work of Registrars' Offices online impeded the production and distribution of student transcripts. Most students still had online access to unofficial transcripts, but these were unsigned and of little use to students seeking to transfer between institutions, or those needing to update sponsors or government agencies on their academic progress. Institutions that were members of electronic transcript exchanges, such as MyCreds in Canada, were able to continue business as usual. Staff who had access off campus to colour printers, blank certificates, and signature stamps could con-

tinue issuing paper transcripts. The AACRAO survey results indicated that 76% of respondent institutions continued to print transcripts, with staff at 64% of those institutions making brief visits to campus to carry out this task. Some institutions temporarily ceased offering paper transcripts.

Institutions adjusted their operations in order to issue other documents electronically, such as enrollment letters, completion letters, inquiries about student attendance, and letters to sponsors and other government agencies.

The evaluation of transfer credit requests from sending institutions is another function commonly performed by staff in the Registrar's Office. The impact of the pandemic on that procedure is examined in another recent BCCAT publication (McQuarrie, 2021).

Convocation

Restrictions on the number of people gathering in one place, and the need to observe social distancing and required sanitation measures, required most institutions to re-invent their graduation ceremonies as online events.

In the AACRAO 2020 survey, 47% of responding institutions cancelled in-person ceremonies but were slower to determine a replacement format, or to decide whether to hold the ceremonies at all. Some institutions (17%) moved the date of the ceremonies forward, presumably hoping the pandemic would be short-lived. At the time of the survey, 12% of respondents had moved to an online format for convocation.

In the early stages of the pandemic, institutions scrambled to replace in-person ceremonies that had already been planned and booked for months. Later, many institutions discovered refreshed vitality and significance in the new online convocation formats. Melissa Padfield, Vice-Provost and Registrar at the University of Alberta, said:

> Graduates are always at the heart of our convocation ceremonies, but this year we faced the same challenge that every university did – making sure the student presence was still there in a virtual ceremony. We settled on making student-created videos. Before the pandemic, we would have worried that home-made content wouldn't have high enough production value. But the pandemic has been a great equalizer when it comes to our collective expectations around what makes a great video. We embraced the idea that the authenticity of a message is what matters most. And to be fair to our students, they created great videos with nothing more than their phones. They were rightly the stars of convocation. Moving forward we'll be looking for more opportunities to bring our students into the production of our ceremonies. (quoted in MacDonald, 2021, p. 19)

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The results of the data collection are presented in this section of the report, along with analysis of their context and implications.

Survey and Interview

Survey data were collected from the institutional members of the BC Transfer System (BCTS). All BCTS member institutions are located in BC with the exception of two out-of-province members. A link to the online survey was emailed to the registrars at the 39 BCTS member institutions. Representatives of 27 institutions completed the survey, for a response rate of 69%. The survey questions are presented in **Appendix A**.

UBC provided survey responses for its Vancouver campus and for its Okanagan campus. These were entered separately in the data set. Therefore, the number of survey responses (28) differs slightly from the number of institutions participating in the survey (27).

Survey Demographics

Table 1 shows the responses by type of post-secondary institution (PSI), using the institutional categorizations of the provincial Student Transitions Project. The highest numbers of responses came from colleges, private institutions, and teaching-intensive universities, although that also reflects the higher representation in those institutional categories in the BC Transfer System.

Table 1. Post-Secondary Institutions (PSIs) Participating in the Survey, by Institution Type

Type of PSI	Number Completing Survey	Percentage of Respondents
College	8	30
Institute	2	7
Teaching-intensive university	4	15
Research-intensive university	6	22
Private institution	6	22
Out-of-province	1	4
TOTAL	**27**	**100%**

Table 2 shows the distribution of the respondents by geographical region, using the regions defined by the Student Transitions Project. The region with the most respondents was the Mainland/Southwest region, which is not surprising given that 24 of 39 BC Transfer System member institutions are located in that region.

Table 2. Post Secondary Institutions (PSIs) Participating in the Survey, by Geographical Region

Region	Number of PSIs Completing Survey	Percent of Respondents
Mainland/Southwest	16	59
Vancouver Island	2	7
Cariboo-North	3	11
Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenays	5	19
Outside BC	1	4
TOTAL	**27**	**100%**

Following the collection of the survey data, 10 interviews were conducted to collect contextual qualitative data. The interview participants were survey respondents who indicated their willingness to participate when completing the survey. The interviewees represented four colleges, three teaching-intensive universities, two research-intensive universities, and one private institution. Interviews were conducted by Zoom and lasted approximately 30 minutes each. The qualitative interview responses are represented by the quotes in the analyses below.

The interview questions are presented in **Appendix B**.

## Data Analysis

Strength of Impact on Different Areas

Figure 1 presents the survey data on the impact of the pandemic in different areas of the Registrar's Office. These data indicate that the impact of the pandemic was experienced differently in different areas. The largest domain impacted was "Staff Work Locations," with 13 (46%) respondents reporting a *Huge Impact* in this area. This is not surprising, given that the pandemic caused a sudden shift to remote work for most staff. The second greatest challenge was the "Amount of In-Person Services and Online Services," where 11 respondents (39%) reported a *Huge Impact*. This finding was also expected, since institutions had to rapidly develop and implement online delivery of previously in-person services. Other institutions reported *Moderate Impact* on "Staff Roles" (61%) and "Staff Schedules" (50%). These responses suggested that these effects were widespread and were related to other changes; however, these were also the areas most reported as experiencing *Little Impact*, so the more intense effects were only experienced by some institutions.

Figure 1. Strength of The Pandemic's Impact in Areas within Registrars' Offices (n=28)

Legend: ■ Huge impact ■ Large impact ■ Moderate impact ■ Little impact
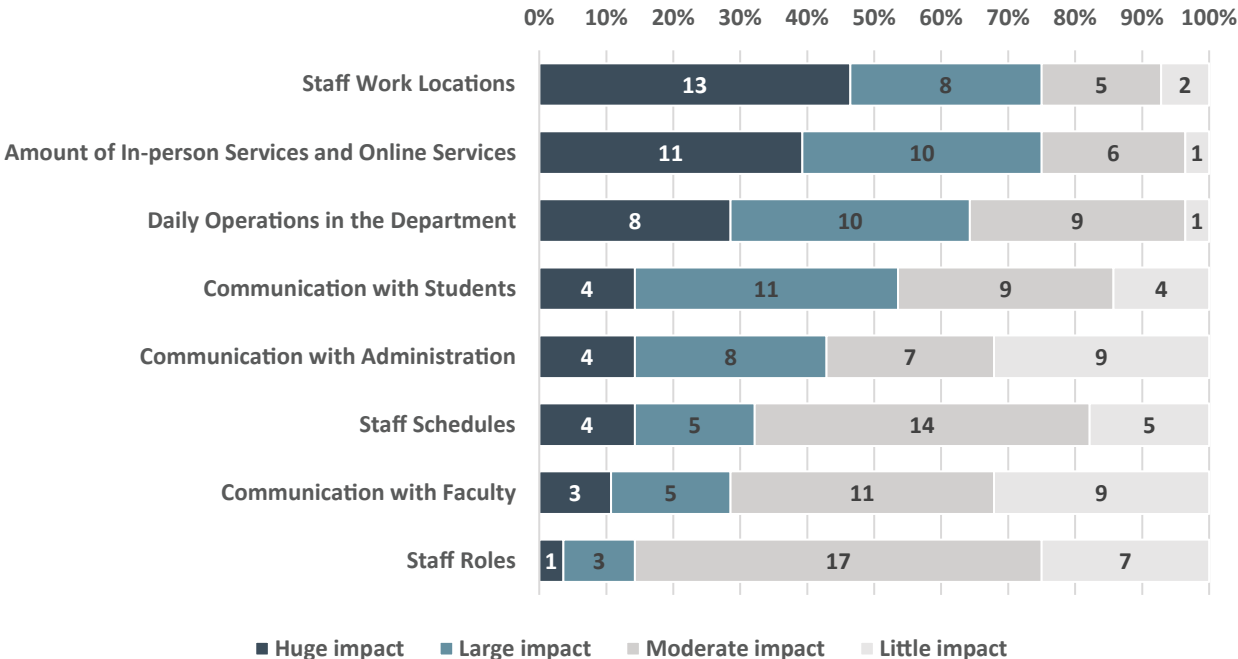
The pandemic presented various challenges to Registrars' Offices. The reported frequencies of these challenges are presented in **Figure 2**.

Figure 2. Frequencies of Challenges Within Registrars' Offices (n=28)
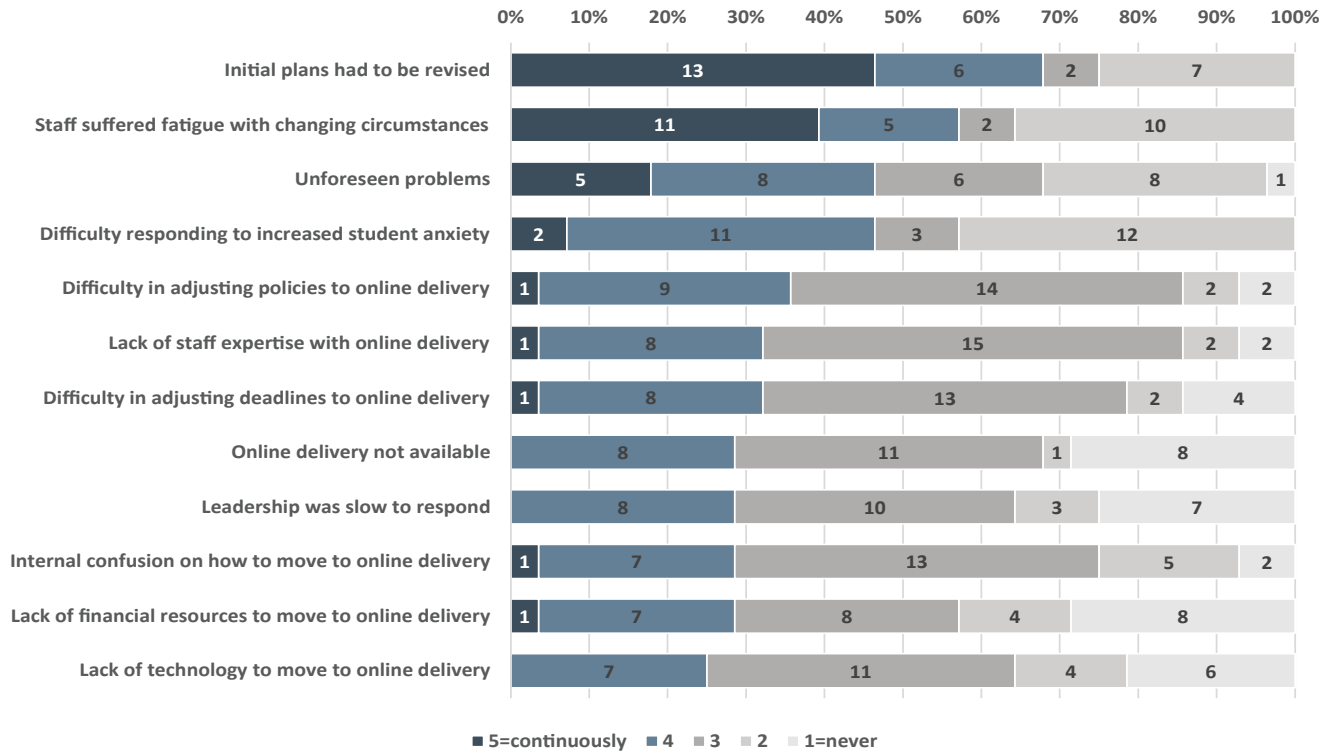
The challenge rated most often as "continuous" was "Initial plans had to be revised", with 13 (over 40%) of the respondent institutions reporting this. This indicates the extent to which institutions needed to rapidly revise their plans in the face of the pandemic. The second most frequently experienced challenge was "Staff suffering fatigue with changing circumstances" identified by 11 institutions (39%). When the two highest points on the response scale are combined, "unforeseen problems" and "difficulty responding to increased student anxiety" also emerged as frequent challenges, with 13 respondents rating each of these as items as "continuous" or close to continuous.

Challenges that were reported as occurring less frequently mostly related to technology, with "internal confusion on how to move to online delivery", "lack of financial resources to move to online delivery", and "lack of technology to move to online delivery" receiving the lowest ratings. This indicates that Registrars' Offices generally did not feel technologically hampered in responding to the pandemic. Several challenges rated by most respondents as occurring moderately often – such as "lack of staff expertise with online delivery" and "difficulty in adjusting policies to online delivery" – suggest that the impact of the pandemic was quite widespread in some Registrars' Offices, as staff were taxed to meet the demands of the new work environment.
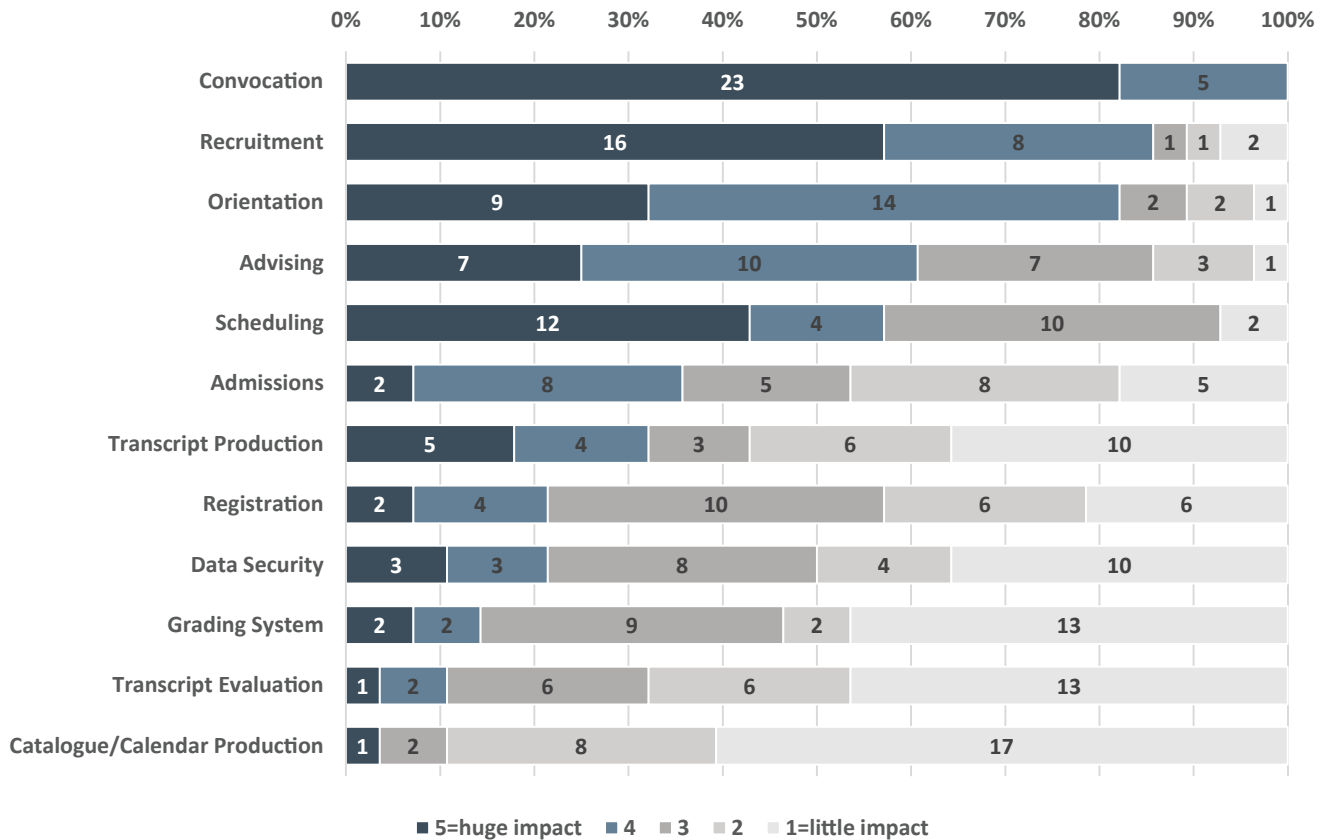
In the interviews, one Registrar commented:

> I'm very proud of what we were able to accomplish. I think we completely re-structured, how we do admissions, how we do registration, how we handle forms, how we have meetings, how we engage with students. Yes, everything changed.
> (Private institution)

Strength of Impact on Different Responsibilities

The survey also explored how strongly the pandemic impacted specific responsibilities within Registrars' Offices. The results are presented in **Figure 3**.

Figure 3. Strength of the Impact on Specific Responsibilities within Registrars' Offices (n=28)

	5=huge impact	4	3	2	1=little impact
Convocation	23	5			
Recruitment	16	8	1	1	2
Orientation	9	14	2	2	1
Advising	7	10	7	3	1
Scheduling	12	4	10		2
Admissions	2	8	5	8	5
Transcript Production	5	4	3	6	10
Registration	2	4	10	6	6
Data Security	3	3	8	4	10
Grading System	2	2	9	2	13
Transcript Evaluation	1	2	6	6	13
Catalogue/Calendar Production	1	2	8		17

Convocation

All institutions reported some impact on their graduation ceremonies, with 23 (82%) reporting a *Huge Impact*. Health regulations restricting large public gatherings required institutions to change their convocation formats, which led to much creativity; for example, one university held a drive-in ceremony. Many institutions cancelled convocation altogether in 2020 and hosted an online version in 2021 before returning to in-person ceremonies in 2022. Some re-invented their ceremonies from the beginning in a virtual format, and began to incorporate pre-recorded speeches and presentations.

One college reported, "We went virtual in three months! The entire event changed!" One university reported that "convocations all moved online, so we lost revenue we would normally receive for gown rental and other ancillary services." The loss of in-person ceremonies was also reported as a disappointment to students, who view the gatherings as a rite of passage and a point of closure for their education. Several institutions reported that their virtual ceremonies contained elements that they would continue to incorporate into future in-person ceremonies, such as student-produced videos.

Recruitment

Almost all institutions reported moving "Recruitment Activities" online. As **Figure 3** shows, 16 institutions (57%) reported a *Huge Impact* in this area, with only two institutions (7%) reporting *Little Impact*. For some institutions, online recruitment activities dramatically increased their amount of email correspondence, while others focused on making phone calls to prospects and leads. The inability to travel, especially for international student recruitment, meant that marketing activities such as education fairs, high school visits, campus tours and open houses were moved online. Some activities, such as "Student for a Day" programs, were cancelled, and other recruitment activities were reduced in scope.

One institutional representative described the scope of this challenge:

> *Everything in recruitment was moved virtual. And that was a challenge. Some of the backend transactional things were less of a challenge. But those front-facing pieces like recruitment became a lot more tricky. And we had to think of ways to keep external partners engaged, like high school counselors, for example. They're used to us being in the schools and interacting in person. And so we had to have virtual events, virtual information sessions, all that kind of stuff and do it in a way that's engaging and creative.* (Teaching-intensive university)

When institutions began delivering online courses and services, they realized their recruitment market had also changed, and that those changes brought new risks.

> *Our target market shifted. And in some instances, it even expanded. Once we knew that we were going to be offering online courses for a long period of time, suddenly we were able to think about expanding our local boundaries related to recruitment. So we were attending virtual recruitment fairs, even out of province, and bringing students in from other markets that we hadn't before. And so that was certainly an opportunity. It's also a bit of a risk because we were bringing students in but we didn't know for how long the online courses would exist, and is that a concern?* (Teaching-intensive university)

Institutional representatives reported other advantages and disadvantages caused by the pandemic's impact on recruitment.

> *Recruitment being all virtual, we saved a heck of a lot of money, which is positive because our recruiters weren't traveling internationally and nationally. So that surplus has helped our bottom line. But I would say that all of those virtual events were really exhausting for us. And prospective students got really bored with them as well.* (Research-intensive university)

Orientation

Orientation activities were significantly affected by the pandemic, with 90% of respondents rating the impact in this area as "huge" or close to huge. These activities moved almost entirely online to asynchronous delivery with videos, enhanced with social media communication. Some institutions had already delivered student orientations fully or partially online, but most had to create virtual delivery of their orientations from scratch.

Advising

The impact of the pandemic on advising was similar to the impact on orientation, and for many of the same reasons. Seventeen institutions (61%) experienced "huge" or close to huge impacts, and only one institution reported little impact. Academic and program advising was already available online or via telephone at some institutions, and those institutions simply increased the availability of these services. But most institutions had to provide virtual services to replace in-person meetings. There were generally two steps to this process. First, creating online appointment booking required the launch of online calendar invitation software. Second, advising sessions were delivered online using Zoom or Teams, either one-on-one or as a group drop-in. Interestingly, institutions reported strong student uptake for this new form of delivery, with more students taking advantage of the advising service and with fewer no-shows for appointments.

Scheduling

Scheduling received the third highest number of *Huge Impact* ratings (13 institutions [46%]), with an additional four respondents rating the impact as being close to huge. Only two institutions rated the impact on "Scheduling" as small. Many respondents experienced considerable increases in workload in the Registrar's Office, along with frustration as they grappled with the new complexities the pandemic created. They also frequently needed to revise their responses, as the impact of the pandemic evolved and intensified.

Continual reductions in the number of in-person classes meant reworking schedules several times, causing delays and confusion. One college representative described the situation at their institution as "no changes in process, but we had to create a new delivery model coding structure. Large changes to schedule after publication meant access to courses changed after registration started." Most institutions did not previously deliver much online programming but then had to accommodate various modalities (e.g. in-person, blended, online) for almost every course. One institutional representative reported that "term dates were changed, mode of delivery was changed in the system, deadlines for faculty submission of course information were extended, timelines to complete a schedule were reduced to 24 hours – revisions, revisions, revisions." Others pointed to external causes of scheduling changes, such as public health orders and amendments to immigration policies.

Admissions

The impact of the pandemic on admissions varied considerably. Ten institutions (36%) reported significant impacts, and 13 (46%) reported minimal impacts. Some institutions were able to continue as normal with no or little changes to their admissions procedures. Other institutions increased the amount of online admissions services they offered, especially where online self-service application portals already existed. Some scrambled to create online services where none existed before: for example, shifting in-person admissions advising and interviewing to telephone or Zoom/Teams appointments, or removing the option of paper applications.

At institutions where all staff were working at home, some institutions stopped mailing admissions letters, and either cancelled admissions testing or moved the tests online. At other institutions, support staff alternated between working at home and working on campus, and while staff were on campus, they digitally scanned application materials for emailing to admissions team members. One university interviewee reported that "much of the application adjudication went from program heads to admission advisors – supported by program heads in borderline cases," and this may have happened elsewhere as well. It was also common for institutions to extend more flexibility in admission deadlines, which was reported by 21 institutions (75%). Obtaining transcripts and grades from some applicants or countries was much more difficult if electronic transcript exchanges did not exist.

International applicants were strongly affected by continually changing immigration regulations. As one institutional representative reported:

> *It's been the bane of my existence. The changes were constant, without warning and with nowhere to seek clarification….*
> *It caused us to create so many additional workflows, and procedures and forms. And it caused students such distress, because a policy gets published, usually at 5pm on a Friday, and then we have to try to interpret how that affects our students. And we had no one to ask for clarification. And so I relied a lot on other registrars from other institutions.* (Private institution)

One noticeable consequence of the pandemic was that several institutions moved their admissions processes from paper-based to online.

> *In admissions, when we admitted a student, previously everything was paper…. [W]e had 10 filing cabinets across the wall. [The pandemic] forced us to get online, to figure out SharePoint, and to develop totally new workflows. And we did all of this in weeks…. And it was a lot of overtime for many, many people.* (Private institution)

Transcript Production

The production of transcripts was not strongly affected at most institutions. Ten institutions (36%) reported *Little Change* and only five (18%) reported a *Huge Change*. If offices were closed, in-person pick-up of transcripts was replaced by mailing transcripts. Other institutions switched from daily to weekly transcript production. Where offices were completely closed, students were given signed electronic transcripts, which some respondents noted compromised the security of the transcript.

Registration

The pandemic's impact on institutions' course registration systems was generally minor because these systems were already mostly online. Most institutions (39%) rated the impact on "Registration" as 3 on the 1-5 scale. Only two institutions reported *High Impact* and six (21%) reported *Little Impact*. However, interview data indicated that frequent revisions to scheduling led to implementation problems affecting student access to course registrations, often because of uncertainty about how courses or programs would be delivered. In the early stages of the pandemic in 2020, registration dates were delayed, sometimes by two months, and the Fall and Winter terms were truncated. Many institutions also extended the course add/drop deadline by a week or so, allowing students to drop courses if online delivery did not suit them. Institutions also adjusted registration-related fees at the last minute when course delivery moved online, and transitioned to collecting fees through online payment options only.

Some institutions reported increased student requests for late withdrawal. Some also reported international students being very anxious about constantly changing immigration policy, travel restrictions, and their ability to register and study from abroad. Some institutions reported significant decreases in registrations by international students, who simply stayed away on a temporary withdrawal from their programs.

Data Security

Generally, the pandemic did not impact the security of data in student information systems and other systems operating within the Registrar's Office. Only four institutions (14%) reported any impact at all. However, interviewees from some institutions highlighted the impact of pandemic-related conditions on the verification of student identity and consent:

> We had unique challenges in terms of knowing that we were speaking with a student, for example, if it's email sometimes they're emailing from email addresses [that] don't match what's on their account. And so we had to make new procedures for making sure we are really talking to the student we're talking to. (Private institution)

The number of employees working from home increased the number of issues related to the use of VPNs and the use of laptops issued to staff. There were also increased risks when staff accessed institutional systems from non-institutional networks. Security issues around increased reliance on online services, and on transferring data such as student transcripts via email, did cause concerns, but these did not reach critical levels. One institution reported:

> Our information security office ramped up training across the university; developed creative ways for identity verification; increased the number of online forms/transactions available via online self-service and other platforms where authentication is required; provided additional training around requirements of staff to use VPN when working offsite. (Teaching-intensive university)

Grading

Grading systems were not strongly affected by the pandemic. Fourteen institutions (50%) reported *Little Impact* on grading systems, and only four (14%) reported a *Strong Impact*. The grading systems at many institutions did not change at all. Other institutions made amendments to react to changing circumstances, particularly in the early phases of the pandemic. These included adding a Pass/Fail grade to the existing letter grades; this was sometimes called an Elective Grading System because students could elect whether to receive a Pass/Fail grade or a letter grade. Generally, this system was only in use during the semester when the pandemic forced courses online in early spring 2020. One college representative reported that their institution allowed more time for incomplete grades to be resolved, increasing the completion period from 30 to 60 days. Another college representative reported, "We were much more lenient in reviewing fail grades, especially if they were in the 2% range. We issued a lot of provisional passes." One institution created a temporary "compassionate grade". Deadlines for withdrawal and appeal were also extended at some institutions, as were deadlines for faculty submission of grades.

Transcript Evaluation

Most institutions reported no change in their process of evaluating transcripts. Fourteen institutions (50%) reported *Little Impact* on transcript evaluation, and only one institution reported a *Huge Impact*. The electronic transfer of transcripts was, of course, unaffected by the pandemic, but institutions where paper transcripts were still commonly received had to make minor adjustments to their processes. Some institutions accepted unofficial transcripts for evaluation. Others reviewed transcripts more closely due to different grading options adopted by some institutions: for example, pass/fail grades instead of letter grades.

Catalogue/Calendar

Only one respondent reported experiencing a *Huge Impact* in this area, while half of the respondents reported *Little Impact*. The information in catalogues and calendars is typically generated, edited and posted electronically, so these processes were not generally affected by the partial or complete physical closure of Registrars' Offices. However, some institutions experienced a much higher than normal number of catalogue/calendar changes as a result of policy changes due to the pandemic. Staff then had to work remotely to perform updates, revisions, and edits.

Workplace Placements

Although this topic was not identified in the survey as an area of challenge, it emerged as a challenge in the interview data. Institutions with programs that involved workplace practicums or placements encountered difficulties in scheduling those activities.

> So what happened was, you had a whole bunch of trades programs, you had a bunch of practicums in the health science areas that had to stop. And so we had to try and figure out what were we going to do with these poor students. They were almost at the end, right? Did we cancel it? Did we extend it? So we did all of those things, actually extended some right into the fall, so that we could get them completed. If a practicum needed to run an extra month or two, to get the hours in, we just extended that section into the fall, we didn't cancel the original and then create a new one. As soon as you create a new one, you're going to charge students for it, but then you had to refund them because that wasn't fair. So it was a logistical bit of a nightmare. (College)

Variations Among Institutions

The data analysis indicated some differences among institutions with different mandates, and also variations among similar institutions.

Among Institutional Types

There were some variations among responses from institutions of different types, but these variations were mostly confined to areas where the reported impact of the pandemic, positive or negative, was not strong. In areas where most institutions reported a *Huge Impact*, such as recruitment or convocation, there was unlikely to be any one type of institution that did not report a huge impact. This suggests that some impacts of the pandemic tended to be uniform, regardless of the type of institution.

The data did show variations among institutional type in areas where there was variation among all institutions. For example, 10 institutions were strongly affected in the area of admissions, with four of six private institutions reporting strong impacts in this area, while at the same time 14 institutions reported that their admissions operations were hardly affected. Most institutions reported *Little Impact* on transcript production, but four private institutions reported being seriously affected in this area, as did four research-intensive universities. Similarly, 14 institutions reported *Little Impact* on grading systems, but three universities reported *Strong Impact* in this area. And while most institutions did not report a lack of financial resources for moving services online, three colleges reported that a lack of financial resources had a *Strong Impact.*

Within Institutional Types

Although there were some variations in responses within institutional types, there were few notable differences. This suggested that the pandemic generally did not affect one type of institution more than another. An impact, whether strong or weak, tended to be felt by all institutions in the same category.

There were variations within specific institutional types. For instance, an equal number of private institutions reported *Strong Impact* and *Weak Impact* of challenges involving staff schedules and catalogue/calendar production. There was also variation among the responses from colleges around challenges involving staff work locations: almost an equal number of colleges reported *Strong* and *Weak Impacts*. There was also some slight variation among responses from colleges around challenges in admissions, scheduling, and online delivery, and among the research-intensive universities' responses regarding effects on registration and data security.

Across Geographic Regions

It is difficult to make meaningful comparisons across institutions in different geographic regions, because, as shown in **Table 2**, the majority of the respondents are from one region. It is worth noting, however, that respondents from outside the Lower Mainland tended to rate the frequency of challenges at their institution as "continuous" or close to continuous, and tended to rate impacts on specific functions and work areas in the Registrar's Office as "huge" or close to huge. The strength of the impacts and challenges at these institutions may be due to the fact that these are smaller institutions that may have comparatively fewer resources.

Impact Over Time

The pandemic was and is a moving target. At its start, institutions were faced with a quickly changing set of realities that needed rapid responses. It was unclear how prolonged the impact of the pandemic would be, and that uncertainty created its own confusion. It is not an overstatement to say that institutions reported an unprecedented level of organizational shock that required a unique response.

The sudden shift to virtual was pretty shocking. And for the first six months, we were really trying to figure out how to best support students. We were reaching out to faculty to ask them to be more lenient with grading. We introduced a temporary new grading system. We gave students a little bit more flexibility whenever they were placed in academic difficulties so that they wouldn't be required to withdraw within two terms. So they were given, essentially like a grace semester. There were a lot of things that we instituted rather quickly in reaction to the pandemic. The new grading system, for example, I think probably [normally] would have taken a year or two for us to actually bring forward, because we would have done consultation. In the pandemic we created the policy within two weeks. So there was a lot of reacting rather than planning. (Research-intensive university)

As time progressed, and public health instructions became more regular and clearer, institutions were able to forecast and implement responses more proactively.

The survey data indicated that institutions reacted very quickly to the initial impact of the pandemic. Fourteen (50%) of respondents indicated that their institutions were able to respond to the pandemic within one week. Eleven respondents (about 40%) indicated that their institutions' responses began within one or two weeks. One interviewee said:

For us, one of the big successes was, especially at the beginning, being able to transition all of our staff and services online fairly seamlessly, and fairly quickly. If you would have asked me, before the pandemic started, how long it might take to transition everything online, I would have said, "Oh, that's like an eight- month project for sure." Not like, "Hey, can you do it next week?". And so, you know, necessity is the mother of invention. (Teaching-intensive university)

Interview data indicated that at many institutions the Registrar's Office initially struggled due to a lack of experience with online delivery of some services, and because of the rapidly changing circumstances around scheduling and admissions.

One interviewee reported that the lack of technology for remote learning at their institution initially caused problems, but that these problems were soon addressed.

We just didn't have the right technology to have folks set up. I mean, the first probably three weeks, we had people at home, managing our call center using their own personal telephones, like their iPhones, because we couldn't deploy enough technology, you know, for people to tap into the call center and do those types of things. But once we were able to procure more, you know, laptops and phones, mobile technology, then it was great. So it was just that initial little hump. (Teaching-intensive university)

As the pandemic became more prolonged than originally anticipated, Registrars' Offices had to adjust to accommodate the extended impacts. One respondent reported:

We adjusted some of our services and our service model to better serve student demand. And then throughout, as the student needs changed, we were able to quickly adapt as a team. Students were accessing and communicating with us way more via email, for example, and we were able to redeploy our resources to be able to service that need, because we were no longer offering in-person services. (Teaching-intensive university)

The survey and interviews also explored the likelihood of temporary changes in response to the pandemic becoming permanent. The data indicated mixed responses to this possibility. Seventeen institutions (61%) anticipated some permanent changes but thought most would be temporary. Ten institutions (36%) anticipated some temporary changes but thought others would mostly be permanent. Thus, 27 institutions (96%) expressed at least some uncertainty on whether temporary changes would become permanent. Given that the survey was conducted while most institutions were gradually returning to regular operations, this uncertainty is understandable.

Some of the interview data identified operational areas where temporary changes had already become permanent. For example, one interviewee reported that their institution had implemented changes in types of payment methods.

> *We went cashless, and moved towards increasing the different types of online payments that students can make... I don't think we're going back to accepting cash again. And so having online payments has been a great opportunity that we benefitted from.* (Teaching-intensive university)

Other interviewees identified pandemic-related changes they would like to see become permanent.

> *There are some [changes] that I would like to advocate to keep, such as a later voluntary course withdrawal deadline for students. I felt it's been very student-centric: we've seen the number of student appeals for extended withdrawals decrease.... [T]here's all kinds of life circumstances that are happening with students and making them go and seek out medical documentation or divulge, you know, sensitive mental health and wellness issues, like, you're just putting more stress on students making them have to do that, rather than just giving them some extra time to withdraw. There was no financial implication, because they're not getting a refund if they withdraw that late in the term, but you're allowing them to safeguard their academic record.* (Teaching-intensive university)

At first, changes in responses to the pandemic were sudden and seemed temporary. But as time progressed, the pandemic's impact became more prolonged, and changes may have persisted for longer than originally anticipated. One interviewee described the trajectory of changes in the practices of their Registrar's Office this way:

> *It started off with a sprint and we used up a lot of energy just to get through it. And then it turned into a marathon over a couple of years. And now, as we seem to be getting to the finish line, it's just exhaustion: nothing left in the tank. But we weren't racing against others, we were racing against ourselves, and what we could achieve.* (College)

Other Observations

Success at Adjusting

Survey respondents were asked to assess how successful their departmental units had been in adjusting their services or operations in response to the pandemic. Twenty-one institutions (75%) reported "More Successes than Challenges". Given the large and varied range of impacts described in response to other survey questions, these ratings are a remarkable testimony to the resilience and fortitude of the BCTS member institutions. Notably, more institutions reported they were "Very Successful" (6 responses, 21% of all responses) than reported "More Challenges than Successes" (1 response). This result reinforces that overall institutional responses to the pandemic were largely viewed as successful, at least by the representatives of the institutions themselves.

Impact on Staff

Many interviewees reported that the initial effect on staff of moving suddenly to working at home was overwhelming. However, staff reacted professionally and responsively.

> *I was amazed at how willing staff were. If you would have said 'Would you mind using your personal computer, your personal device to do X, Y, or Z', they would have been like, 'No.' But then the alternative to them was, 'I don't want to have to come to campus. So I'm willing to do whatever you need me to do from home, even if that means I have to wait for some technology.'* (Teaching-intensive university)

Over time, particularly as the pandemic persisted across months and years, the continually changing environment caused staff fatigue to increase.

Probably the biggest overarching challenge, I think, was the constant shifts and changes. People were doing their best, but I think sometimes decisions would get made, and then they get changed... It became wearing on people... the constant pivoting. (Teaching-intensive university)

The continually changing pandemic guidelines and external regulations also drained some of the energy and spirit of staff.

There was a lot more uncertainty about policy, and I think staff felt a lot more uncertain about how they're doing their job, because there were stressors in terms of constantly changing policy, and procedure. There was so much change, I think it was really hard for them to stay on top of what they were supposed to tell students.... [Y]ou would send students a new procedure change email and then two days later, something would change. And you'd have to send another email saying, forget what I just told you, [we're] doing this instead. Yes, that definitely caused some anxiety and stress. (Private institution)

The loss of social activities and interaction, and the impact of that loss on staff, was also acknowledged.

I think mentally it's been tough for everybody.... You can't recharge your batteries, like we would normally recharge our batteries. You know, people are not going on vacations. We've noticed a large increase in unused vacation.... And when they do go on vacation, they're not doing their normal vacation, a lot of the staycations at home, or maybe visit family. So there hasn't been that opportunity to not only recharge your battery through a vacation, but also the social aspect of the work. So we don't get together. We don't do our potlucks. We don't do our soup Mondays and those other social activities that provide for us to just, you know, meet and engage with each other as we normally do. (College)

Some interviewees reported that the prolonged impact of the pandemic affected staff differently. Some staff found working from home to be positive, whereas others found working at home cramping and distracting.

I think staff appreciated the flexibility that was provided in the approach that our institution took to working from home and flexible work arrangements, especially since safety was a big thing. Of course, there were staff that said, my work from home scenario is not the greatest. I've got little kids, I'm in an apartment.... [I]t wasn't a level playing field for everybody.... Some have been thrilled to work from home, and said "I never want to come back to the office". And, of course, others were clamoring to come back. So it's trying to manage the staff morale and satisfaction. (College)

The fatigue was also experienced differently in different service areas, and was especially noticeable in areas where the changes caused by the pandemic were more dramatic or constant.

The constant innovation, and expectation to continue to improve, has become wearing for some. I've noticed it probably more so for those teams that are engaged in the system side and the technology side, and less so for those that are involved in frontline services or some of the more transactional-based work. (Research-intensive university)

Respondents also reported issues that arose over time from staff being isolated from each other physically.

We didn't recognize initially the importance of those hallway conversations or side conversations as things where you physically interact with each other. You always think of those side conversations as something that builds teams, but not necessarily something that provides information. And so it was a little surprising that our electronic communications weren't completing the job. And some of those informal communications were things that we needed to rely on and replicate. (College)

Supervisors needed to learn how to manage people remotely. Some of that coordination and collaboration that happens by just seeing people in the hallway didn't happen. So I think some functions got a bit more siloed than they were before. One of the challenges was how do you keep people engaged, especially seeing the bigger picture. It's not the same talking to somebody on Zoom or Skype or Teams. Right? I think people were slow to realize the human connection they were missing.... It's not so much the water cooler talk as the side conversations that happen in the hallways.... There were incidents where normally I

would just pop up in the hall and I could talk to somebody, whereas I had to wait maybe four hours to schedule a meeting to talk to that person. And so things just got delayed, or issues got worse that you could have dealt with really quickly. (Research-intensive university)

During the pandemic, staff turnover was low at most institutions. One Registrar reported, "If I look at our turnover in a 12-month period, that first year of the pandemic was lower than it had ever been since I started. People stuck with it."

However, as the pandemic continued, the rate of resignations increased at some institutions, because staff didn't want to leave their home locations or had reassessed aspects of their lives.

When we started to transition back to being in-person, a lot of people ended up leaving for other positions, and I think they felt disconnected from their team and their work. Or some people wanted to remain working virtually and found other positions. I think people made new life decisions. There were a lot of retirements.... [A]s [the pandemic] dragged on, it really impacted people's mental health and well-being, and had people really think about their own—really reflect on their own lives and what they want to do. Some of the concern was about the safety of coming back on campus. And so everyone's now seeing staff shortages. (Research-intensive university)

Impact on Governance and Decision-Making

Under normal circumstances, decisions on policies and procedures regulating processes such as student admission, registration, timetabling, and grading are made by institutional governance bodies such as Senates and Education Councils. The pandemic led to some institutions making adaptations to these standard decision-making processes.

Interviewees reported that their institutions had used different ways to respond to governance-related issues. Most institutions created committees to oversee responses to the pandemic. These committees had a limited shelf life and were not part of the normal governance structure, but were given considerable authority to recommend and even implement actions.

Ours was called the Pandemic Response Working Group. It had both academic and administrative folks. Every week we would review Bonnie Henry's new instructions on public health for the Ministry, and their implications and any new responses we needed to make. So that was a group specifically mobilized to address the pandemic. (Teaching-intensive university)

We had two [committees]. There was a group working on the health side, as emergency response and creating business continuity plans. Then there was an academic planning group ... where a lot of discussions would come forward. Some of it wasn't at the policy level, just quickly changing practices or procedures. Also, a couple of senior-level communications folks were there too because we had to constantly come up with a communications calendar. (Research-intensive university)

The pandemic also affected normal policy development and revision processes, and how the Registrar's Office was involved in these processes.

We had some policy- and governance-related decisions created by the pandemic. We made sure they still went to Senate. Some of them were time-sensitive, and couldn't wait for the next Senate meeting, so we assembled our Senate executive to discuss and make some decisions. The Senate executive played a big role, especially in the beginning. Some of the operational ones that wouldn't normally go to Senate were proposed to the university executive. So, for example, we shifted our fee payment deadline – that's more of an operational decision.... And then some of them were just decided within our unit, such as moving some of our workflows where we used to require students to come in person to this but now we make an online option available to them. (Teaching-intensive university)

Some policy changes were externally driven, but still required internal changes.

> *Prior to the pandemic, we required all international students [to] have a study permit before they can be enrolled for studies. Then IRCC changed that to say students can register with a study permit application in process, as long as they had the final decision before classes started. So we had to adapt our procedure to allow them to register with the application only. And then follow up with them prior to the first day of class to collect the actual permit. And if they hadn't received it, then they had to be dropped from classes and all of that. So this meant phone follow-ups to students and all that.* (Private institution)

Comparative Impact

Since the pandemic had a significant and sudden impact on almost all aspects of post-secondary education, interviewees were asked if they thought that the impact had been stronger in the Registrar's Office than elsewhere in their institutions. Responses indicated that the Registrar's Office was severely impacted by the pandemic.

> *I would say the joke I constantly heard last year was that everything related to the pandemic always included the Registrar's Office. So I would say we felt [the impact] a lot just because there was so much with managing exams, final exams, virtual classrooms… the Registrar's Office is really kind of the silent backbone of the institution, and so I think a lot of [the impact] really did fall to us. We were very busy.* (Research-intensive university)

However, responses overwhelmingly suggested that academic departments and faculty members were affected more strongly.

> *We've not been a highly online institution … maybe 10% of our offerings being offered online. And those are typically by the same faculty all the time who were accustomed to teaching online, but suddenly everybody else had to move online. We had a sea of faculty retirements.* (Teaching-intensive university)

The effects of the pandemic's impact on faculty also ricocheted back to the Registrar's Office.

> *I agree that faculty switching to teaching online, when they've always taught in person [was problematic], and we delayed the start [of classes] twice … to give faculty that time to get ready to be teaching virtually. But then, a lot of new problems were created that involved the Registrar's Office. There was an increase in virtual cheating or academic integrity issues that we had not seen before. That is coordinated centrally through the Registrar's Office. The increase in disciplinary cases was a by-product of everything shifting online.* (Research-intensive university)

Summary of Impacts

The results of this study showed that Registrars' Offices were significantly impacted by the pandemic, both initially and over time. The types of impacts were broadly similar within specific institutional types and geographic regions. However, not all services were affected to the same extent. Table 3 summarizes the impacts experienced within Registrars' Offices, as indicated by the survey data.

Table 3: Summary of Impacts of the Pandemic on Registrars' Offices

Area	Impact	Services Affected
Service Functions	Huge	Recruitment, Scheduling, Convocation
	Large	Orientation
	Moderate	Admissions, Advising
	Little	Registration, Catalogue/Calendar Production, Transcript Evaluation, Transcript Production, Grading System, Data Security
Service Delivery	Huge	Online Services, Staff Work Locations
	Large	Communication with Students, Daily Operations
	Moderate	Staff Roles, Staff Schedules, Communication with Faculty
	Little	Communication with Administration
Service Challenges	Huge	Initial Plans Revised, Staff Fatigue
	Large	Student Anxiety
	Moderate	Lack of Staff Expertise, Lack of Technology, Adjusting Policies, Adjusting Deadlines, Internal Confusion, Leadership Response, Unforeseen Problems
	Little	Lack of Resources for Online Services

CONCLUSION

This section of the report discusses the importance of the survey and interview results, and presents recommendations and considerations of the evolving role of the Registrar's Office at post-secondary institutions, in light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Importance of the Findings

The pandemic was one of the most significant game-changing phenomena that post-secondary institutions have experienced in a generation, perhaps in a century. As shown by the data, BC institutions had to respond immediately to deliver services in a radically different and often unknown environment. The Registrar's Office was one of many campus units that were dramatically affected, but it was one where the impact of the pandemic was immediate, widespread, and, in some respects, permanent.

Post-secondary institutions are part of a crucial framework of social, economic and progressive advancement for individuals and society. Thus, it is important to understand how they responded to a unique, widespread and deleterious public health crisis. Adapting admissions or registrarial functions in response to COVID-19 may not be the most obvious or significant adjustments that post-secondary institutions made in this situation, but these adaptations demonstrate how standard functions at post-secondary institutions were affected, some permanently.

While this study produced some clear and important findings, its findings are limited by a number of factors.

- The study only collected data from BC post-secondary institutions. Any definitive conclusions are limited to institutions in that jurisdiction.

- The literature review indicates that some aspects of the BC experience were not typical of the experiences in other jurisdictions, such as the USA. Therefore, the findings of this report should be extrapolated with caution.

- The institutions from which the data were collected are broadly representative of BC's post-secondary landscape. However, a number of institutions chose not to participate in the data collection, leaving some doubt around the extent to which the reported challenges were experienced.

- The data collection period generally coincided with the rise and demise of the pandemic. However, some impacts of the pandemic are in the future or are still unfolding, and so their effect remains unknown.

Longer-Term Effects

There are different opinions on whether some of the changes resulting from the pandemic – those experienced by post-secondary institutions in general, and by the Registrar's Office in particular – are likely to be reversed. Some obvious candidates for reverting to previous forms of delivery are activities best delivered face-to-face or on campus, such as admission interviews, campus orientations for new students, and convocation ceremonies. However, some changes in response to the pandemic seem likely to remain in place for the time being, and some may become permanent, particularly those recognized as improvements. These include procedures that have been enhanced or streamlined, including forms that can be completed online, online photo identification, and academic advising online or by telephone.

There will inevitably be some resistance to permanent changes, as employees and students return to the campus and occupy their old places. Veletsianos, Johnson & Seaman (2020) suggest that "higher education institutions are generally slow to change…[with] a bias towards the status quo and a belief that the pandemic is a temporary event with temporary ramifications" (para. 13).

While the pandemic may have created opportunities for innovation and creativity, these benefits may be tempered by a workforce and student body returning after a long gruelling sojourn away from campus: one that started with a sudden rapid pivot to online service delivery, then morphed over time to severely tax daily operations and mental health. The impact of the pandemic on students is outside the scope of this report, but it is worth noting that this issue has been explored in a meta-analysis of institutional surveys of students' experiences with educational changes brought on by the pandemic (BCCAT, 2022).

It seems that regardless of what endures after the pandemic, things are unlikely to return completely to previous conditions (IESALC, 2020). The impact of the pandemic has been too strong and lasted too long for it to dissipate without leaving some legacy. The overall impact of the pandemic can be best summed up in the words of a dean, a professor and a student writing collectively about how the pandemic has changed them:

> In many ways, everyone involved in higher education has journeyed through the pandemic together—we've shared ups and downs, motivated each other, and marveled at what has been possible. The grand digital experiment necessitated by COVID-19's aggressive spread has led many to reconsider what the future of education may look like—and it has become clear that schools will not simply return to the way things were before. (de Fátima Carioca, Stahl, & Khalil, 2021, para. 1)

Indeed, while the pandemic has forced post-secondary institutions to rise to challenges and overcome obstacles in the short term, institutions that embrace exploration and ingenuity in the long term may be turning a crisis into a substantial opportunity.

Role of the Registrar's Office

The pandemic has illuminated the role of the Registrar's Office in post-secondary institutions – a role that may have been undervalued in the past. It also revealed how that role is continually evolving: a process that the pandemic may have strongly accelerated.

Pittinsky (2019) suggested the functions of the Registrar's Office were already being transformed in post-secondary institutions before the pandemic:

> On the surface, the Registrar's work on course catalogues, registration, curriculum management, degree audit, credits transfer, transcript fulfillment and the like represent a pretty stable core to the job. Dig deeper, however, and the answer is clear. Registrars are located at several intersections: 1) academic life and administrative life, 2) protecting student data and making student data actionable and 3) supporting student-led pathways and scaffolding them. These intersections, among others, are fundamentally transforming the profile of the registrar. (para. 3)

A key aspect of this transformation was the growth of information technology and the increasing role of the Registrar's Office in managing student data.

> The registrar has become a leader in campus technology planning, implementation and operation…[.] This has led to greater responsibility in coordinating and collaborating with the many other offices on-campus that depend on student systems for their daily work. (Lanier, 2006, p. 17)

Duklas (2014), in her review of registrarial functions in Canadian post-secondary institutions, observed:

In Canadian universities and colleges, the registrar role appears to be evolving. It absolutely remains a position focused on the diligent care and oversight of student academic records and related student services. However, those holding these roles are more often called upon to create interesting and unique partnerships; actively support or steer enrollment management; oversee significant pan-institutional responsibilities and related accountabilities; and develop policies, procedures and integrated systems that serve as the backbone for the institution and support overall student success. (p. 4)

The pandemic continued this evolution of the role of the Registrar's Office. Mary Ross (2021), former registrar for University Canada West, has emphasised how the pandemic shifted the Office's relationship with students towards a more student-focused one:

Out of the pandemic … came the need for better and more effective communication methods with students. That in-person comfort was gone, forcing us to convert to other platforms to interact with our students…. In a pandemic world that pushed us apart, we had to connect more deliberately with our students even as we struggled to provide a fluid, dynamic situation…. And therein lies the power of change in the life of a Registrar. I went from a career based on being student-centered to one that is far more student-led and student-driven. I had to listen and follow like never before…. The institution's campus became irrelevant. The Registrar's Office did not exist in a physical sense anymore. We were interfacing with our students in their personal space, and we had to do it on their terms and according to their schedules. (Ross, 2021, para. 6)

Interviewees participating in this study similarly emphasized how the pandemic raised the profile of the Registrar's Office, as the institution increasingly relied on its expertise:

I feel like our registrar's office was sort of brought to the fore. I was pulled into more senior meetings than I normally would have been included in. I feel our executive looked to me and my team for some really critical operational information on how to keep things running smoothly…. And we went through cycles in different terms, new questions, considerations, deadlines, accommodations. We were talking about grading options at the beginning, then we're talking certain deadlines that have shifted and whether we're going to maintain them and all those things. In the past, you might talk about one of those things every once in a while when a policy came up for review. All of those things became a consideration during the pandemic, and I think did reveal the importance of the work we do. (Teaching-intensive university)

I think, prior to the pandemic, we were just one of the other departments. Because we were kind of like "the old reliable", we were always there just in the background doing what we need to do. And during the pandemic, it became very evident how critical our services are to students…. [F]or much of the pandemic, we've been one of the only departments on campus…. And so it just really revealed, I think, to the entire college, the importance of what we do…. I think people didn't really even know what we did, until we started having these discussions with our senior leadership teams about service provisions during CO-VID. That's when they sort of like said "Oh no, do you really do all that?" I think it was eye-opening. When we started talking about all the complexities of how we were just making all these adjustments, I think people were really like, for the first time, realizing how complicated what we do is. (Private institution)

I do think that the Registrar's Office has increased in importance, at least at our institution. There's some institutions where the Registrar's Office has always been sort of a central hub for communication…. But I think at our institution, we saw that sort of take shape through the pandemic. (College)

Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic also changed the dynamics of decision-making within Registrars' Offices. New operational requirements and responses to changing circumstances required staff to be agile and creative. Indeed, the pandemic may well prove to be a defining moment in the careers of many who plan to build their careers inside these units within the BC post-secondary sector.

We had to make decisions really quickly and pivot. Our office made decisions in like record time. I've never seen a registrar move so fast. (College)

RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations are based on the literature review, the survey results, and the interview data. They include suggestions for institutional practice and for further research.

Institutional Practice

- *Institutions should continue to explore ways to improve service delivery by Registrars' Offices in both online and in-person formats.* Almost all study participants felt that their institutions adapted remarkably quickly to providing services online. For many of these newly online services, such as academic advising, participation rates rose and the number of no-shows declined. This suggests that institutions have perhaps more capacity than they realize to offer better registrarial services online.

- *Institutions that made changes in responses to the pandemic should consider maintaining those changes once the pandemic is over.* Some institutions did not realize that pandemic-related changes would be so beneficial. Examples of changes that proved to be beneficial include moving to a cashless environment and involving students more in the delivery of convocation ceremonies.

- *Institutions should consider continuing flexible work arrangements, where feasible, to support operational efficiency and effectiveness.* While Registrar's Office staff generally made a swift and successful switch to working from home, many experienced fatigue over time. Some staff found the isolation of working from home, or the distractions at home, to be debilitating. However, some staff appreciated not having to commute and having flexible working conditions.

Future Research

- This study did not collect data from students or instructional faculty. Research focusing on the impact of the pandemic on those populations would broaden the picture. For example, there is some evidence of a long-term preference by students for increased online access to courses and services (e.g. Hewitt, 2020; UFV, 2022).

- Differences in the pandemic's impact across a wider range of jurisdictions may be worthy of further study. As mentioned previously, the impacts of the pandemic on BC institutions may not mirror the impacts in other jurisdictions, both in Canada and elsewhere.

- A follow-up investigation of the long-term impacts of the pandemic may provide further insights. Since the impact of the pandemic is likely to continue beyond the time period of this study, a follow-up investigation may provide further insights.

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APPENDIX A. SURVEY QUESTIONS

Registrarial Responses to COVID-19

The British Columbia Council on Admission and Transfer (BCCAT) has contracted Ted James to conduct a survey on registrarial responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The survey is designed to assess how the pandemic has affected the services and operations of your department between April 2020 and August 2021 and the changes that have been made in response to the pandemic.

We value your expertise in this area, and would be grateful for your input. We would appreciate your completing this survey by December 15, 2021.

The survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. We are asking for one response per institution. If another staff member in your department would be better able to answer the questions, please feel free to forward the survey link to them.

Your participation in the study is completely voluntary, and you may choose to stop participating at any time. If you choose to formally withdraw from the study, and notify the researcher of your withdrawal, all data that you have submitted will be destroyed. Your completion of the survey implies informed consent to participate.

The final data set for the project will be anonymous. The only identifying information used in the data analysis will be types of post-secondary institutions and geographic regions. Your identity will be known to the researcher if you provide an email address for a possible follow-up interview, but the data you provide will not be linked to that email. Survey responses and data analysis will be stored securely in Canada; following completion of the study, they will be destroyed.

If you have any questions about the survey or the use of survey data, please contact Ted James or Dr. Fiona McQuarrie, BCCAT Special Projects Officer.

1. Please tell us your job title and the name of the institution you work at. This information will be only used for data analysis. Titles and institutions will not be identified in the published study.

Institution

> [input field]

Position title

> [input field]

2. How strongly has the pandemic affected these areas of your department? "Little impact" means there were only small changes from pre-pandemic operations, and "huge impact" means almost all aspects were affected.

	Little impact	Moderate impact	Large impact	Huge impact
The amount of in-person services and on-line services	o	o	o	o
Staff roles	o	o	o	o
Staff schedules	o	o	o	o
Staff work locations	o	o	o	o
Communication with students	o	o	o	o
Communication with faculty	o	o	o	o
Communication with administration	o	o	o	o
Daily operations in the department	o	o	o	o

3. How strongly has the pandemic affected these services in your department? Please rate the impact from 1 to 5, with 1= little impact and 5 = huge impact.

	1=little impact	2	3	4	5=huge impact
Recruitment	o	o	o	o	o
Orientation	o	o	o	o	o
Admissions	o	o	o	o	o
Advising	o	o	o	o	o
Scheduling	o	o	o	o	o
Registration	o	o	o	o	o
Catalogue/calendar production	o	o	o	o	o
Transcript evaluation	o	o	o	o	o
Transcript production	o	o	o	o	o
Grading system	o	o	o	o	o
Convocation	o	o	o	o	o
Data security	o	o	o	o	o

4. How often did your department experience challenges in the areas listed below? Please rate each area on a scale from 1-5, with 1= never and 5 = continuously.

	1=never	2	3	4	5=continuously
Online delivery not available	o	o	o	o	o
Lack of staff expertise with online delivery	o	o	o	o	o
Lack of technology to move to online delivery	o	o	o	o	o
Lack of financial resources to move to online delivery	o	o	o	o	o
Initial plans had to be revised	o	o	o	o	o
Difficulty in adjusting policies to online delivery	o	o	o	o	o
Difficulty in adjusting deadlines to online delivery	o	o	o	o	o
Staff suffered fatigue with changing circumstances	o	o	o	o	o
Difficulty responding to increased student anxiety	o	o	o	o	o
Internal confusion on how to move to online delivery	o	o	o	o	o
Leadership was slow to respond	o	o	o	o	o
Unforeseen problems	o	o	o	o	o

If your department had other challenges that were not mentioned, please describe them here.

5. In general, how quickly did your department need to make changes in response to the pandemic?

o Less than one week

o One to two weeks

o Less than a month

o A month or more

6. For each service listed below, please identify a part of the service that was changed because of the pandemic, and describe how it changed. For example: in-person admissions interviews being held on-line.

	How Service Changed
Recruitment	
Admissions	
Orientation	
Advising	
Scheduling	
Registration	
Transcript evaluation	
Transcript production	
Grading system	
Convocation	
Catalogue/calendar	
Data security	

7. How permanent do you think the pandemic-related changes will be in your department?

○ Temporary

○ Some permanent changes, but mostly temporary

○ Some temporary changes, but mostly permanent

○ Permanent

Please give an example of a permanent change in your department/area that was caused by the pandemic.

8. Overall, how successful was your department in adjusting its services/operations in response to the pandemic?

○ Not very successful

○ Some successes but mostly challenges

○ More successes than challenges

○ Very successful

9. What lessons did you learn from responding to this pandemic?

[   ]

10. If a similar large-scale unexpected situation arose in the future, what would you do differently?

[   ]

11. If you have any other comments or observations about the impact of the pandemic on your department, please add them here.

[   ]

12. If you are willing to have comments you made in this survey quoted directly in the final report, please indicate that below. All comments will be anonymous.

○ Yes, I give permission for my comments to be quoted directly and anonymously.

○ No, I do not give permission for my comments to be quoted.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION! Please be sure to click the "Submit" button at the bottom of the page to ensure that your responses are recorded. If you are willing to participate in a follow-up interview on the topics addressed in this survey, please provide your email address below.

[   ]

APPENDIX B. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Overall, how well do you think your Registrar's Office (RO) fared during the pandemic?

    a. What were some of the biggest successes?
    b. What were some of the biggest challenges?

2. What surprised you most about the impact of the pandemic on your RO?

3. Compared to other areas of your institution, were your RO operations/services more or less impacted by the pandemic?

4. How did the impact of the pandemic affect your staff?

5. How did students react to the changes you made in response to the pandemic?

6. What did the impact of the pandemic reveal about the importance of your RO to your institution?

7. What was the internal process(es) by which decisions at institutions were made to amend normal procedures/polices?

8. How much do you think the changes in the RO will endure as a "new normal" or go back to the original state?

9. Anything else you want to stress about how the pandemic affected your RO?

APPENDIX C. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Acsenda School of Management	Okanagan College
Alexander College	Quest University Canada
British Columbia Institute of Technology	Royal Roads University
Capilano University	Selkirk College
Coast Mountain College	Simon Fraser University
College of New Caledonia	Thompson Rivers University
College of the Rockies	Trinity Western University
Corpus Christi College	University of British Columbia – Vancouver
Emily Carr University of Art + Design	University of British Columbia -- Okanagan
Fairleigh Dickinson University	University of Northern British Columbia
Justice Institution of BC	University of the Fraser Valley
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	University of Victoria
Langara College	Vancouver Community College
Northern Lights College	Yukon University

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