

The Baccalaureate Degree in Colleges and Institutes

Perspectives from an
Ontario Degree-Granting College

Community College Baccalaureate Association
Conference

Why Degrees in Colleges and Institutes?

- Needs of employers
- Graduate mobility nationally and internationally
- Importance of degrees to individuals
- Lack of institutional/system diversity and cooperation

Impacts of Degree Granting on Colleges

- Background and Context
- External Authorities and Approval Processes
- The Price to Faculty
- Institutional Culture
- Critical Mass – the Student Experience
- Lessons Learned
- On-going Questions

PSE in Ontario – PSE System Design

- 20 universities, 24 colleges, Francophone and Anglophone institutions
- College system established 1967: an alternative for those not suited for or
- Binary system – two distinct mandates for colleges and universities
- No lower division transfer mandate for colleges
- Little history of formal coordination between PSE sectors
- Degree granting authority restricted
- High levels of university autonomy

PSE in Ontario – Colleges and College Programs

- Programs
 - Occupation oriented, employment focused
 - Applied in nature
 - Designed to produce job-ready graduates
 - Credential not intended to transfer
 - Traditional general education component limited
- Faculty Qualifications
 - Vocational programs focused on business/ industry experience first, academic background second
 - Salary calculation table includes up to Master's only

PSE in Ontario - Degree Granting Authority

- Degree granting limited to universities until 2000
- Legislation extended limited degree granting to colleges (Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000)
 - Ministerial permission for college to grant a degree
 - Applied area of study
 - Recommended by external QA Board
 - Time limited approval
 - Defined nomenclature

Ontario Degree Approval Process

- Ministry - does the application fall under the Act?
- Assessment Panel is appointed
- Panel reviews proposal against standards including on-site visit; submits report to PEQAB
- College reviews panel's report and may file a response
- Panel may be asked to comment
- PEQAB reviews reports and responses and makes recommendation to Minister
- Minister considers PEQAB's recommendation and any associated public policy or financial issues

External Authorities and Approval Processes

- Assessment panels primarily from universities
- The structure of programs
 - “confusing quality with conformity to orthodoxy” (M. Skolnik, 2007)
 - Measuring inputs vs outcomes
- Policies and processes
- Is there a threat to similar university programs?

Impact of Degrees in Colleges - Faculty

- Who teaches?
 - New programs
 - Conversions of existing programs
- What is my value to the institution?

Impact of Degrees in Colleges - Institutional Culture

- Degrees and Diplomas
 - What is valued?
 - Blurring the edges
 - Institutional Identity
- Two groups of faculty
 - Academic qualifications
 - Orientation to teaching and learning
 - The role of research

Critical Mass – the Student Experience

- Is there a “degree” experience?
 - Elective choice
 - Cross-fertilization of thinking
 - Understanding the “bigger picture”

Lessons Learned

- Employee commitment – how much and to what?
- Clear understanding of implications for programs and the institution

On-going Questions

- Have we found an appropriate balance
 - Between external quality measures and internal vision?
 - Between student preparation for professional field and student “degree” experience?
 - Between scholarly activity and professional practice among faculty?
 - Between the value of a full range of credentials and the integrity of all?

For Further Information

- Maureen Callahan – mcallahan@cucc-ontario.ca
- Postsecondary Education Choice and Excellence Act –

http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_00p36_e.htm

- PEQAB – www.peqab.ca