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