

Movement of All Registrants Among B.C. Public Post-Secondary Institutions

The Student Transitions Project (STP) has conducted an analysis of the movement of all B.C. public post-secondary registrants between post-secondary institutions over a five-year period, from 2002/03 to the Fall of 2007. This is an expansion of a similar study conducted in the Fall of 2008 that focused exclusively on a cohort of 2001/02 B.C. secondary school graduates, including their post-secondary mobility, student retention, attrition and credential completion outcomes (http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/student_transitions/documents/stp_highlights_nov08.pdf). This new study complements the previous STP studies and provides a broader picture of the education patterns of B.C.'s post-secondary registrants.

In this study, the primary research question of interest is: **What is the volume and flow of B.C. public post-secondary registrants among B.C. public post-secondary institutions over a multi-year period?** This research focused exclusively on the mobility of all post-secondary registrants in B.C. public post-secondary institutions from 2002/03 through the Fall of 2007¹. Study highlights are described in this newsletter, and more detailed information is provided directly to post-secondary institutions.

In order to track the year-to-year movement of undergraduate students between each of B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions, a series of Institution Mobility Matrices were prepared for each of the two-year time periods between academic year 2002/03 and 2007/2008². The matrices are too detailed to present in this newsletter, but the student mobility and stability rates for each of the five time periods are provided in **Table 1**. (Definitions are provided below).

Mobility and stability rates are calculated on the number of students enrolled across sequential two-year periods. Among students who remained registered in the B.C. public post-secondary education system in both years (using 2005/06 to 2006/07 as an example), the rate at which they remained in the same institution is referred to as the **student stability rate** (85%). The rate at which the students who registered in both years, but switched to a different institution in the B.C. public post-secondary system, is the **student mobility rate** (15%).

From the first time period in this study (2002/03 to 2003/04) to the most recent and complete period (2005/06 to 2006/07), the student mobility rate has declined by four percentage points, from 19% to 15%. This may be partially attributed to expansion of degree completion opportunities across the province, such that students are able to complete degrees at the institution where they began their program, without transferring to a university.

Table 1: Student Mobility and Student Stability Rates

Year-to-Year Time Period	Student Mobility Rate	Student Stability Rate
2002/03 to 2003/04	19%	81%
2003/04 to 2004/05	19%	81%
2004/05 to 2005/06	25% ^a	75%
2005/06 to 2006/07	15%	85%
2006/07 to Fall 2007 ^b	13%	87%

Notes: (a) Student mobility between 2004/05 and 2005/06 is higher than normal, due to institution conversions, including University College of the Cariboo to Thompson Rivers University, Open Learning Agency to Thompson Rivers University - Open Learning, and Okanagan University College to Okanagan College. (b) Five complete academic years (2002/03 to 2006/07) are included in this analysis, plus the Fall 2007 term of the 2007/08 academic year.

Inside the Highlights

Movement of All Registrants Among B.C. Public Post-Secondary Institutions	1
Background and Methodology	2
Student Mobility by Institution Last Attended in 2005/06	2
Reverse Transfer Phenomenon	3
Movement between Post-Secondary Sectors	3
Ongoing Student Mobility Studies	4

Page

¹Analysis of student retention and credential completion is better suited to a cohort study and is therefore absent in this non-cohort-based analysis.

²Academic year 2007/2008 was not a complete year, but included Fall 2007 only.

Background and Methodology

Each year, over 300,000 undergraduate students³ register in B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions. While the number of students enrolled at each institution is reasonably simple to quantify, the extent to which these students move between the institutions from one year to the next has traditionally been difficult to track. This has changed with the more widespread use of the Personal Education Number (PEN) in B.C. and ongoing studies conducted by the Student Transitions Project.

In this STP study, over 900,000 undergraduate registrants in the B.C. public post-secondary education system were tracked over a multi-year period via their PEN. These students registered at least once in a B.C. public post-secondary institution between the Fall of 2002 and the Fall of 2007⁴. For simplicity of interpretation, students enrolled in multiple institutions per year were allocated to a single post-secondary institution in each year, based on the first post-secondary institution attended annually⁵.

Graduate students and students enrolled exclusively in continuing education programs have been excluded from this study, where possible. Due to the single institution attribution per year and the exclusion of these students, total registration counts in this study are lower than headcounts reported internally by each institution. Continuing education across B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions is not universally defined, nor is it consistently classified at each institution. As a result, it is not possible to identify and exclude all continuing education enrollments. STP is currently working toward data quality improvements in this area to improve the accuracy and utility of this information.

Student Mobility by Institution Last Attended in 2005/06

A summary of undergraduate student mobility for two subsequent years, 2005/06 to 2006/07, is provided in [Table 2](#). Of those students enrolled in both years, a total of 15% moved from one institution in 2005/06 to another in 2006/07. The proportion of movers ranged from a low of 5% moving from Royal Roads University to a high of 33% moving from Langara College.

Overall, the most popular post-secondary institution destination for movers in this period was BCIT, with 14% of all movers transferring to BCIT. The next two most popular destinations from all sources were SFU (12%) and UBC (9%). For each of B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions in 2005/06, the top three most popular post-secondary destinations are shown in [Table 2](#) for those students who moved to another institution in 2006/07.

The success of the B.C. college transfer system is evident in this analysis and primarily accounts for the large volume of students who transfer to universities. The B.C. college transfer system allows students to complete a portion of their academic program at a B.C. college, university college⁶ or institute and subsequently transfer to a university to complete their degree. Excluding the special purpose institutes, the top post-secondary destination for 2005/06 students who moved in 2006/07 was a B.C. university, with only one exception: North Island College movers went to Malaspina University-College⁶.

About the STP

The Student Transitions Project is managed by a steering committee with representation from the two ministries, public institutions and B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT). Three sub-committees are established to address key areas of research: mobility of transfer students, data management and applicant research. The ministries and institutions are equal partners in this undertaking.

- » Devron Gaber, STP Chair, Associate Director, BCCAT.
- » Bob Cowin, Director, Institutional Research, Douglas College.
- » Gerald Morton, Director, Information Department, Ministry of Education.
- » Patty Beatty-Guenter, A/Director, Information and Data Management Branch, Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development.
- » Walter Sudmant, Director, Planning and Institutional Research, University of British Columbia.

Special Thanks

STP would like to thank the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development and the B.C. public post-secondary institutions for collaborating in this research effort. Without their co-operation and data contributions, this research could not have been accomplished.

Where to find more information: STP Highlights newsletters and reports are available on the public Student Transitions Project web site at:

http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/student_transitions/

Prepared by:

Joanne Heslop, Manager
Student Transitions Project

³The number of students enrolled in undergraduate and developmental programs at B.C. public post-secondary institutions increased each year, from 298,000 in academic year 2002/03 to 316,000 in 2006/07.

⁴Five complete academic years (2002/03 to 2006/07) are included in this analysis, plus the Fall 2007 term of the 2007/08 academic year.

⁵The November 2008 STP study of the grade 12 graduation class of 2001/02 showed that 5% to 9% of students simultaneously or sequentially enrolled in multiple post-secondary institutions in a single academic year.

⁶Institutional designations in this study are those that were in place for the period of this study.

Student Transitions Project Highlights

Table 2: Top Three Destinations of "Movers" in 2006/07 by Institution Last Attended in 2005/06

Institution Where Registered in 2005/06	Post-Sec. Code	2005/06 to 2006/07 Student Mobility Rate*	2006/07 Institution Destinations of "Movers"										2006/07 Movers		Total Reg'd 2005/06 & 2006/07	
			Most Popular Destination		Second Most Popular Destination		Third Most Popular Destination		All Other Destinations Combined		Total Movers	Total %				
British Columbia Institute of Technology	BCIT	11%	JIBC	463	20%	DOUG	276	12%	VCC	242	11%	1,323	57%	2,304	100%	20,187
Camosun College	CAM	19%	UVIC	756	56%	TRU-OL	116	9%	MAL	71	5%	398	30%	1,341	100%	7,248
Capilano College	CAP	26%	SFU	406	28%	UBC	265	18%	BCIT	196	14%	581	40%	1,448	100%	5,634
College of New Caledonia	CNC	22%	UNBC	358	53%	TRU-OL	78	12%	TRU	35	5%	203	30%	674	100%	3,090
College of the Rockies	COTR	14%	TRU-OL	30	16%	UVIC	25	13%	BCIT	25	13%	110	58%	190	100%	1,333
Douglas College	DOUG	24%	SFU	758	33%	BCIT	356	15%	KWAN	206	9%	999	43%	2,319	100%	9,853
Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design	ECI	6%	BCIT	20	26%	LANG	14	18%	CAP	8	11%	34	45%	76	100%	1,358
Institute of Indigenous Government	IIG	22%	UBC	8	20%	KWAN	8	20%	UVIC	5	13%	19	48%	40	100%	181
Justice Institute of British Columbia	JIBC	10%	BCIT	363	37%	UBC	114	12%	TRU-OL	65	7%	444	45%	986	100%	9,695
Kwantlen University College	KWAN	21%	SFU	550	25%	BCIT	382	18%	UBC	255	12%	991	46%	2,178	100%	10,477
Langara College	LANG	33%	UBC	616	23%	SFU	548	21%	BCIT	356	13%	1,153	43%	2,673	100%	8,193
Malaspina University-College	MAL	10%	UVIC	128	20%	TRU-OL	95	15%	CAM	65	10%	353	55%	641	100%	6,204
North Island College	NIC	16%	MAL	100	29%	CAM	42	12%	TRU-OL	39	12%	158	47%	339	100%	2,061
Northern Lights College	NLC	19%	SFU	56	25%	TRU-OL	26	12%	UNBC	23	10%	115	52%	220	100%	1,143
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	NVIT	28%	TRU	27	42%	UBCO	6	9%	JIBC	6	9%	26	40%	65	100%	235
Northwest Community College	NWCC	19%	UNBC	38	19%	CNC	26	13%	TRU-OL	19	9%	119	59%	202	100%	1,066
Okanagan College	OKAN	11%	UBCO	161	35%	TRU	51	11%	TRU-OL	47	10%	200	44%	459	100%	4,225
Okanagan University College	OUC	100%	OKAN	84	82%	BCIT	6	6%	CAM	<5	3%	9	9%	102	100%	102
Royal Roads University	RRU	5%	JIBC	8	30%	CAM	7	26%	BCIT	5	19%	7	26%	27	100%	526
Selkirk College	SEL	18%	UVIC	48	16%	OKAN	41	14%	TRU-OL	27	9%	178	61%	294	100%	1,680
Simon Fraser University	SFU	9%	BCIT	285	18%	DOUG	241	15%	KWAN	201	13%	865	54%	1,592	100%	17,139
Thompson Rivers University	TRU	12%	TRU-OL	286	33%	BCIT	75	9%	UBC	58	7%	439	51%	858	100%	7,252
Thompson Rivers University - Open Learning	TRU-OL	29%	UVIC	250	12%	BCIT	248	12%	UBC	210	10%	1,327	65%	2,035	100%	7,015
University of British Columbia	UBC	7%	BCIT	519	33%	LANG	268	17%	TRU-OL	151	10%	646	41%	1,584	100%	22,323
University of British Columbia (Okanagan)	UBCO	13%	UBC	76	25%	OKAN	69	22%	TRU-OL	48	15%	117	38%	310	100%	2,313
University College of the Fraser Valley	UCFV	12%	SFU	149	17%	BCIT	118	14%	TRU-OL	94	11%	503	58%	864	100%	7,421
University of Northern British Columbia	UNBC	18%	CNC	127	28%	TRU-OL	98	22%	UBC	30	7%	197	44%	452	100%	2,488
University of Victoria	UVIC	10%	TRU-OL	305	26%	CAM	280	24%	UBC	120	10%	485	41%	1,190	100%	11,908
Vancouver Community College	VCC	15%	BCIT	408	33%	LANG	201	16%	DOUG	181	15%	433	35%	1,223	100%	8,004
Grand Total		15%	BCIT	3,782	14%	SFU	3,148	12%	UBC	2,503	9%	17,253	65%	26,686	100%	180,354

* Student Mobility Rate is the % of 2005/06 registrants who moved to another B.C. public post-secondary institution in 2006/07.

Reverse Transfer Phenomenon

The movement of students from a university to a non-university is frequently referred to as "reverse transfer". Of those students who registered at a university in 2005/06 and continued their studies in 2006/07, 7.1% transferred to a college, university college or institute. The most popular destinations were urban colleges (2.8%) and institutes (2.4%). The most common reverse transfer destinations for 2005/06 registrants in B.C.'s research universities are also revealed in [Table 2](#) and highlighted here:

- » Movers from SFU and UBC were more inclined to go to BCIT than any other destination.
- » More than half of the movers from UVic went to Thompson Rivers Open Learning and Camosun College.
- » Movers from UNBC were more inclined to attend College of New Caledonia than any other destination.
- » Movers from UBC Okanagan were more likely to move to UBC Vancouver than any other institution.

Movement Between Post-Secondary Sectors

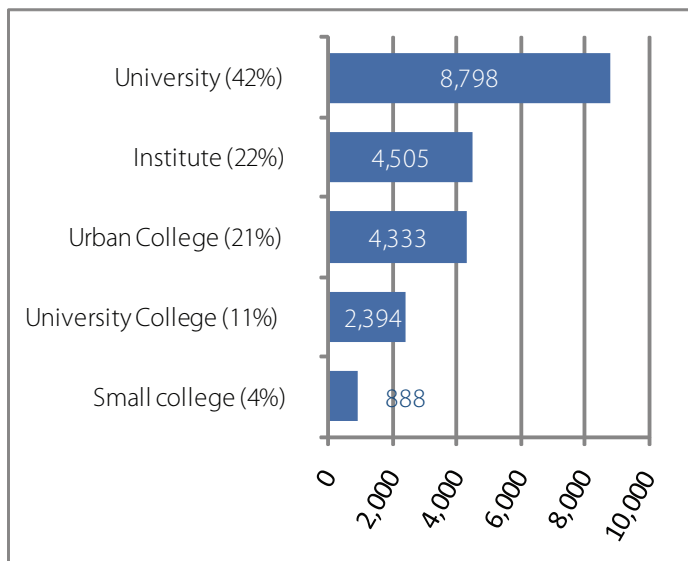
By aggregating student mobility within the B.C. public post-secondary sectors, student mobility between sectors can be summarized in a **sector mobility matrix**. [Table 3](#) shows the volume of student movement from 2005/06 to 2006/07 between each of the five post-secondary sectors (according to the sector designations at each of B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions during the time period of this study – institutes, small colleges, urban colleges, university colleges and universities). Among students who remained registered in the B.C. public post-secondary system in both years, the rate at which they remained in the same sector is referred to as the **sector stability rate** (88%), and the rate at which they switched to a different sector is the **sector mobility rate** (12%).

Table 3: Sector Mobility Matrix (From 2005/06 to 2006/07):

	Post-Secondary Sector	Post-Secondary Sector Where Registered in 2006/07						
		Institute	Small college	Urban College	University College	University	Not Reg'd 2006/07	
Post-Secondary Sector Where Registered in 2005/06	Institute	29,058 38.9%	147 0.2%	1,100 1.5%	379 0.5%	972 1.3%	42,964 57.6%	
	Small college	252 1.2%	8,615 41.4%	269 1.3%	183 0.9%	1,054 5.1%	10,455 50.2%	
	Urban College	1,756 2.4%	175 0.2%	35,246 47.6%	964 1.3%	5,016 6.8%	30,931 41.7%	
	University College	756 2.0%	129 0.3%	969 2.6%	20,594 54.7%	1,756 4.7%	13,450 35.7%	
	University	1,741 1.7%	437 0.4%	1,995 1.9%	868 0.8%	65,923 63.5%	32,822 31.6%	
	Not Registered 2005/06	42,506 55.9%	11,207 54.1%	36,753 48.1%	15,076 39.6%	30,096 28.7%		
Total Who Remained in Same Sector from 2005/06 to 2006/07							159,436	
Sector Stability Rate							88.4%	

Notes: (a) In 2005/06 and 2006/07, a total of 311,000 and 316,000 undergraduate students were enrolled in all B.C. public post-secondary institutions respectively. Among these registrants, 180,354 were enrolled in both years and 159,436 enrolled in the same sector in both years. The sector stability rate of 88.4% is calculated from 159,436 / 180,354. (b) The matrix row, "Not Registered 2005/06", shows the number of students who did not register in the B.C. public post-secondary education system in 2005/06, but did register in 2006/07. (c) The matrix column, "Not Reg'd 2006/07", shows the number of students who did register in 2005/06, but did not register again in 2006/07; roughly 44,000 of the 2006/07 non-registrants had completed a credential in 2005/06.

Figure A: Post-Secondary Sector Destinations of "Movers" in 2006/07



Given that sector mobility and stability rates of 88% and 12% are similar to the student mobility and stability rates of 85% and 15% (see Table 1), this suggests that student movement between institutions is mainly occurring between sectors. Among the roughly 21,000 undergraduate students who moved from one sector in 2005/06 to another in 2006/07, the most popular destination was the university sector (see Figure A). This is a reflection of B.C.'s effective credit transfer system and university transfer programs in colleges. Universities have the longest programs on average, and therefore retain a higher proportion of their students in subsequent years.

Ongoing Student Mobility Studies

This study shows that large numbers of students are moving in multiple directions within the public post-secondary system in B.C. each year, but most students continue their education at the same institution. Of those who do move between institutions, the majority move between sectors, such as college to university. The Student Transitions Project will likely repeat this study again in future, but with an expanded focus on program mobility. Such a study would track the flow of B.C.'s public post-secondary students within and between programs, as students move from one institution or sector to another.

Student mobility between B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions continues to be a topic of interest to the Student Transitions Project, post-secondary institutions and B.C.'s ministries responsible for education and advanced education. Additional student transitions and mobility reports will be prepared in 2009, beginning with post-secondary enrollments in academic year 2002/03, to the most current enrollments available to STP (2007/08 and Fall 2008).