

# COTA Meeting Minutes March 2005

## Committee on Transfer and Articulation Department of Higher Education Conference Call March 21, 2005

*Approved July 7, 2005*

**Participants:** Karen Herzog, Don Doucette, Karen Finken Keller, Alton Lacey, Steve Lehmkuhle, James Scanlon, Evelyn Jorgenson (for Marsha Drennon), Bruno Schmidt (for Julio Leon)

**MDHE Staff:** Greg Fitch, Robert Stein, Laura Vedenhaupt

**Guests:** Arlen Dykstra, Jeanie Crain

Karen Herzog called the meeting to order at 1:00pm on March 21, 2005.

### **Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Alton Lacey and seconded by Karen Finken Keller that the minutes of the October 18, 2004 meeting be approved. The motion passed unanimously. Karen Herzog welcomed Commissioner Fitch to the conference call and expressed appreciation for his interest and participation with COTA.

### **Lingering Transfer Issues**

Robert Stein briefed the members on lingering transfer issues referred to COTA by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) at its February 2005 meeting. The Council on Public Higher Education (COPHE) and the Missouri Community College Association (MCCA) have recommended statements to CBHE for inclusion in the Credit Transfer Policy covering the following issues: additional lower-division requirements beyond the 42-hour block of general education, the transfer of more than 64 credit hours, and the treatment of lower/upper division course similarity. The CBHE directed COTA to review and analyze each issue and provide recommendations for CBHE action at a future Board meeting.

Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) staff developed a comparison grid for use by COTA members as they review each lingering issue and identify which section(s) of the current credit transfer policy would be affected.

James Scanlon cautioned that, when reviewing the information, the committee should keep in mind that COTA membership is comprised of more than representatives from COPHE and MCCA institutions. Concerns of the independent and certified proprietary school signatories should also be considered.

A motion was made by Dr. Herzog and seconded by Don Doucette that each member would review the proposed language for each issue and determine if the statement should be an addendum, a clarifying comment, or a revision to the current policy. Initial results will be sent to Dr. Stein and to other COTA members for consideration prior to the next Committee meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Transfer Friendly Institutions**

At the December 2004 CBHE meeting, CBHE members expressed support for COTA to explore the potential of developing a voluntary program identifying Missouri "transfer friendly" institutions. COTA members discussed the benefits and challenges associated with implementing a program that might serve as a "Good Housekeeping Seal" to better inform the public about transfer and articulation practices within the state.

Steve Lehmkuhle commented that previous attempts to develop such criteria were met with pushback, reasons for which included inconsistency between transfer policies and practices and the tendency to focus criteria on receiving institutions only. Any policy on transfer-friendly should address these issues.

COTA determined that a collaborative discussion on the topic should be pursued. COTA directed Dr. Stein to draft a charge for a subcommittee that would be comprised of COTA members and other institutional representatives, including student affairs and transfer officers. The subcommittee will examine institutional practices that result in positive transfer experiences for students and will present

their findings of best practices to COTA. The subcommittee's conclusions will serve as the basis for statewide discussion with institutions on the establishment of transfer-friendly criteria in Missouri.

### **Transferability of Credit from Proprietary Institutions**

Dr. Stein briefed the Committee on the long-standing conversation regarding credit transfer from the proprietary sector to public and independent institutions. Members reviewed sections of the current policy on general education credit transfer and the Frequently Asked Questions document that references proprietary institutions. Institutions are encouraged to develop institution-to-institution articulation agreements with proprietary institutions that are accredited by a national accredited agency recognized by the US Department of Education.

Ms. Finken Keller stated that, from her perspective, more proprietary students are pushing to get their general education credit transferred, but easy transfer is still the exception rather than the rule. Many students who face obstacles in transferring credit get discouraged when they are turned away simply because they are from the proprietary sector.

Dr. Lehmkuhle commented that many public and independent institutions are unclear about the standards and procedures proprietary institutions must follow to receive national accreditation and state certification. Educating administrators on these standards and procedures may ease concerns and increase a more equitable treatment of proprietary transfer students. An increased understanding, open discussion, and time are needed to build the trust necessary for seamless transfer. COTA members agreed that it should be unacceptable for public and independent institutions to turn away students simply because they are from the proprietary sector.

A motion was made by Dr. Lehmkuhle and seconded by Ms. Finken Keller to form a subcommittee that will review and recommend language to clarify the intent of the current policy so that public and independent institutions treat students from proprietary institutions in a fair and equitable manner. The subcommittee will also recommend language for a Principles of Good Practice for the Transfer of Proprietary School Credit. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Other**

Dr. Herzog announced that she will be retiring as President of East Central College in May and that this was her last meeting with the Committee. She offered her thanks and appreciation for all of COTA's hard work.

Dr. Scanlon requested that the next meeting of COTA be a face-to-face meeting. Committee members agreed.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.