Implementing a 1 Year time Limit for Pending Requests

The Background

Over the years a very large backlog of pending articulation requests has accumulated. There are several reasons why this backlog has occurred: receiving institutions have not had the resources to respond quickly to articulation requests, sending institutions have submitted courses for articulation where there are no matching programs at the institutions, and BCCAT's Transfer Credit Evaluation System (TCES) made it too easy to submit course requests to every receiving institution in the BC Transfer System. After consultation with BCCAT's Institutional Contact Persons, BCCAT's Transfer and Articulation Committee, and the Chairs and System Liaison Persons of Articulation Committees, there was strong support for implementing a one year time limit for articulation requests.

The Problem

In April 2008 there were just under 12,000 pending articulation requests spread amongst 16 receiving institutions. Of these requests, 46% were 1 year old or older. This was resulting in some unintended consequences, such as sending institutions submitting duplicate requests thinking this might hasten the process, or instances where receiving institutions would eventually respond to articulation requests where the sending course was no longer being offered. It is also BCCAT's observation that many courses were being submitted inappropriately, where the receiving institution had no matching programs or where there was little likelihood of student movement. Receiving institutions were having difficulty keeping up with current articulation requests, let alone finding the resources to tackle requests that were 1 year old or more. In many cases, receiving institutions were choosing to only respond to current requests, as they had no intention or ability to respond to requests that were in some cases more than three years old.

The Solution

BCCAT has now implemented the 1 year time limit for articulation requests. Receiving institutions will have until August 31, 2009 to respond to articulation requests that have been pending for 1 year or more. All requests submitted within the last year have been given an expiry date of either August 31, 2009 or one year from their date of submission, whichever comes later. All new requests submitted will be given an expiry date of 1 year from the date of submission. For example, if a request is submitted on May 15, 2009, it will have an expiry date of May 15, 2010 for response by the receiving institution. This will accomplish two goals: first, it will eliminate the backlog of articulation requests that are currently one year old or more, and second, will help make the articulation process more sustainable in the long run.

The FAQs

1. **What can sending institutions do if a request is expired, but they still want to create an articulation?**

    If a sending institution is still seeking articulation after a request has expired, they can submit a new course outline for evaluation to their chosen receiving institutions. This new request will have a 1 year expiry date from the new date of submission. While this may be a duplication of effort on the sending institution, this will ensure that the receiving institution has a current outline for a particular course, and that the course continues to be offered.

2. **How will sending/receiving institutions know when a request has been expired?**

Whenever a request is expired, a notification will appear in the TCES account of the institution letting them know a request has been expired. We have also built additional tools into the TCES to allow users to view when requests are expiring so that they are aware when an expiry is imminent. If a faculty member wants to know when requests are expiring he/she should contact the transfer credit contact (TCC) at the Registrars office.

3. **What if a receiving institution wants to respond to an expired request after 1 year?**

Receiving institutions can always use the "Receiver Initiated Transfer Credit Evaluation" option within the TCES to establish credit for course requests after they have become expired. This tool is routinely used by all receiving institutions to establish credit for courses based on student demand or evaluations conducted outside of the TCES process.

4. **Why is BCCAT implementing a one year time limit?**

In order for the BC Transfer System to be sustainable, we need to ensure that the articulation process is running smoothly and efficiently. While some receiving institutions may not respond to articulation requests as quickly as sending institutions (or they themselves) would like, at the same time many sending institutions submit courses for articulation to all institutions when only a handful are offering matching programs. As requests become stale dated, institutions get bogged down in responding to requests for courses where there are no students transferring and in some cases, the courses are no longer being offered. BCCAT is not trying to prevent institutions from formally entering into course to course articulation where there are appropriate matching programs and legitimate student flows. BCCAT does, however, need to be responsible in meeting the needs of all members of the BC Transfer System, to help ensure that the course to course articulation process remains sustainable in the long run. We feel that implementing a 1 year time limit for articulation requests will help ensure sustainability in the long term.

If you have any questions, please contact Mike Winsemann, Transfer & Technology Manager at the BC Council on Admissions & Transfer at mwinsemann@bccat.ca.