Certificate in Academic Foundations Comprehensive Program Review
Self-Study Recommendations
Dr. E. McCausland, Faculty Liaison, Academic Foundations
30th April 2019

The Certificate in Academic Foundations (CAF) was designed to provide students with a strong first year experience, an opportunity to explore a variety of fields, and maximum transfer into degree programs. It has achieved that purpose. Douglas College has revised existing degrees to include a CAF entrance pathway and ensured that all new degrees will include a CAF option. The program has block t.8 (he)0.7 ((n)-0.

However, since the creation of separate limited enrolment CAF programs for entry in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Bachelor of Science in Psychiatric Nursing, student numbers in the open enrolment CAF have dropped substantially; there were 130 new CAF students in 2017. Moreover, about half of those students are waiting for entr

Response to Douglas College Self Study: Certificate in Academic Foundations
External Reviewer: Dr. Alisa Webb, Vice President, Students, University of the Fraser Valley
May 2019

Overview:

I am pleased to have been asked to conduct an external review of Douglas College's Certificate in Academic Foundations (CAF). The CAF appears to be a solid credential which prepares students for academic success by ensuring learning in key, foundational areas: communication (English), quantitative analysis (Math, Statistics, or Computing Science), science (lab science), and other areas typically the product of a range of first-year Arts and Science courses, such as critical thinking, problem solving, and research. The well-written self-study clearly articulates the merits of the program and general student satisfaction with their studies, while also noting issues with recruitment and enrolment.

Environmental Scan:

A few colleges offer the equivalent to Douglas' CAF. Institutions such as Camosun College, and Selkirk College only provide Arts and Science credentials for 60 credits, either as an Associate Degree or a Diploma. Similarly, a quick look at four of the designated teaching-intensive universities ̶ Capilano, Vancouver Island, UFV, and Emily Carr ̶ finds no comparable program. The self-study notes one comparable program, KPU's Certificate in Arts ̶ with 6 required credits and 24 additional credits in Arts.

Two BC colleges do offer a program similar to CAF: Vancouver Community College and Northern Lights College. These programs are closer in composition to CAF than the noted KPU certificate.

	DOUG	VCC	NLC
Total Credits	30	30	30

Required Math and/or Science Credits	0	6	0
Options?	Can include up to 9 credits of university transfer	N/A	Can include select courses from Business Management or from Social Work

K(šZ šE>Œ[• U Œš]‹]šŒ}•š (o Æ] o U µo•}(šZ•µ}Io o Œ•šµ(všo švÇ population and their lower number of course offerings. VCC and DOUG both require 6 credits in D šZI^] vo š[µ] PZK h'[• •&u }Œ•‰](]}µ šoo students meet those 6 credits. All programs require the completion of general arts and science courses, with an emphasis on university transferability. Finally, DOUG and N >C both allow for some non-Arts/Science credits to be applied to their respective certificates.

The environmental scan led to another observation that

Diploma. It might also include a change in name, such as Academic Foundations for Success. This would likely appeal to both students and their supporters.

2. That Douglas consider other avenues for transfer

While agreeing that Douglas should re-start conversations with UBC around block transfer of the CAF into UBC programs, there is also value in Douglas thinking beyond the research universities. While appreciating that this approach creates seamless pathways into and out of the associate degrees, by adhering so firmly to the associate degree framework which emphasizes the research institutions, I think Douglas is missing an opportunity. BCCAT data, as presented at the past several Joint Articulation Meetings, shows that the government-identified teaching intensive institutions receive huge numbers of transfer students. Douglas could be limiting opportunities for students by not broadening the scope of transfer possibilities. K (v } Douglas might consider conversations with KPU and CAP given their relative proximity and ease of access to transportation for students living in New Westminster and Coquitlam.

Conclusion:

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