

Final Report  
March 2017



ONCAT  
Project 2016-33

Reverse pathways – B.A. of Psychology to  
Collège Boréal and Collège La Cité programs



## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS AND PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

### **Collège Boréal**

Jocelyne Bédard  
Project Manager

### **Laurentian University**

Nathalie Poulin-Lehoux  
Senior Teaching Consultant

### **Collège La Cité**

Lise Frenette  
Manager, Special Projects

Joseph Aghaby  
Project Leader

## CONTACTS

### **Collège Boréal**

Jocelyne Bédard  
Project Manager  
21 Lasalle Blvd.  
Sudbury, ON P3A 6B1  
Tel.: 705-560-6673, ext. 2240

### **Laurentian University**

Natalie Poulin-Lehoux  
Senior Teaching Consultant  
Research and Francophone Program Development Support  
Office of the Associate Vice-President, Academic and Francophone Affairs  
935 Ramsey Lake Road, Office - P341 (Parker Building), Sudbury, ON P3E 2C6  
Tel.: 705-675-1151, ext. 3444

### **Collège La Cité**

Lise Frenette  
Manager, Special Projects  
801 Aviation Pkwy  
Ottawa, ON K1K 4R3  
Tel.: 705-742-2493, ext. 2023

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## 1. Executive Summary

This project was carried out by the two francophone colleges in Ontario and one bilingual university in the province. It primarily targeted university students seeking to enhance their soft skills and their know-how in areas of competency where essential technical skills are required to perform their work on a daily basis.

The partners agree that the bachelor of psychology is "non terminal" and that program graduates can have a hard time finding employment, as they don't gain specific expertise or professional credentials during the program. A college education recognized by employers for its ability to prepare graduates for the labour market unquestionably adds value to the bachelor degree, providing them with access to a variety of areas of specialization.

This initiative falls within the French-language education system continuum in Ontario that enhances student mobility. We strongly believe that it could become a model for other institutions wishing to invest in this type of pathway.

Despite our best efforts to develop pathways, the analyses didn't lead to expected outcomes or allow us to offer students a block credit transfer that would have meant advanced placement in the 2nd year of 2 to 3 year programs and in the 2nd semester of a one-year postgraduation program. We were however able to identify transfer credits that will be granted to graduates of the B.A. of Psychology program at Laurentian University who register in these college programs.

## 2. Project Purpose and Goals

The project set out to analyze feasibility and then develop and implement pathways, for graduates of the B.A. of Psychology program at Laurentian University, to the two colleges' common or unique programs that seemed to have, in principle, a strong affinity with the bachelor degree:

| <b>Program name</b>  | <b>Common program</b> | <b>Unique program at Boréal</b> | <b>Unique program at La Cité</b> |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Éducation en services à l'enfance<br><i>Early childhood education</i>                                  | x                     |                                 |                                  |
| Techniques d'éducation spécialisée<br><i>Child and youth worker</i>                                    | x                     |                                 |                                  |
| Techniques de travail social<br><i>Social work foundations</i>   | x                     |                                 |                                  |
| Techniques des services policiers<br><i>Police foundations</i>   | x                     |                                 |                                  |
| Études sur la paix et les conflits<br><i>Peace and conflict studies</i>                                |                       | x                               |                                  |
| Ressources humaines<br><i>Human resources</i>  |                       | x                               |                                  |
| Autisme et sciences du comportement<br><i>Autism and behavioural sciences</i>                          |                       |                                 | x                                |
| Intervention auprès des personnes ayant un handicap<br><i>Treating people with a disability</i>        |                       |                                 | x                                |
| Santé mentale et toxicomanie<br><i>Mental health and addiction</i>                                     |                       |                                 | x                                |
| Techniques de réadaptation et de justice pénale<br><i>Rehabilitation and penal justice foundations</i> |                       |                                 | x                                |
| Techniques de travail social – gérontologie<br><i>Social work foundations – gerontology</i>            |                       |                                 | x                                |

Collège Boréal, La Cité college and Laurentian University wanted to offer graduates of the B.A. of Psychology the opportunity to pursue a college education, in French, in a field that is closely related to psychology, such as in social and human sciences related programs.

In view of the applied nature of college programs and of the theoretical nature of university courses, the partners wanted to develop pathways that would include a bridge for students to upgrade and enhance their technical knowledge and then take advantage of a block credit transfer. Ideally, this credit transfer would have led to advanced placement in the 2nd year of 2 to 3 year programs, and in the 2nd semester of a one-year postgraduate program. In all cases, the goal was to transfer a maximum number of credits.

### 3. Pathway Development

#### 3.1 Methodology

The work process was developed jointly by the three partners and initially included four phases. It was slightly modified once the project was underway, to take into account operational differences between the college and university systems, as well as unforeseen factors that came up throughout the project. Work was interrupted at the end of Phase II, as the analysis results were inconclusive and did not allow for pathway development.

While the analyses didn't lead to expected outcomes, they identified credit transfers that can be automatically granted to graduates of the bachelor of psychology at Laurentian University who are registering in one of the college programs.

The following outlines the work done in phases I and II:

#### **Phase I – February to April 2016**

#### **Initial meeting, allocation of work hours for spring and fall 2016, and information gathering on the B.A. of Psychology:**

- Held initial meeting with deans/directors of schools or institutions, managers of staff support centres and managers of the Admissions Office and Registrar's Office at both colleges:
  - presented the project
  - confirmed which programs were targeted for pathway development
  - identified needs in terms of subject experts and educational consultants

- developed the analysis tool, defined the work process, deliverables and timelines
- Held initial meeting with subject experts and educational consultants from both colleges to provide information on the project
- Allocated hours on workload forms for professors-subject experts and educational consultants for spring 2016
- Allocated hours on workload forms for professors-subject experts and educational consultants for fall 2016
- Compiled and distributed to the colleges the following information on the B.A. of Psychology (3 years): program objectives, course outlines and other information on learning outcomes and activities
- Shared and adapted the analysis tool, established work process for colleges
- Planned meeting schedule

### **Phase II - May to December 2016**

#### **Launch meeting with subject experts and educational consultants; analysis, allocation of hours for winter 2017**

- Held launch meeting with professors-subject experts and educational consultants from both colleges:
  - provided documentation on the B.A. of Psychology
  - presented the analysis tool, work process and expected deliverables
  - presented the meeting schedule
- Subject experts and educational consultants analyzed the B.A. of Psychology (3 years) program objectives and course outlines
- Created list of courses that could be credited, for each college program
- Created list of language courses and general education courses that could be credited, for each program
- Subject experts and educational consultants from the colleges and Laurentian University exchanged analysis results
- College subject experts met to discuss analyses performed, ensure uniformity and go over analysis results

### **3.2 Program comparison and analysis**

Program analysis was done using a grid developed by an educational consultant at Collège Boréal.

After a more in-depth reading of the university program's course outlines, it became clear that the applied nature of college programs could not be reconciled with the more scientific nature of the psychology program. Consequently, we were unable to develop



pathways for Laurentian University graduates from the B.A. of Psychology. Furthermore, although many credit transfers are granted for certain programs, it is impossible to admit students to the program beyond the first semester due to the program structure and the limits pertaining to course offerings.

#### 4. Summary of credit transfers granted

Unfortunately, as stated previously and despite our best efforts, the analyses did not lead to expected outcomes. They did however allow us to identify credits that could be granted to students graduating from the B.A. of Psychology at Laurentian University.

| Program Name   | Collège Boréal<br>Credits granted | Collège La Cité<br>Credits granted |
|--|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Éducation en services à l'enfance<br><i>Early childhood education</i>                                  | 12/98*                            | 12/80*                             |
| Techniques d'éducation spécialisée<br><i>Child and youth worker</i>                                    | 31/120*                           | 22/108*                            |
| Techniques de travail social<br><i>Social work foundations</i>   | 19/86*                            | 16/92*                             |
| Techniques des services policiers<br><i>Police foundations</i>   | 12/99*                            | 10/102*                            |
| Études sur la paix et les conflits<br><i>Peace and conflict studies</i>                                | 6/84*                             |                                    |
| Ressources humaines<br><i>Human resources</i>  | 0/53***                           |                                    |
| Autisme et sciences du comportement<br><i>Autism and behavioural sciences</i>                          |                                   | 2/33***                            |
| Intervention auprès des personnes ayant un handicap<br><i>Treating people with a disability</i>        |                                   | 13/69**                            |
| Santé mentale et toxicomanie<br><i>Mental health and addiction</i>                                     |                                   | 7/33***                            |
| Techniques de réadaptation et de justice pénale<br><i>Rehabilitation and penal justice foundations</i> |                                   | 12/82*                             |
| Techniques de travail social – gérontologie<br><i>Social work foundations – gerontology</i>            |                                   | 12/75*                             |

\*Three additional credits could be granted based on results in the following two courses - ENG1010 Preparatory English for Professional Communication and ENG1009 English in the Workplace - if students have a Certificate of Bilingualism from Laurentian University, which means that they have taken at least 15 credits in each language.

\*\*Six additional credits could be granted for the following two courses - 022554ENL English I and 022555ENL English II, if students have a Certificate of Bilingualism from Laurentian University, which means that they have taken at least 15 credits in each language.

\*\*\* This postgraduate program does not include language courses, general education courses or electives that could be credited.

This information will be shared with the Admissions Office and Registrar's Office at both colleges, to ensure that admission requests by graduates of the Laurentian University bachelor of psychology are handled properly.

The table on the previous page shows the differences between credit transfers for both colleges' common programs. These differences can be explained by the level of autonomy given to colleges to create course contents based on provincial standards set by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development. It is possible that harmonization work will be done and submitted as a separate project to ONCAT.

Furthermore, we might also look at harmonizing course schedules between the college programs and the Psychology program at Laurentian, so that students can simultaneously complete their B.A. of Psychology degree and their college degree, or their advanced level college degree or postgraduate certificate. This project could also be submitted to ONCAT.

## 5. Best practices and teaching

To ensure proper project execution, it is crucial that institutions implement a work and communication process between project managers, as they are the cornerstone of communication between institutions, deans, program directors, subject experts and educational consultants.

Moreover, it is essential to mobilize program directors and deans as soon as possible to perform the work. Presenting the project, work process and timelines at the beginning of the project ensures that they are able to better understand the project and also provide feedback and share their concerns and recommendations from the start.

Lastly, the analysis tool that was developed made it much easier to organize the analytical work and present coherent results.

## 6. Appendices

6.1 Evaluation grid - template

6.2 Éducation en services à l'enfance (GEEN) (Early childhood education) - Examples of technical sheets for each program