

Better Understanding the College Transfer Pathway at a Bilingual University

Presented by: Johanne Bourdages, Alain Malette, Sylvie Lamoureux et Julie Beauchamp

Overview

- Context of credit transfers
- Incoming cohort:
 - Where do our College transfers come from?
 - Which faculties at uOttawa are they choosing?
- Quantitative component: *Dealing with a heterogeneous student body*
- Qualitative study: *The college transfer experience*
- Facilitating college transfers: *The Telfer School of Management Experience*
- Next steps at uOttawa

Context of credit transfers

Context

- University of Ottawa - largest bilingual university (43,000 students, including 13,000 francophones)
- Most programs offered in both French and English with a few programs offered only in French
- Partnership with Colleges offering programs in French and in English

UofO commitments

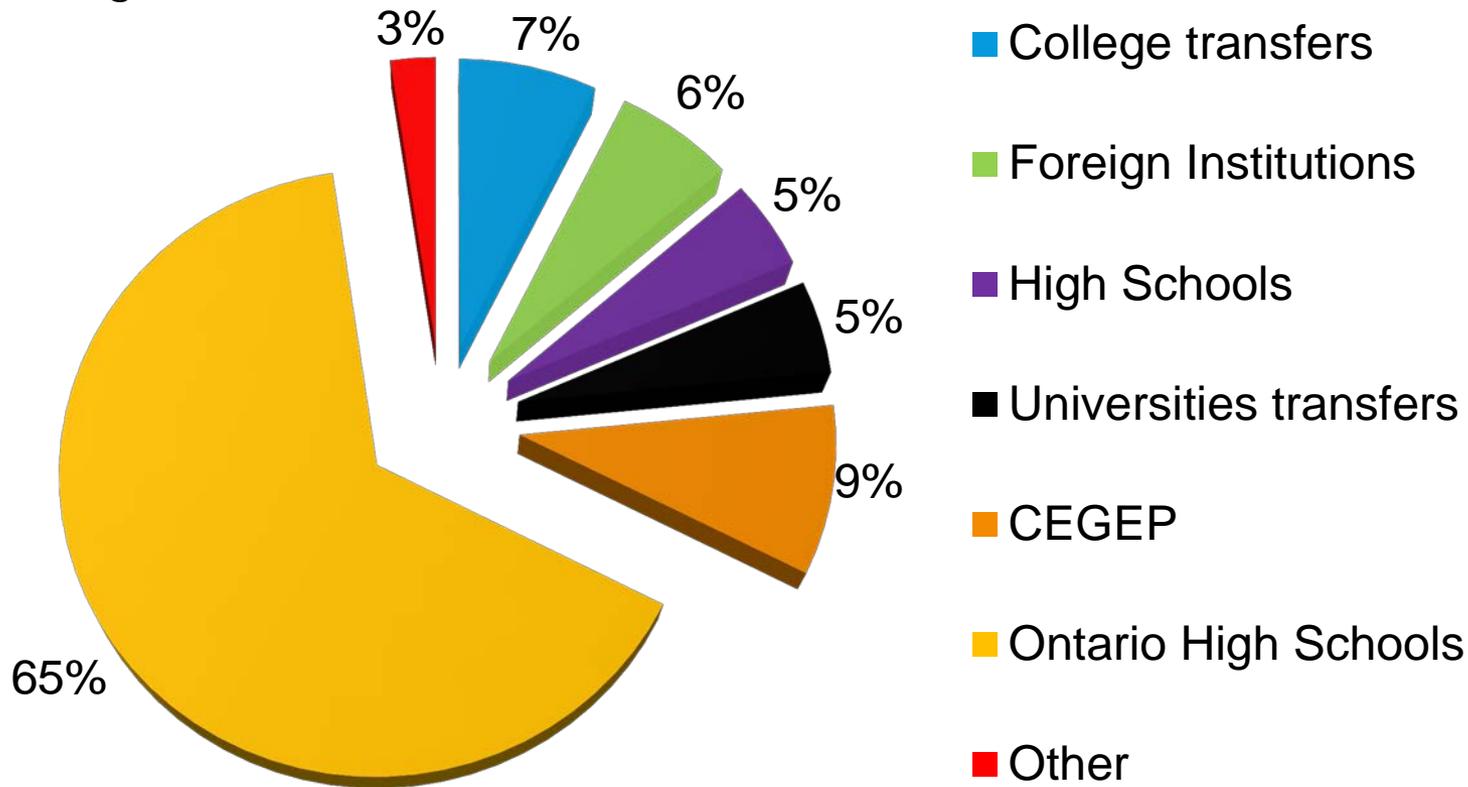
- Student success
- Student experience
- Serving the Francophone Community

Challenges

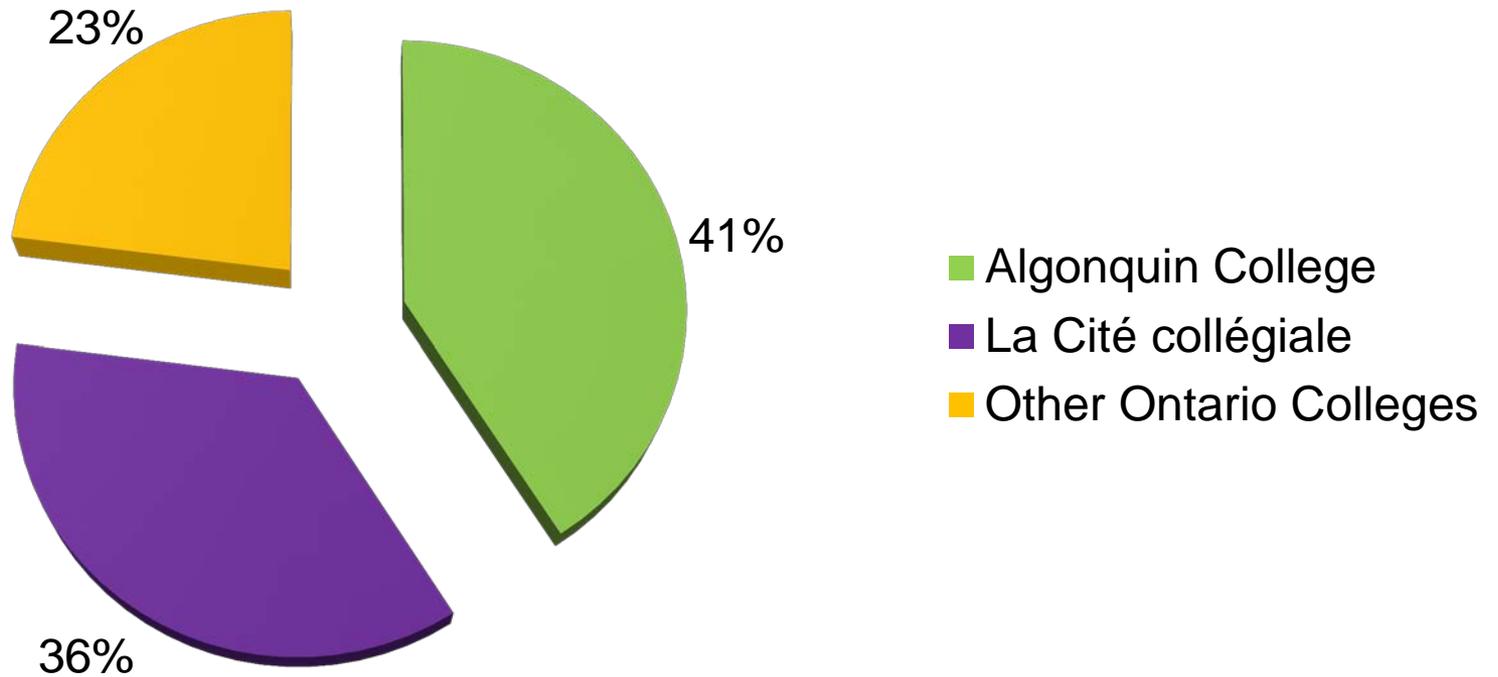
- Credit transfer focused on learning outcomes
- Faculty members focused on traditional pathways (i.e. Ontario high schools)
- Monitoring student success
 - Clear understanding of credit transfer students' needs (diversity of incoming students)
 - Students' performance
 - Retention and program completion

- Fall session 2012
- All languages
- Total: 7848 undergraduates

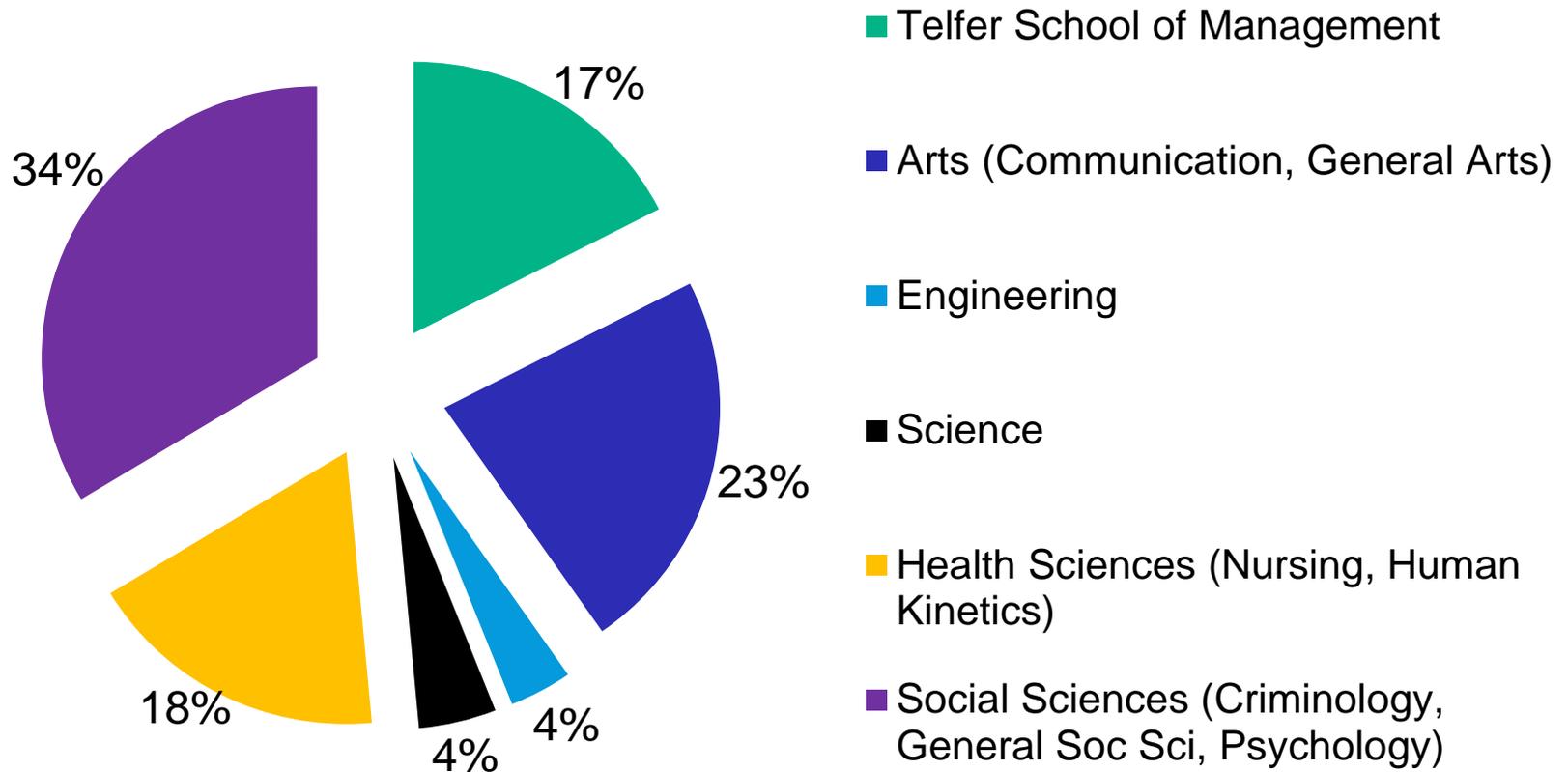
Incoming Cohort



What institutions do our College transfers come from?

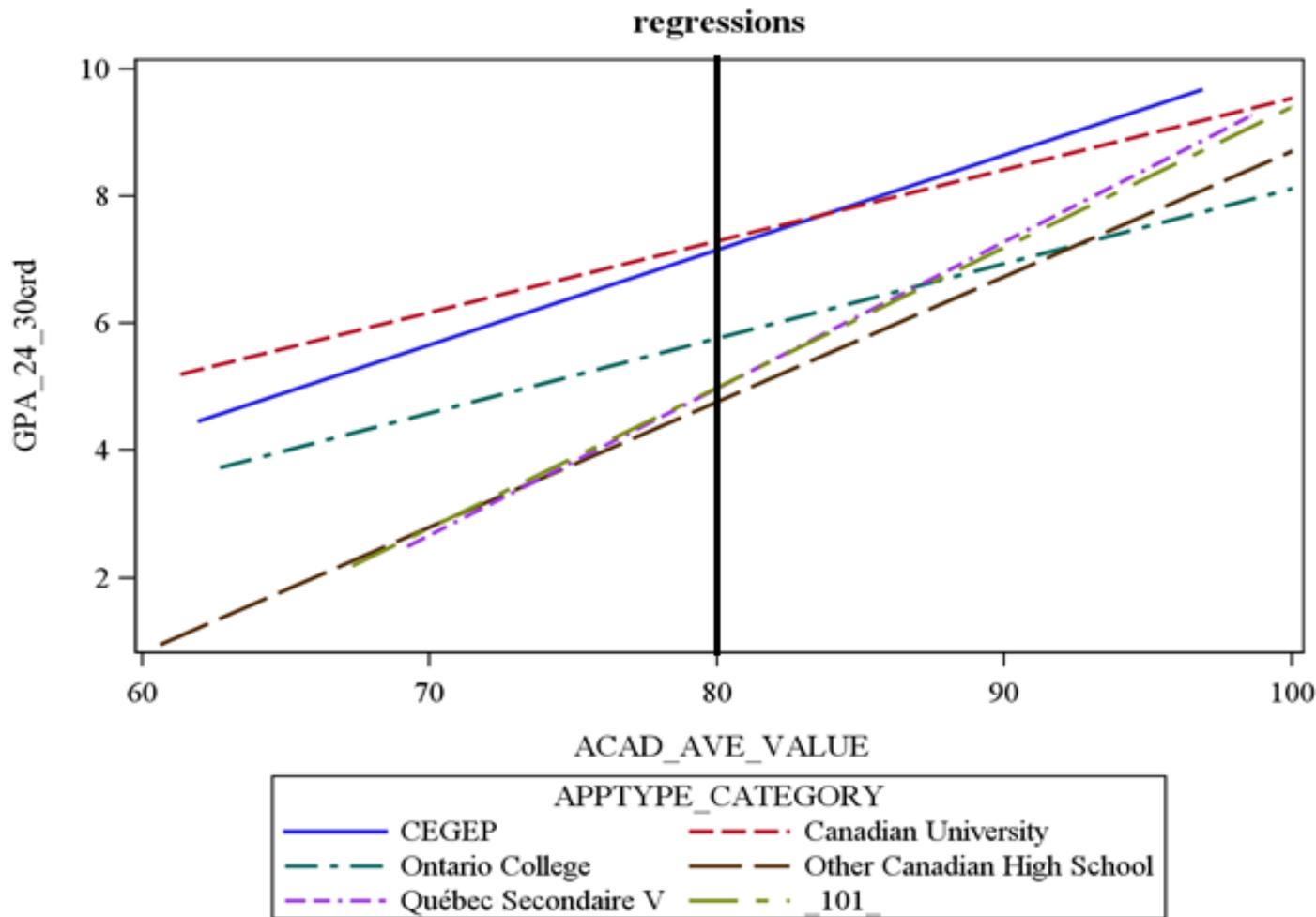


Which uOttawa faculties are they choosing?



- Fall session 2012
- All languages
- Ontario Colleges only

Quantitative component: *Dealing with a heterogeneous student body*



Qualitative Results Overview

(n=33 participants)

- Most students enrol in programs of study **they perceive are directly connected** to their diploma. However most college programs **do not have** official transfer agreements.
- Participants **did not** feel compelled to participate in orientation activities as they feel a disconnect with the majority of « first-entry » students who are at different life stage.
- Participants' Focus : getting a degree to **improve standing in workforce** or **access career path**.
- The University's (and program) reputation in their field **are paramount**.
- They feel that their **professors do not seem to know** that that college transfer students are in their classes and do not build their previous knowledge.

Qualitative Results Overview - 2

- College experience similar to secondary school. Work experience better prepared them for transition to University.
- **College better** prepares them for **workplace skills**; **University degree** provides theory and access to **a better job**.
- Uncertainty about university processes, e.g.
 - Choosing courses vs being given a schedule;
 - How to navigate course sequence in light of equivalencies.
- Frustrated by **opaque credit-equivalency process**; is neither consistent nor coherent; varies based on who analyses the file; if you complain, you get more equivalencies.
- **Equivalency conundrum**: must repeat some courses but given equivalencies to missing foundational competencies.
- Bottom line: Students feel that there needs to be **more discussion between** the University and the Colleges.

Facilitating College Transfers: *The Telfer School of Management Experience*

- Our experience:
 - Initial program looked at the potential of credit recognition on a case by case basis
 - Lack of standardisation and equitable treatment in credit recognition
 - Ill defined program mapping
 - Student success questionable at best
 - Negative impact on student experience
 - Lack of clarity of agreement and prospect
 - Perception of inequity
 - Sense of abandonment
 - Difficulty in completing program
 - Time to completion
 - Attrition and failure rates
 - Lack of availability of courses due to unpredictable course sequence
 - Perception that the activity was not student centered

The Telfer Initiative

- A student centered approach
 - Study of college programs and mapping against the Telfer B.Com.
 - Establish standardised, pre-determined pathways
 - Communicate course sequence and program duration to students upon admission
 - Provide student support and counselling in the transition
 - Work with Colleges to build on the results and further develop the program

Next steps at uOttawa

- Monitor and assess Telfer's model for best practices
- Focus on learning outcomes rather than only on content-based equivalencies
- Importance of monitoring student success
- Increased dialogue with partners
- Adapt our academic counselling services to reflect the diversity of incoming students

Thank you! Merci!