



PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Research exploring the student experience in transfer between York University and Seneca College

Type: Research

Project Number: 2019-22 or R1922

Project Lead: York University

Collaborators:

York University (Office of Institutional Planning and Analysis; Institute for Social Research) and Seneca College (Centre for Research in Student Mobility) and the York Seneca Partnership

Deliverables for website (if applicable): The Student Experience in Transfer – York/Seneca

Project Summary

The 'Student Experience in Transfer' study is a research project using a combination of surveys and focus groups. The study population is transfer students who were enrolled at York University and Seneca College in Fall 2019. Two surveys were administered electronically between October 2019 and November 2019:

1. Of 652 York to Seneca transfer students, 162 went on to participate in the survey (25%).
2. Of 1,260 Seneca to York transfer students enrolled at the University, 354 (28%) participated in the survey.

Overall, 516 students responded - a participation rate of 27%.

Project Rationale

The primary objective of the project was to produce actionable results from which the institutions could build upon to make significant changes to improve the experiences and process for transfer students.

Therefore, the study sought to learn about service information gaps to help improve the supports for transfer students at York and Seneca, especially through advising, admission and recruitment. Although it focused on two institutions, the results should be generalizable to other postsecondary relationships within Ontario.

Secondarily, another goal included the provision of information to support the work of stakeholders across the postsecondary system in Ontario.

What research methods were used?

Focus groups and surveys were the research methods used for this project. (See the Report for additional details)

Describe any limitations

The research focused on student experiences, however the perspectives of administrators and staff within the institutions, who had transfer responsibilities were not part of the study.

A longitudinal approach, would have been able to decipher cohort-effects within the transfer population. Additionally, a larger sample that also included non-transfer students, would have helped to make distinctions between the transfer and the non-transfer population within the institutions.

Main Collaborator Contributions

York University (Office of Institutional Planning and Analysis; Institute for Social Research) and Seneca College (Centre for Research in Student Mobility) and the York Seneca Partnership.

Research Findings

Transfer students were more focused on academic integration and engagement than on social integration and engagement.

Many of the on-campus services offered to transfer students are not well utilized or well-known. Institutional and campus service disparities affected transfer students' levels of satisfaction. The timing of transfer credits and the amount of credits received affected student satisfaction levels for college to university transfers.

Faculty/student interactions positively impacted student satisfaction levels and academic performance.

Future Research

The faculty and staff perspectives on transfer students at the institution and about transfer/college university collaboration.

Sector or System Implications

ONCAT is working towards a more seamless and student-centered transfer system. Does this project provide any insights, cautions or recommendations for a more seamless system? Please describe.

See report recommendations.

Tips/Advice

Have a very involved discussion, early on, how background literature and theories will shape the research study. But, be opened to expanding those ideas, as the research results/ findings are being uncovered. Be detailed and specific with the larger research questions and how they frame/will frame the tools being used to administer the study.

Tools and Resources

The appendices contain a copy of the survey tool used for the project.

