

Borderless Learning: Policy Implications for Institutions

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Borderless Learning....

“Refers to the breaking down of social, cultural, economic, geographical and other boundaries and barriers that limit access, quality and opportunity for students, institutions and higher educational systems”

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Cooper

Impacts on Learners....

- More choice and opportunity
- More flexibility
- Mobility and transferability of studies
- Exposure to multiple technologies and institutional cultures

For Institutions.....

- Build their student base
- Internationalize their offerings and student profile in new ways
- Achieve specific special goals
- Differentiate themselves by offering unique and distinctive programs nationally and internationally.....continued

For Institutions.....

- Build brand identity at home and elsewhere
- Create opportunities for institutional and staff growth through collaboration and partnerships in development, delivery and research

For systems of higher education....

- Implementation of economic and social goals through flexible, affordable lifelong learning.
- Develop partnerships between institutions and between education and employment sectors, thus meeting emerging needs more economically and effectively.

Canadian Context

- Education is a provincial responsibility
- Each institution has academic autonomy
- Federal government has an agendas for Mobility and Flexibility, Immigration, Human Resource Development, Telecommunications and Research
- Pan-Canadian Protocol for transferability of studies (Council of (provincial) Ministers of Education)
- Consortia of institutions developed by both provincial and federal governments

Convergence

- Mobility within the walls
- Changing profile of distance learners
- Learners are selecting courses from more than one institution, and expect transferability among them.
- Learners expect to accumulate credits from several providers towards a credential.

Policy Implications

- Residency – this has evolved, from courses “taken at” to courses “offered by”
- Provincial Initiatives to foster transfer credit and collaboration: B.C. Campus, Campus Alberta, Campus Saskatchewan, Campus Manitoba
- Whose student is it: who controls what, who gets what?

Institutional Perspectives

- On-site or on-line?
- Authentication of Students
- Program Integrity
- Nature of the Learning Environment
- Assessment: validating and guaranteeing the learning through transfer credit
- Loss of Registrations
- Reputation

Approaches to Residency

- Program Outcomes
- Capstone Events
- Specific Letters of Permission
- Regional or Consortia Approaches
- Central Agencies
- Improved Tools for Assessment

Looking Forward

- Online learning is an integral part of Higher Education
- It impacts both “open” and “traditional” Institutions
- It will require institutions to rethink policies and practices

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