

## Board of Examiners Coordinating Committee Summary Report September 2008

The Board of Examiner Coordinating Committee is a long standing committee of CCLS. A new terms of reference for the committee was approved in 2006. The terms were broadened to include a fuller description of the aims and objectives of the committee (see excerpt below) and to add non-voting participants, called observers, representing educational institutions that maintain an accredited program.

The current members of the committee are as follows:

Chair Graham Bowden, representing AOLS  
James Secord, Representing APBELS and University of New Brunswick  
Jack Larson, Representing CBEPS  
Mike Barry, Representing University of Calgary

The Council of OAGQ sent notice in June 2008 of their decision that they would have no representative on the committee.

All of individual members of this committee have been working in the past three years on the harmonization and syllabus review initiatives.

The CCLS Board Champion for BECC is Norm Coté as part of his role as Champion for Harmonization. Sarah Cornett acts as committee secretary.

Currently there are three areas that require attention.

### **BCIT Evaluation**

Work is progressing on the evaluation for accreditation of the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT). Communication with Ian Lloyd, Program Head, Bachelor of Technology in Geomatics, is ongoing and the most recent estimate is that the evaluation materials will be submitted for review in December. A site visit will be planned for early 2009, six to eight weeks after the materials have been received. This will require that the CCLS budget for 2008 be reallocated to 2009.

Graham Bowden, James Secord, Jack Larson, Teresa Myrfield, Dave Thomson, and Jean-Noël Lechasseur have been contacted to take part in the evaluation team. The site visit team will be chosen based on availability for travel when the site visit dates are set. Others may participate in the review of materials and reporting.

The evaluation will be based on the current accreditation process and the current joint boards syllabus. The Committee will be reviewing and making recommendations for revising the national accreditation system in order to improve its effectiveness in today's educational environment. As an initial step, the accreditation process document is being updated to reflect the current situation (i.e. CBEPS, joint boards syllabus, BECC terms of reference, etc). An in depth review will then consider the needs of the surveying community and the associations particularly with respect to programs at Ryerson and Laval and elsewhere, and look at building more flexibility into the system to address the needs of the associations.

### Core & Electives Syllabus

The core & electives syllabus has been recommended through the harmonization initiative and presented to all associations. All associations have responded to the presentations with general support and some general comments but a solid consensus is needed to move forward with detailed work on the syllabus.

A process is needed to move the work forward from this point. The process needs to directly involve CBEPS and all of the associations. Any association requirements or areas of concern need to be communicated clearly and specifically so that they can be effectively addressed. The task force developed a syllabus outline with core and elective components carefully considered to meet the needs of all associations but it is a very fine line and balancing act that could easily be upset if communications is not open, specific and timely.

Before a new syllabus can be implemented, detailed syllabus item descriptions including texts, resource lists, and learning outcomes need to be developed, study guides need to be created, transition of accredited programs and candidates currently in the process needs to be mapped.

These next steps will take significant resources, will most likely be done through CBEPS, and can only go forward with the specific commitment of the associations that this is the direction they want to go.

A compilation of written responses from the associations that have been received by CCLS to August 30, 2008 is included at the end of this report.

### The Evolution of BECC

BECC had five members several years ago (APBELS, OAGQ, AOLS, WCBELS, ACLS). It currently has three active members (APBELS, AOLS, CBEPS) and two observer universities (UNB and Calgary) with potential for a third (BCIT). With AOLS and finalizing their membership in CBEPS and APBELS winding down as the Atlantic associations join CBEPS, the BECC structure will not be relevant in the very near future.

The associations must consider carefully how to ensure that the aims and objectives of BECC will be carried forward over this time of transition and into the future. CBEPS will play a key role in this process but CCLS may also play a facilitating role. Communication between all stakeholders, the associations, boards and institutions, will be key over the next few months, and this has been communication has recently been less than effective.

### In Summary

Much work has been done and is being done by individuals volunteering considerable time and expertise. Clear process and communication is needed in several areas and is currently lacking.

Sarah Cornett, BECC Secretary

**Excerpts from the BECC Terms of Reference**

- The specific **aims and objectives** of BECC are:
  - To administer the CCLS accreditation program for baccalaureate degree programs in geomatics.
  - To foster uniformity in the accreditation of educational programs for purposes of registration with the governing surveying associations in Canada.
  - To foster, in co-operation with the educational institutions, a standard of surveying education in Canada.
  - To provide a medium for the exchange of ideas between the educational institutions and the profession as to the educational needs of the profession. This is not intended to supplant the advisory committee role within individual educational institution programs which are the front line contact for those programs.
  - To foster cooperation among the various boards of examiners for land surveyors or committees/agencies of each governing association.
  - To promote uniformity of academic standards for admission to the land surveying profession among the governing associations in Canada.

**Compiled Association Responses to Core and Electives Syllabus****CBEPS**

*(Email sent to CCLS by J.C. Tétreault January 25, 2008)*

CBEPS Board just held a meeting and passed a motion to accept the new syllabus in principle as of item 3.1 of your backgrounder.

**ABCLS**

*(Email sent to CCLS by Jack Larson June 5, 2008 following ABCLS presentation)*

I made a presentation to the ABCLS board of management yesterday. ... the New Syllabus was well received. Some even felt that the core would be adequate and that BC may not need to worry about what electives were taken. They asked what was needed from BC and I told them CBEPS needs a letter of agreement in principle. I was not part of the discussion as to what the ABCLS board of management was going to do next.

**ALSA**

*(Letter sent by email to CCLS by Brian Munday June 30, 2008)*

I am pleased to inform you that the Council of the Alberta Land Surveyors' Association passed a motion at its meeting of June 26, 2008 endorsing the proposed syllabus of eleven core subjects and two elective subjects.

**SLSA**

*(Email sent to CCLS by Carl Shiels August 26, 2008)*

... at their meeting on May 31, the SLSA Council passed the following resolution:

That the SLSA supports the adoption, by the Canadian Board of Examiners for Professional Surveyors (CBEPS), of the revised CCLS Core Curriculum plus any two of four electives as the requirements for CBEPS Certificate of Completion; and

That the SLSA Strongly condemns any of the signatories to the Mutual Recognition Agreement on Labour Mobility who refuse to accept a CBEPS Certificate of Completion without the applicant having taken specific electives.

Based on this resolution, I do not expect that the SLSA Council will require anything further at this time and expect that the work of finalizing the curriculum should proceed as quickly as possible.

**AMLS**

*(Email sent to CCLS by Wilson Phillips August 26, 2008)*

I can ... report at this time what we had discussed at our council. Our CBEPS rep gave us a presentation about the changing syllabus and we had, as a council, approved what they were doing and the new syllabus. ...

JC had offered to give a presentation, council discussed it, and decided that we had already given our approval to the new syllabus through our CBEPS rep and we did not feel this was necessary.

**Wilson Phillips, MLS, CLS**

(AMLS President)

*(Email sent to CBEPS June 2008, forwarded to CCLS by Jim Watling August 28, 2008)*

The AMLS approves the new Syllabus in principle. This was agreed upon by the executive council of the Association on April 10th, 2008 after I did a presentation and presented the material. The council does have some concerns however. I will try and paraphrase these concerns for you:

1.) The council has some concerns with CCLS spearheading the comprehensive rewrite. It is felt that CCLS is also concurrently placing significant resources into developing a National Surveyors Association which may impact their ability to deliver a comprehensive syllabus in a timely manner. The council feels it is imperative that strict timelines, milestones and deliverables be spelled out to CCLS. The council would also like to see in the new rewrite of the syllabus a package of lecture notes to aid students in preparation for the exams. ( ie. development of study material) Council feels that CBEPS might be in a better position to make this happen. Also the revised syllabus and any lecture notes should be dynamic documents with a mechanism in place for monitoring and amendment of both on a regular basis to ensure that all of the material is current and that we are not faced with carrying out an onerous process down the road.

Jim Watling, AMLS Registrar

**AOLS**

No specific details received at this time. General acceptance was indicated early in the process. Concern has since been expressed over the ACLS position on increasing core items and AOLS is looking for more information in that regard.

**OAGQ**

*(Email sent to CCLS by J.C. Tétreault June 5, 2008 following OAGQ presentation)*

The New Syllabus was very well received by the OAGQ "Bureau".

Since Québec has a very different system, they have a hard time to grasp how they can mesh the Syllabus system. The Civil Code complicating things further. They have been running the two exam system for many years (one scientific and one legal). They want to get rid of the scientific exam. Can the scientific be replaced by the CBEPS system?

A special task force has been formed by the OAGQ to look at the review of their entry process and I offered my help.

**Atlantic Provinces**

*(Email sent to CCLS by James Secord August 5, 2008 following Atlantic presentations)*

I have met with all four Atlantic Provinces associations, the last, APEILS, on the 31st in Charlottetown. Each seems to be reasonably receptive to the concept in the core plus elective items and the other revisions to the syllabus.

It is curious to note that keeping the CCLS joint boards syllabus separate from joining CBEPS was a challenge. At each meeting, there was considerable discussion concerning both of those issues as well as the future of APBELS. ...

As a consequence of all of that, the PEI association would like a formal request from the CCLS, in the form of a letter, stating what the CCLS wishes them to "approve", "approve in principle", or whatever. This seems reasonable to me so that their response addresses what the CCLS needs to receive. Further, I would suggest that the same request be sent to each of the other associations.

I had met with the BoE of the ANSLs and of the ANLS and with the BoE and Council of the ANBLs and of the APEILS. The necessary level of decision making seemed to vary. Some thought that Council might be enough while others felt that membership might be necessary. An explicit request from the CCLS might help them to clarify that.

**ANBLs**

*(Letter from ANBLs received by email from CBEPS August 28, 2008. Letter dated July 24, 2008)*

At the ANBLs Council meeting on July 24th Council members were given a presentation by Dr. James Secord with regards to the proposed changes to the syllabus. Following the presentation the Council held a special meeting and made a motion to support in principle the proposed revisions to the current syllabus to be followed by suggestions from Council to expand, at a later date, on both the core and electives offered.

As soon as Council has had the opportunity to formulate their suggestions I will forward them to you. In the meantime, should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

*(Email sent to CCLS by Norm Coté July 24, 2008 following ANBLS presentations)*

We heard Dr. James Secord's presentation at a joint ANBLS Council/Board of Examiners meeting (about 90 minutes) this morning. Lots of stimulating discussion and perception problem-solving.

Both groups were generally in favor of endorsing the CBEPS syllabus structure. However, a couple of further actions were moved also. Our Association needs to look at the specific content of the syllabus, together with having the desire to add more electives, to include the "soft skills" side of the profession (marketing, HR, etc.). Furthermore, APBELS members needs to convene to decide on how it will dissolve this organization.

### **ANSLS**

*(Email sent to CCLS by Fred Hutchinson July 14, 2008 following ANSLS presentations)*

James did his presentation and ... there seemed to be no objection to the syllabus proposal and that APBELS Part III appeared to be absorbed within Parts I & II to some degree.

I will try to get an official approval from Council as per section 10(6) of the Land Surveyors Act. "The Board, with the approval of the Council, may appoint one or more competent persons to assist the Board in any of the subjects of examination." This section, however, relates more to CBEPS which Council has approved. All the other stuff regarding exams is contained in Regulations and the Board does have the delegated authority to approve the syllabus without Council. Section 113(a) & 114(a&b).

### **APEILS**

*(Excerpt of CCLS Report from APEILS Director received August 30, 2008)*

Dr. James Secord, chair of APBELS gave a presentation to the membership about proposed changes to the UNB syllabus and the program and how it relates to APBELS versus CBEPS and Harmonization in general. At the next meeting (September or October 2008) the membership is expected to vote if they support the proposed syllabus changes.

### **ANLS**

No specific details received at this time. See general Atlantic Provinces comments.

### **ACLS**

*(Minutes of CCLS Board meeting May 26, 2008)*

It was noted during the discussion that ACLS Council have agreed in principle to the proposed Core & Electives Syllabus but want hydrography and environmental management in the core syllabus. It was suggested that discussion will continue, including information about how the core and electives portions of the syllabus can work, and the ramifications of the ACLS Council's requirements.

*(Email sent to CCLS by J.C. Tétreault July 16, 2008)*

ACLS Council asked our BE to look at the Hydrography and Envir. subjects issue and get back with a recommendation.