

OPEN STUDIES POLICY

Policy Statement

Open Studies provides learners access to a selection of Bow Valley College credit courses without being admitted or committed to one of the College's postsecondary programs.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the purpose of Open Studies and the principles by which it will be administered.

Scope

This policy applies to Bow Valley College learners who apply and are registered under the Open Studies option. This policy also encompasses Bow Valley College program areas offering courses under Open Studies and other members of the Bow Valley College community involved in supporting Open Studies programming and learners.

Principal Objectives

1. The purpose of Open Studies for learners is to:
 - 1.1. Provide an opportunity to explore postsecondary program areas at Bow Valley College and define career goals before making a commitment to a specific program;
 - 1.2. Obtain advanced standing credits in a Bow Valley College postsecondary program while taking upgrading or English language learning courses, or while awaiting admission to the program;
 - 1.3. Provide access to Bow Valley College postsecondary programs through an alternative admission route that is based on postsecondary credits rather than high school courses;
 - 1.4. Take courses to obtain admission, advanced standing, or program completion at another postsecondary institution;
 - 1.5. Rehabilitate poor previous academic performance and access an avenue of return to a postsecondary program of study;
 - 1.6. Develop professional skills and knowledge without the commitment of a full postsecondary program of study;
 - 1.7. Enrich personal learning and development by taking courses, where completing a full program of study may not be of interest or benefit.
2. The purpose of Open Studies for the College is to:
 - 2.1. Embody the life-long learning goal of the college;
 - 2.2. Attract learners and increase applications to the college's postsecondary programs of study by making it possible for prospective learners to take a variety of courses, explore program areas, and experience the college environment;
 - 2.3. Increase the cost effectiveness of program delivery by opening unfilled or additional spaces in courses for learners who are not in one of the College's postsecondary programs of study;

- 2.4. Fulfill the access mandate of the college by adding another avenue of admission to the college's programs of study.
3. To provide learners with access to a selection of Bow Valley College credit courses without being admitted or committed to a credit program;
4. To provide easy and open access to Open Studies through a simplified admission process while maintaining any necessary requirements;
5. To govern course registration processes in a way that provides for orderly registration and access to courses by Open Studies learners while maintaining the priority of the college's commitment to learners in its post-secondary programs of studies;
6. To provide Open Studies learners with access to regular college services and resources including, as available and applicable, learner financial supports;
7. To provide standards and limits for Open Studies that reflect the intent and maintain the integrity of Open Studies;

Compliance

Employees, contractors, and learners are responsible for knowing, understanding, and complying with Bow Valley College policies, procedures, and any other attached documentation that relate to their position, employment, or enrolment at the College.

DATA SHEET

Accountable Officer

Vice President, Learner and College Services and Chief Financial Officer

Responsible Officer

Director of Enrolment Services and Registrar

Approval

Board of Governors

Contact Area

Office of the Registrar and Enrolment Services

Relevant Dates

Approved	November 27, 2015
Effective	November 2015
Next Review	November 2020
Modification History	

Associated Policies

Learner Credit Registration Policy # 500-1-17

Academic Continuance and Graduation Policy #500-1-5

Admission Policy #500-1-2

Learner Financial Account Policy #500-1-11

Transfer Credit Request Policy #500-1-9

Tuition and Fees Policy #500-1-15

Academic Accommodations and Support for Learners with Disabilities Policy & Procedure #500-1-4

OPEN STUDIES PROCEDURE

Parent Policy

Open Studies Policy #500-1-18

Purpose

This document provides detailed procedures to put the Open Studies Policy into practice.

Scope

These procedures apply to Bow Valley College learners and employees.

Compliance

Employees, contractors, and learners are responsible for knowing, understanding, and complying with Bow Valley College policies, procedures, and any other attached documentation that relate to their position, employment, or enrolment at the College.

Procedures

1. Open Studies Courses
 - 1.1. A selection of credit courses from the college's post-secondary programs will be offered. This selection will generally include at least one core course from each post-secondary program of study. Each program area will endeavor to provide sufficient capacity in these courses to allow for some enrolment by Open Studies learners.
 - 1.2. There are no restrictions on the instructional location or delivery method of Open Studies courses.
 - 1.3. Program areas are responsible for determining which courses will be made available through Open Studies each trimester and for communicating this to the Office of the Registrar by deadlines connected to each trimester term.
 - 1.4. In determining the suitability of a course for Open Studies, program areas will take into account whether Open Studies learners are likely to have adequate background for the course, and other factors such as safety issues, requirements for Police Information Checks, etc.
 - 1.5. Work placement courses, including practicums and co-op courses, will not be available through Open Studies.
 - 1.6. Upgrading, English language learning, and non-credit courses will not be offered through Open Studies.
 - 1.7. The Office of the Registrar is responsible for maintaining the master list of courses offered through Open Studies, and for communicating this information to learners.
 - 1.8. In exceptional circumstances, a program coordinator may approve an Open Studies learner to take a course which is not on the master list of Open Studies courses.

2. Open Studies Admission
 - 2.1. Learners are required to apply and be admitted to Open Studies before taking Open Studies courses. Admission processes and communications with applicants for Open Studies are handled by the Admissions unit in the Office of the Registrar.
 - 2.2. Applicants to Open Studies must meet the English language proficiency requirement for Open Studies which is established through the normal processes for setting program admission requirements. The English language proficiency requirement will be published in the Academic Calendar, College website and elsewhere as appropriate.
 - 2.3. The application fee for Open Studies will be the same as for the College's upgrading and English language learning programs. The payment of a single application fee for study in any of these program areas will apply to the others and the learner will not be required to pay a further application fee to transfer between any of these three program areas (Open Studies, upgrading and English language learning).
 - 2.4. Admission decisions will be made within a minimal period after receipt of application and evidence of English language proficiency.
 - 2.5. Open Studies is open to both Canadian and international learners. International learners are responsible to ensure that their enrolment in Open Studies meets the requirements of their permission to study in Canada.
 - 2.6. Individuals who have applied to the college's postsecondary programs but have been denied admission, waitlisted, or have a program start date that is more than 4 months in the future will be provided with an offer to be admitted to Open Studies without submitting an Open Studies application or payment of a further application fee, provided they meet the English language proficiency requirement.

3. Open Studies Registration
 - 3.1. The priority of Open Studies learner registration is determined by the College's Learner Credit Registration Policy.
 - 3.2. Open Studies learners will register for courses through regular College registration processes.
 - 3.3. For each term, the Office of the Registrar will provide learners with information about the registration open date for Open Studies learners.
 - 3.4. A full course load for Open Studies is 15 credits and this is the maximum number of credits that a student can take per term in Open Studies.
 - 3.5. There is no maximum number of courses that a learner can take through Open Studies.
 - 3.6. Information provided to learners about Open Studies courses will include a strong recommendation to learners that they meet the high school course prerequisites for courses offered through Open Studies where applicable. It is the responsibility of the learners to meet these prerequisite requirements. That being said, it is acceptable for learners to meet the academic skill requirements implicit in high school course prerequisites through other means than those that would be formally presented on a high school transcript.
 - 3.7. Learners are required to meet the postsecondary course prerequisites and corequisites for courses offered through Open Studies.
 - 3.8. The tuition, mandatory, and third party fees for courses offered through Open Studies will be the same as for the courses taken through the College's postsecondary programs of study.

- 3.9. Open Studies learners may register for non-credit, upgrading, and English language learning courses while taking Open Studies courses but will need to meet any requirements that are applicable.
 - 3.10. Learners in the College's post-secondary programs are permitted to take any available Open Studies courses without applying to or being admitted to Open Studies. Learners in other College program areas such as upgrading and English language learning will need to apply and be admitted to Open Studies in order to take Open Studies courses.
4. Other Open Studies Standards and Provisions
 - 4.1. All college policies apply to Open Studies learners unless otherwise noted.
 - 4.2. The academic standing provisions of the Academic Continuance and Graduation Policy do not apply to Open Studies Learners. However, learners will not be allowed to take a course more than three times while in Open Studies
 - 4.3. To be considered active in Open Studies, a learner must register and begin studies in at least one credit post-secondary course at the College within a twelve month period. Failure to do so will result in the learner being withdrawn from Open Studies. In this event, the learner will need to reapply to Open Studies to again access Open Studies courses.
 - 4.4. There is no ministry approved post-secondary credential for Open Studies.
 - 4.5. Bow Valley College's Certificates of Achievement may be awarded to learners in Open Studies upon completion of the required courses for those certificates.
 - 4.6. In order to transfer from Open Studies to one of the College's postsecondary programs, learners will have to follow normal application and admissions procedures and meet the normal admission requirements for those programs.
 - 4.7. Courses taken in Open Studies are considered to be taken in residence for the purposes of the residency requirements for graduation in the College's postsecondary programs of study.
 - 4.8. It is not the intent of Open Studies to enable a learner to complete all of the courses required to graduate from one of the College's postsecondary programs. However, if all graduation requirements for a program have been met, including the required course grades, the program credential will be awarded and the learner will be allowed to graduate. To receive the program credential, the learners must apply to graduate.
 - 4.9. The Registrar may approve exceptions to Open Studies procedures due to exceptional or extenuating circumstances.
 5. Open Studies Support
 - 5.1. Learners have access to the same College services as learners in postsecondary programs unless otherwise noted.
 - 5.2. Any matters or concerns related to a specific course will be the responsibility of the academic department delivering that course.
 - 5.3. General Open Studies matters that are normally dealt with by academic departments but are not associated with specific courses or course delivery will be the responsibility of the Chiu School of Business's Continuing Education area. This responsibility includes dealing with learner issues that involve more than one academic department.

- 5.4. The availability of scholarships, bursaries, awards, student loans and grants to Open Studies learners will depend on the criteria stipulated by that particular source of financial assistance

Definitions

Core Course: A course with content that is specifically related to the career(s) for which the program is intended to prepare learners.

Corequisite: A course that a learner must be registered in at the same time as another course.

Open Studies: A learning option that provides learners access to a selection of Bow Valley College credit courses without being admitted or committed to a credit program.

Prerequisite: A course that a learner must pass or other condition that must be met before registering in a more advanced course.

DATA SHEET

Responsible Officer

Director of Enrolment Services and Registrar

Relevant Dates

Approved	
Effective	
Next Review	
Modification History	

Related Policy

- Open Studies Policy #500-1-18
- Learner Credit Registration Policy # 500-1-17
- Academic Continuance and Graduation Policy #500-1-5
- Admission Policy #500-1-2
- Learner Financial Account Policy #500-1-11
- Transfer Credit Request Policy #500-1-9
- Tuition and Fees Policy #500-1-15
- Academic Accomodations and Support for Learners with Disabilities Policy & Procedure #500-1-4