

Update on Pathways to Fairness and Equity Project

By Bruce Millar

The “*Pathways to Fairness and Equity*” project, funded by the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, is about to start its fourth and final year. This initiative by the AOLS is aimed at improving the process that Internationally Educated Professionals (IEPs) follow for certification as an Ontario Land Surveyor (OLS), but the tools, processes and other improvements to the certification process will also mean that all candidates, regardless of place of origin, will reap benefits.

There are two main elements to the project: Process and Courses.

Process:

The AOLS, like most other professions, has been using course-based assessment in an attempt to evaluate the level of candidates from off shore. This process is daunting. There are thousands of universities in the world¹. Courses are developed for different profiles and applications. Even a change in professor may profoundly change the direction and content of the course. Trying to compare courses is, therefore, an inefficient and time consuming task that can lead to the IEP having to take many more courses than may be necessary.

A team, lead by Dr. Michael Chapman, a Geomatics professor at Ryerson University, who is also an AOLS Assessor, has been working on documenting the continuum of competencies that an OLS needs to meet the requirements of the profession in Ontario. Other team members are Dr. Spiros Pagiatakis, Dr. Sunil Bisnath and Dr. Costas Armenakis all from York University. Survey Law is a further competency area that will ultimately form part of the competency continuum. For now that area is being developed by Izaak de Rijcke and integrated in the learning experience of the beta courses (described later). Each competency is described in detail and a determination of how to assess the acquisition or mastery of the competency is also included.

The competency continuum has, at present, 11 groupings. It is always a work in progress as new technologies, processes and regulations are introduced. The continuum is also formatted into 2 levels of *Self Assessment* tools.

The Level 1 assessment is a reduced list with representative content from each of the 11 groupings. This tool is designed to allow potential candidates to rate themselves against the general competency platform that they will face. The Level 1 tool facilitates the candidate’s ability to make an informed decision as to whether or not he/she has enough

knowledge and experience to make it worthwhile to pursue the goal of becoming an OLS.

The Level 2 Self Assessment tool contains all the competencies in the continuum and is designed to serve as a tool for both the candidate and the Assessor to reach an understanding of where the candidate believes he/she is compared to the professional placement by the Assessor.

During this last year of the project, it is the AOLS’ goal to develop, collect and rate resource modules for each of the competencies and competency groups so that independent study can be facilitated.

Once a person becomes an official candidate, the AOLS Case Manager will monitor, track and support him/her during the process. If required, certified advisors can be assigned to assist the candidate with documenting his/her qualifications and competency attainment, preparing competency matching portfolios for consideration by the Assessor and to refer the candidate to other resources and agencies as appropriate.

An interview between the Assessor and the Candidate, prior to the preparation of an official report to the AERC is now added to the process. During this interview, the Assessor is able to make a determination as to the relationship between the Candidate’s perceptions of readiness and reality.

The Assessor then prepares a report to the AERC outlining courses required and competency gaps that exist. This report will be more accurate and rigorous than previous reports using the older method.

Once the AERC has reviewed the report and made any modifications it deems required, the candidate receives notification of their decision(s). The candidate will then work with the AOLS support team to develop a Learning Contract, outlining which courses are required, which competencies have to be acquired and what elements of proof and documentation will be required to satisfy the Assessor and the Registrar. The Learning Contract will also identify elements of support available to the candidate during the time frame of the Learning Contract.

Dr. Chapman will continue to be the Lead Assessor for the AOLS, but is joined by Doctors Pagiatakis, Bisnath and Armenakis as Assessors, who will be called upon for appeals, consultation and reviews.

Courses:

The AOLS will be offering new courses. These courses will have delivery and offering features that are designed to

be Adult Learner Friendly. Many will be continuous intake and most will be offered with “in person” and remote participation options. All will be supported by the AOLS’ new Learning Management System (LMS), <http://learning.aols.org>. The LMS will handle registration, resource access, collaboration functions, student support systems and evaluation administration.

A new course, *Introduction to Canadian Common Law* is already being offered in a beta test format. This course is a precursor to a main Survey Law Course scheduled to be offered in beta version early in the spring. The Common Law Course is aimed at those students who may not be familiar with Canadian or British Common Law systems.

The Canadian Common Law and Survey Law courses are being taught by Izaak de Rijcke, who is both a lawyer and a licensed Ontario Land Surveyor. Municipal Planning, Professional Communications and Capstone Technical Writing are being taught by Dr. M. Chapman.

It is intended that the AOLS website will have

added functionality to provide ready access to all of the features, tools and processes that have been developed over the past 4 years.



More information can be requested through Bill Buck, the AOLS Registrar.



Izaak de Rijcke teaching the course to a group of learners, including 4 remote learners participating through GoToTraining software. Note the AOLS’s new SMART Board behind Izaak.

¹ According to International Journal of Scientometrics, infometrics and bibliometrics, total *number of universities in the world* is counted to 17,036.