

Brandon University Aboriginal Initiatives as of May 24, 2007

Brandon University is an institution with the stated principle “to encourage cultural diversity and understanding” and the objective “to enhance programs for rural, northern, and Aboriginal students”. There are approximately 3200 undergraduate and 100 graduate students, including 48% of whom originate from Brandon and western Manitoba.

Looking at registrations, 310 students (or 9.7%) self-identify as Aboriginal (272 First Nations, 38 Metis; 59 First Nations and 9) Metis are based on the Brandon campus and 213 First Nations and 29 Metis are in the BUNTEP-Brandon University Northern Teacher Education Program or PENT-Program for the Education of Native Teachers projects).

There are at least eight faculty members who are Aboriginal (in FNAC-First Nations Aboriginal Counselling, Native Studies, Fine Arts, Education).

In addition, Brandon University is home to *Bearpaw Publishing*, a small press dedicated to providing top quality publications in the field of Native Studies.

Academic Programs:

Brandon University offers degree programs in FNAC, Native Studies, and Aboriginal Art and minors in Native Languages, Native Studies, and Aboriginal Art. There are various courses offered in Cree, Saulteaux and Sioux, and, a course entitled “Issues for Teaching Native Languages”. Fine Art courses address Aboriginal Art History, Indigenous Art Techniques, Advanced Aboriginal Art and Design, Art of Aboriginal Women in North America.

Brandon University has also pioneered community-based programs, known as “projects”, delivered in northern and rural locales. In 1974, BUNTEP made it possible to access the teacher education degree in northern communities and starting in 1971, PENT used an apprenticeship model for preparing teacher candidates.

First Nations and Aboriginal Counselling Program (FNAC)

The bachelor’s degree program in FNAC was launched in 1998. This program has been developed using Aboriginal holistic approaches to counselling, healing and community.

The Curriculum is designed to be a creative innovative, and interdisciplinary blend of traditional Aboriginal teachings and Western counselling theories and skills. Understanding of traditional philosophies and spiritual practices is taught through classroom discussion with Elders and by participation in cultural ceremonies. Personal growth and development as counsellors is recognized as an on-going journey throughout the program.

The focus is on the needs of the individual, but also on work with families, groups and communities. The program interweaves an understanding of historical and contemporary political issues of importance to Aboriginal peoples, including traditional teachings, legal and policy issues, administration and self-care.

There is a multi-level entry system whereby students can come directly from high school, can transfer from another university or college program, and can receive credit for life, work, workshops and ceremonial experience through Prior Learning Assessment.

Students are required to enroll in a practicum course in three of the four years of study. Each practicum is 320 hours in length, for a total of 960 hours of field time.

Students of all ethnic and national back-grounds are welcome and encouraged to benefit from this program. It is of special interest to persons who are working or hope to work as counsellors with the First Nations and Aboriginal clients.

The F. N. A. C. Steering committee involves a broad cross section of academics, counsellors, Elders and representatives from First Nations and Aboriginal Communities and professional associations.

Aboriginal and Visual Arts

Students may take a 4-year Bachelor of Fine Arts major in Aboriginal Art or minor in Aboriginal Art when pursuing a 3- or 4- year BA degree program in which a minor is required.

The Aboriginal and Visual Arts program provides a creative, academic, technical and practical environment for professional preparation in careers in the visual arts.

It equips students through a well-rounded education in issues, ideas and histories of both Western and Aboriginal art. Visual arts courses begin with the development of basic technical and formal skills, as well as a broad based knowledge of both Western and Aboriginal art.

The studio program fosters an informed, independent professional studio practice and encourages students to immerse themselves in a wide spectrum of creative directions and opportunities while acquiring essential skills for professional activity in their chosen field.

Brandon University Northern Teacher Education Program (BUNTEP)

BUNTEP is a community-based program that offers an opportunity to access the teacher education degree program through Brandon University.

In summer 1974, funding arrangements were made through the Northlands Agreement to establish a Brandon University Northern Teacher Education Program (BUNTEP) with a projected start date of January 1975. In September 1974, BUNTEP assumed responsibility for the administration of a project known as IMPACTE (Indian and Métis Project for Action in Careers through Teacher Education). Since then, BUNTEP has had centres in as many as 25 different communities. Many of these communities have had more than one intake of students. Approximately 550 teachers have been trained throughout the program's 33-year history.

BUNTEP offers a viable alternative to traditional campus-based teacher training. Many residents in northern, rural, and remote communities are unable to attend a university campus, largely because of location, lack of financial resources, and/or educational preparedness. BUNTEP offers the BU Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) (AD) and Bachelor of Arts. The Education component consists of courses and practical experience in the classroom. In addition, BUNTEP has provided a laddering option for many others who did not complete a B.Ed. but pursued areas of employment.

There are currently seven BUNTEP Centres with approximately 225 students: Cranberry Portage, Cross Lake, Dauphin, Long Plain, Sapotaweyak, Thompson and Wasagamack.

Program for the Education of Native Teachers (PENT)

Established in 1971, the Program for the Education of Native Teachers (PENT) has been one of the most effective affirmative-action teaching programs on the North American continent. In 1983 the PENT program won the Association of Teacher Educators award for innovative teacher-education programming. It is also important to note that the Council on Post-Secondary Education, COPSE, has never funded the PENT Program.

The PENT program is primarily funded by sponsoring First Nation Education Authorities and Frontier School Division. The PENT receives virtually no support from the Council on Post Secondary Education or Manitoba Advanced Education. It has been noted that other teacher-training programs, including CATEP, which is modeled on the PENT and operates in conjunction with COPSE, the University of Winnipeg and some Winnipeg school divisions, does receive financial support.

The PENT apprenticeship model is an excellent means for preparing teacher candidates. The PENT program is in essence an apprenticeship program. The extended nature of the internship is the great strength of this teacher-preparation program.

Apprenticeship allows the teacher candidate to find out very early in the learning process if she/he really wants to be a teacher. The learner's approach and attitudes toward the work of teaching are revealed at the start of the learning process. Apprenticeship tests the student's commitment to the profession. Apprenticeship develops character and reveals

the learner's character traits. It reveals early on whether or not the teacher candidate has professional promise.

The apprenticeship teacher candidate gains more practical knowledge and experience before becoming a certified teacher. This experiential approach offers more to beginning learners than the conventional teacher-preparation process.

Apprenticeship allows for a more refined system for selection of candidates, because the candidates have had to prove themselves on the job first. This reduces the risk of selecting inappropriate teacher candidates and increases the likelihood of success in teacher preparation. Apprenticeship provides employment in the local community with teaching assistant positions providing a service to children and parents of the community. The teaching assistant positions result in more economic benefit to communities where there is often high unemployment.

Increasing Tuition Costs

Since 1998, with the addition of almost two more years of schooling to be paid for by sponsors, the costs of the program have escalated and enrollment declined. The table below demonstrates the economic impact of declining enrolment.

PENT TUITION COST PER STUDENT 1997 - 2007		
Enrollment Year	Budget Student Estimate	Tuition Cost/Student
1997	150	\$3,300
1998	145	\$3,600
1999	145	\$3,600
2000	145	\$3,675
2001	147	\$3,675
2002	150	\$3,675
2003	150	\$2,845
2004	150	\$3,818
2005	125	\$4,040
2006	110	\$5,800
2007	110	\$6,395

The table above demonstrates the gradual and relentless cost increases facing PENT sponsors. Despite the obvious success of the program, individual PENT sponsors are justifiably concerned with the increasing costs of the program. Although recruitment efforts, on behalf of the PENT program have continued, it is difficult to entice individuals because of the increased length of the program – almost eight years – or sponsors whose costs continue to escalate. In 2006 PENT courses were offered beginning in April instead of May in order to help students to graduate in six years. However, we do not expect an increase in the number of students until there is once again a reasonable tuition charge.

The current PENT training model was modified after the Government of Manitoba revised the teacher certification requirements to include at least 150 credit hours of academic and professional training. The new certification requirements, which increased the required credit hours of study from 120 to 150 credit hours, also increased the minimum training time for PENT students.

Declining PENT Enrollment

The impact of this decision has been critical for both PENT and its sponsors. The change resulted in a two-year extension to the program, taking it from a six-year program to an eight –year program for many students. For most PENT students, it means another two summers away from their communities and families. They endure another two years of disruption to achieve their goal.

PENT staff and its sponsors understand and support the rationale for the change in certification requirements. Unfortunately, in program terms, the additional academic requirements had significant implications for sponsors, for PENT students, and their families.

Since the introduction of the new teacher-training requirements, enrollment in PENT has continued to decline. The table below illustrates the combined impact of increased educational time commitment introduced in 1998 and the increased cost per student resulting from declining enrolment as partners and potential students re-evaluate their commitment to the program.

PENT STUDENT INTAKE 1998 - 2006									
PENT Student Type	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Full/Part-Time	157	153	156	149	155	144	125	93	121
Full Time	152	149	154	147	147	130*	114	86	109
Participating Schools	53	41	55	40	40	24	27	17	46
Number of Sponsors	37	38	39	39	39	36	35	34	32

* Estimate only

PENT Community Support

Together with its sponsors, PENT has transformed the lives of hundreds of Aboriginal students wishing to pursue the goal of becoming teachers. Since its inception, more than 30 years ago, Brandon University's PENT program has graduated hundreds of Aboriginal teachers – at virtually no cost to the provincial government.

The following table outlines the program's success.

PENT GRADUATES 1975 - 2006	
School Division Graduates	149
First Nations Graduates	291

Total PENT Graduates	440
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It should be noted that sponsors have continued to support the program despite the increasing costs. Since the change in certification credits introduced in 1998, the number of sponsors has remained fairly constant. This is because they value the program. In a recent program review, one of the program's earliest sponsors concluded by noting:

“PENT is an excellent program and continues to produce quality teachers for the school division.”

Members of the PENT Advisory Committee are in the process of writing a proposal to COPSE asking for financial support. There is need of a more level playing field to bring PENT tuition fees in line with the fees of other post-secondary agencies delivering teacher training. Enrollment is down from 150 students to 100 students. This loss of one third of PENT's normal revenue is very serious. The future of PENT may hinge on receiving additional financial support to allow for a more reasonable tuition charge. It would be a tragedy if this excellent way to prepare teachers were to disappear.

Elders' Program:

The Elders' Program aims to ensure that the educational experience will be a successful and pleasant one for Brandon University First Nations and Metis students and their families. It also aims to build a climate at the University which recognizes and respects culture and heritage of First Nations and Metis students so that they may experience increased self-esteem and a strong, healthy identity. The Elders' Program provides, to the whole educational community, numerous services, including spiritual and traditional counseling, performance of relevant ceremonies, mediation, assistance with student orientation.

Student Support Services:

Brandon University is a recognized pioneer in the provision of quality services for First Nations and Aboriginal students. The Indigenous Peoples' Centre, under the umbrella of Student Services, takes pride in the provision of culturally sensitive services, including academic support and personal counselling. The IPC was established in 1998, to serve as a university – based academic and social environment for successful educational experiences and provides the following services:

- the planning of services designed to support and encourage success in university, including orientation, holistic and developmental advising, counselling and academic assistance.
- an environment for First Nations and Aboriginal students that promotes their personal well- being, social and cultural identity and enables them to feel at home.
- the promotion of cross- cultural understanding between First Nations and

Aboriginal students and the university community.

- an enhancement of the academic and cultural life of the campus through participation of First Nations and Aboriginal peoples and exposure to their perspectives.

In close collaboration with Student Services professionals, the members of the Indigenous Peoples' Centre Advisory Council provide an orientation to the University and community, as well as arrange learning skills and workshops specific to First Nations and Aboriginal student needs. In addition, there is close liaison with the community to facilitate the services relevant to the needs of students and their families. This encourages a successful introduction to university life and a well- rounded experience while at Brandon University.

Located in the George T. Richardson Centre, and in close proximity to the Library, the IPC is a hub for a wide range of activities and provides the following:

Sharing Circle and Meditation areas	Employment Information
Meeting areas for off-campus Education Counsellors	Lounge
On- campus & community resources information	Telephone
Elders Program Consultation Office	Kitchen facilities
First Nations & Aboriginal Student Council Office	

Areas for Improvement:

While Brandon University has an identity that includes being of service to rural and northern communities and engaging native peoples, this institution still has work to do. We do not have Aboriginal culturally relevant programming across the University and we have not been as successful in attracting Aboriginal students, faculty or staff as desired. We also need to do better in helping our Aboriginal students be successful at post-secondary studies.

Policies:

Several policies particularly relevant to this gathering are presented on the following pages, including the *Policy Guidelines for Traditional Aboriginal Activities on Campus*, *Statement of Ethics: The Principles By Which We Live*, and the *Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities*.

Brandon University
Policy Guidelines
for
Traditional Aboriginal Activities on Campus

Brandon University welcomes Aboriginal people and supports the participation of the campus community in traditional ceremonies and activities. Consequently, the University has established the following policy guidelines to ensure that the rights and freedoms of the entire community are respected.

Day-to-Day Use of Space


The day-to-day traditional Aboriginal activities of the Brandon University campus community may be conducted in the Indigenous Peoples Centre (IPC) and in portions of the Health Studies Complex (HSC) specifically designed for this purpose. These include smudging and pipe ceremonies done in the context of teaching, counselling, and ceremony. Signs indicating that smudging occurs will be posted and information about these activities made available. There will be no requirement to provide advance notice prior to the conducting of traditional activities in these spaces.

Occasional Use of Space

When traditional Aboriginal activities, particularly smudging and pipe ceremonies, cannot be accommodated within the IPC or the HSC, other spaces on campus may be used. Under these circumstances, the Director, Physical Plant should be notified at least two weeks in advance. The Director of Physical Plant and the relevant Dean or Area Head will assist in the selection of a suitable space and make appropriate arrangements. Whenever possible, smudging and pipe ceremonies will be conducted at times of the day that will impact the fewest people in adjacent areas.

Accommodation

Any employees, students, or visitors affected by exposure to smoke should contact the appropriate Area Head, who will address the concern as soon as possible. Administrators and unions responsible for employees of Brandon University will be made aware of the range of traditional Aboriginal activities.

 <p>BRANDON UNIVERSITY <small>Founded 1899</small></p>	<p align="center">Statement of Ethics The Principles By Which We Live: Brandon University</p>	<p><i>Approved by Board of Governors</i></p> <p><i>Administered by</i></p>
<p align="center"><i>Board of Governors Policy</i></p>	<p><i>First Approved:</i> <i>February 28, 2002</i></p>	<p><i>Updated:</i></p>

We agree that the major purposes of Brandon University are:

- to provide a facility for higher education;
- to provide students with an environment in which they may develop intellectually, emotionally and socially;
- to promote the pursuit, advancement, and dissemination of truth and knowledge;
- to serve the community; and
- to encourage a climate of freedom, responsibility, and mutual respect in the pursuit of these goals.

Our aim is to promote harmonious relations and, should any misunderstandings or disputes arise, to attempt to settle them peacefully and cooperatively.

In that context we agree that there shall be no discrimination, interference, restriction, or coercion exercised or practised with respect to any current employee, student, or applicant for a position of employment by reason of age, race, creed, colour, national origin, citizenship, political or religious affiliation or belief, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, personal life-style, physical handicap, or membership in any trade union or association.

Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities

Brandon University is dedicated to promoting the intellectual and personal growth of its students. The University depends for its effective operation on the respect of its members for each other and the acknowledgement of community standards of conduct. It is the responsibility of each student to contribute to an environment of trust and respect that protects the freedom of all to live, work, and learn together. Any actions that undermine the ability of the University to achieve its purpose diminish the educational experience of its members.

Every student enjoys the opportunity to participate in the academic and social life of the University regardless of race, colour, religion, national origin, ethnic identification, age, political affiliation or belief, sexual orientation, gender, economic status, source of income or disability.

All Brandon University students are expected to subscribe to the principles embodied in this Statement. Behaviour that violates the community standards and values herein will be covered in the *Senate Policy on Academic Offenses, the Sexual Harassment Policy, or the Student Discipline Process*. Brandon University students have a responsibility to adhere to local, provincial, and federal laws while on campus or participating in an off-campus University activity.

Principle of Intellectual Responsibility

Brandon University recognizes that each person's education is the product of his or her intellectual effort and participation. The University cannot educate those who are unwilling to submit their own work and ideas to critical assessment, nor can it tolerate those who interfere with the participation of others in the critical process. The highest standards of academic integrity are expected of all members of the University community. **Behaviour that violates this Principle shall be dealt with through the *Senate Policy on Academic Offenses*.**

Principle of Respect for Persons

Brandon University recognizes that respect for the rights, dignity, and integrity of others is essential for the well being of a community. Each member of the University community must be free from nuisance, discrimination, physical threat, disruption, interference, intimidation, harassment, or disparagement whether they are on campus or participating in an off-campus University activity. **Behaviour that violates this Principle shall be dealt with through the *Sexual Harassment Policy or the Student Discipline Process* in the context of the event and/or situation.**

Principle of Freedom of Expression

Brandon University prizes and defends freedom of speech. It affirms the rights of its members to teach and learn in an environment free from coercive force, intimidation, and

interference, and subject only to the constraints of reasoned discourse and peaceful conduct. **Behaviour that violates this Principle shall be dealt with through the *Student Discipline Process*.**

Principle of Community Citizenship

Brandon University is committed to maintaining an environment in which its members may pursue their goals and carry out their responsibilities effectively and collegially. **Disruptive behaviour, willful damage to or misconduct against persons or property and equipment, and actions that fail to adhere to existing federal, provincial, and local laws and statutes, interfere with the rights of others to live, work, and learn in a safe and supportive environment. Behaviour that violates this Principle may be dealt with through the *Student Discipline Process* regardless of the prospect or the initiation of civil or criminal proceedings.**

BRANDON UNIVERSITY STUDENT DISCIPLINE PROCESS

I. Filing a Complaint

Any member of the Brandon University community may bring forth a complaint against a student for violation of the Principle of Respect for Persons, Freedom of Expression, or Community Citizenship through the Dean of Students. Normally, a complaint will be brought within **fifteen (15) working days** of the alleged offense.

The Dean of Students (or designate) will inform the complainant of the policy and procedures, interview the complainant, and advise the complainant whether or not there appear to be grounds to proceed with a formal complaint within the *Student Discipline Process* through mediation, or through the Student Judiciary Committee.

If the complainant chooses to proceed with a formal complaint, he or she must provide the Dean of Students with a written and signed statement of the alleged offense within **five (5) working days** of the initial interview.

II. Mediation

If the complainant chooses to seek mediation, within **five (5) working days** of receipt of the written statement, the Dean of Students will provide the respondent with a copy of the statement, inform him or her of the policy and procedures, and request a written and signed response to the complaint and an agreement to participate in mediation. The respondent shall have **five (5) working days** in which to reply.

Within **five (5) working** days of receipt of the response, the Dean of Students will arrange for the complainant and the respondent to meet with a mediator. It is expected that both the complainant and the respondent will proceed in good faith. The mediation process shall be confidential.

If satisfactory resolution is achieved through mediation, the Dean of Students shall maintain a confidential record of the case. This record will be destroyed if there are no further complaints brought against the respondent **within four (4) years** of the date of resolution.

If satisfactory resolution is not achieved, the Dean of Students will refer the complaint to the Student Judiciary Committee.

III. The Student Judiciary Committee

The Chair of the Student Judiciary Committee shall be a faculty member appointed by the President for a two-year term. Members shall include the Dean of the Faculty to which the **respondent belongs** and the President of the Brandon University Students' Union, or their respective designates. If the student is not from a distinct faculty, the President will appoint a Dean to serve on the Committee.

Within five (5) working days of the receipt of a written complaint, either as Step 1 or as the result of a failed mediation, the Chair will convene a meeting of the Student Judiciary Committee to begin its review of the complaint.

The Committee shall interview the complainant, the respondent, and any other persons whose testimony may be useful to determine the merits of the complaint. The complainant and/or respondent are welcome to bring along a support person throughout the process.

The Committee will adhere to the principles of procedural fairness and confidentiality at all times.

At the conclusion of its review, the Committee shall make one of the following determinations:

1. There is no substance to the complaint, and any reference to the complaint will be removed from the University's records.
2. There is substance to the complaint, and satisfactory resolution can be achieved without the imposition of a penalty.
3. There is substance to the complaint, and disciplinary measures are warranted.

The Committee shall submit a report to the President of Brandon University

within **five (5) working days** of the conclusion of its deliberations. If it recommends that disciplinary measures be imposed, it shall specify appropriate sanctions, which may include, but not be limited to the following: fines or restitution, restrictions on participation in University activities, restrictions on access to University property, community service, suspension, and expulsion.

The President of Brandon University shall make the final determination of disciplinary measures. The Office of the President shall retain reports from the Student Judiciary Committee for a period of **ten (10) years**.

NOTE: The University's responsibility to act immediately in situations in which an individual's behaviour is threatening to himself/herself or others supersedes the procedures of the *Student Discipline Process*. In these cases, local authorities will be called.