

## **The University of British Columbia** **Aboriginal Programs and Initiatives May 2007**

### **Introduction:**

The University of British Columbia's 2005 vision statement "Trek 2010" builds upon and enhances the long-term commitment to making the University's vast resources more accessible to Aboriginal peoples, and to improving the University's ability to meet their educational needs.

### **Programs and Courses:**

At the Vancouver (UBC-V) campus located in traditional Coastal Salish territory and the new Kelowna (UBC-O) campus situated in the traditional territory of the Okanagan Nation there are numerous Aboriginal program/academic initiatives, student services, community affiliations/linkages, and research projects. UBC has offered Aboriginal specific programs for 32 years.

- The faculties of **Education and Law** are the longest running programs that have produced the most education and law graduates at BC universities.
- The UBC Calendar shows over **60 Aboriginal specific courses** being taught at its campuses and in the community
- **Faculty of Arts-** First Nations Studies Program, First Nations Language Programs, and the Squamish First Nations Satellite Bachelor of Social Work Program.
- **Faculty of Education -** Native Indian Teacher Education Program, (NITEP) and the Ts'kel Graduate Studies. **NITEP** with off-campus sites at Kamloops, Duncan Chilliwack and Bella Coola has over 322 program graduates
- **The Institute for Aboriginal Health:** Faculty of Medicine's Aboriginal Residency Program, School of Nursing's Aboriginal Health Nursing Preceptorship Program, the Aboriginal Health Care Administration Program, and the Summer Science Program.
- **Faculty of Forestry:** First Nations Forestry Initiatives.
- **Faculty of Law:** Native Legal Studies Program.
- **Sauder School of Business:** Chinook Program.

- **Faculties of Science/ Faculty of Land & Food Systems: CEDAR Day Camp and After School Program.**
- **The School of Library, Archival & Information Studies First Nations Curriculum Concentration.**

UBC's comprehensive academic programs, student services, substantial numbers of Aboriginal faculty and professional staff, unique units like the **First Nations House Learning, Xwi7xwa Library and the Institute for Aboriginal Health** demonstrate institutional interest and commitment. A broad range of student services are offered through the **First Nations House of Learning**, including: a dedicated award winning building ; a learning commons; counseling services; a computer lab; cultural recreational, social and academic programming and the **Xwi7xwa Library**.

Aboriginal faculty members engage in substantial research programs and are supported by the academy in their community based activities. The appointments of **Aboriginal faculty to leadership positions: A/VP Students Services, A/Dean of Indigenous Education, the Senior Advisor to the President on Aboriginal Affairs and six Academic Program Directors** signal institutional commitment to do more.

### **Recruitment, Access, Retention and Success:**

Strategies have been developed and implemented for the recruitment, access, retention and success of Aboriginal students at all levels of academic endeavour. This work is carried out by **First Nations House of Learning (FNHL) staff, faculty or program based coordinators (Arts, Education, Land & Food Systems, Forestry, Law, Medicine, Science) and the UBC Student Services Aboriginal Student Recruiter/Advisor.**

The University collaborates with BC Aboriginal communities to develop curricula and programs that will assist increasing numbers of Aboriginal youth to enroll in undergraduate, graduate and continuing education programs at UBC. **Programming for youth include: the Native Youth Program; the Summer Science Program; Chinook Summer Biz Camp; Bridge Through Sports; and the Cedar Day Camp.**

The innovative **Bridge through Sport Program** was developed in 2002 as a partnership between UBC and the Musqueam Indian Band. Athletic, educational, and social programming support both UBC and Musqueam goals of recruitment and retention of Aboriginal students. Programs include a reading and recreation program for 5-12 year olds, a tutoring program connecting UBC students with Point Grey Secondary aboriginal students, and an all-Aboriginal youth soccer tournament held at the University for 4-16 year olds. Over 500 Aboriginal youth participate in the combined Bridge through Sport programming.

**The Aboriginal Health Care Administrators Program (AHCAP)** a joint project of the Institute for Aboriginal Health and Continuing Studies drew Aboriginal students from across the province and western Canada. AHCAP was the recipient of national and international awards for excellence in distance education.

**The First Nations Satellite Bachelor of Social Work Program at Squamish First Nation** which has been fully engaged in the development and delivery of a fully integrated culturally congruent BSW Program that has afforded Prior Learning Credit for students and the opportunity to complete a degree program in their own community while continuing to work full-time in the Nation's Social Development Department.

**Chinook Diploma Program in the Sauder School of Business** established with five partner colleges enables the transfer to the UBC BCom. Program. The new Chinook Major has been added to the BCom Program. The Entrepreneurship and Business Success management development program has been established with the Executive Education Department of the Sauder School of Business. **The Chinook Summer Biz Camp** was established to provide Aboriginal high school students with an introduction to business education opportunities.

An **Aboriginal access** and success program is being developed at UBC-O with credit courses in **Aboriginal English and Aboriginal Mathematics** to be delivered in Sept. 2007

UBC Aboriginal Admissions policy has provided an avenue for students to enroll in a wide range of programs of study. A number of the programs and faculties: **Arts, Business, Education, Forestry, Law, Medicine, and Social Work** have established specific equity targets, enrolment policies and practices to ensure the admission of increased numbers of Aboriginal students.

**Community based programs** such as the **First Nations Languages Program at Musqueam, and Musqueam 101 Program** include the opportunity for younger students to achieve pre-degree course credits.

The development of Aboriginal and Indigenous doctoral students is promoted through **Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement (SAGE)** initiative.

For the past ten years, the University of British Columbia has made increasing Aboriginal student enrolment a University wide goal. During the past two years, at UBC Vancouver and Okanagan, Student Recruitment and Advising in Enrolment Services in collaboration with on and off-campus partners has been working to develop new strategies and practices to recruit Aboriginal students and to accomplish this aim. With the creation of an **Aboriginal Student Recruiter Advisor position, (StRA) Enrolment Services** has established the necessary resources and expertise to provide individual support to Aboriginal applicants, to actively manage the Aboriginal applicant pool, and to develop key partnerships with faculties to support new Aboriginal students. Another vital component of the updated strategy has been to ensure that undergraduate application and admission policies and practices are not discouraging Aboriginal students from applying

to UBC. Enrolment Services has also taken a leadership role within the University, and across the province, to develop a systematic means of encouraging Aboriginal student self-identification. This information is used by Enrolment Services and by our on-campus partners to provide Aboriginal students with integrated student services and to track Aboriginal student enrolment from recruitment to degree attainment. The sum of these efforts have resulted in an increase of new Aboriginal student enrolment in undergraduate studies (excluding professional and graduate degree programs) from 63 in 2004/05 to 128 in 2006/2007 - an increase of 103%.

Student Recruitment and Advising in collaboration with the First Nations House of Learning is developing an Aboriginal specific communication strategy. For instance, an Aboriginal Welcome booklet is being developed for prospective students. As a companion piece to our other recruitment materials, this booklet seeks to provide specific messaging for Aboriginal applicants, their families and communities.

Admissions is also seeking to include more Aboriginal focused high school courses into the University's basic entrance requirements for BC secondary school students. By including more Aboriginal courses, such as BC First Nations Studies 12 and Aboriginal language courses, the University hopes to enhance and enlarge its pool of prospective Aboriginal students.

## **Aboriginal Community Partnerships:**

UBC has struck numerous partnerships, affiliations, agreements, and protocols with Aboriginal communities, organizations and groups. Many of the relationships have been sustained over a period of decades, others developed recently in response to expressed needs and interests.

- A Memorandum of Affiliation with the **Musqueam** Indian Band on whose traditional territory UBC-Vancouver is located.
- Memoranda of Understanding with the **Okanagan Nations Tribal Alliance** on whose traditional territory UBC-Okanagan is located.
- Memoranda of Agreement and Affiliation with the **Eno'wkin Centre**, the post-secondary institution of the Okanagan Nation.
- The **UNCO/OC Aboriginal Council** is recognized as by UBCO as the official voice of Aboriginal communities in the Okanagan region in establishing priorities for post-secondary development.
- The **Okanagan Aboriginal Health Research Action Group** brings together representatives from UBCO and the full spectrum of Aboriginal health stakeholders in the Okanagan region.
- A number of partnership **protocols** have been established with individual communities and organizations such as **Boston Bar First Nation, Musqueam Indian Band, Bella Bella First Nation, the Westbank First Nation and the**

**Ki Low Na Friendship Centre** with regard to community-based research activities and program initiatives.

- The **Faculties of: Arts, Business, Education, Forestry, Law, and Medicine; the School of Social Work and Family Studies, the Institute for Aboriginal Health, and the First Nations House of Learning** have **Aboriginal community based advisory committees** that contribute to program and curriculum development.
- A **First Nations Education Council** which guides the Native Indian Teacher Education Program (NITEP) and Ts'`kel Graduate Studies is comprised of **Aboriginal community educators**, school district, Ministry of Education, BC Teachers' Federation involved in Aboriginal education.
- The **Bella Coola NITEP** field centre is offered in partnership with **Lip'ahayc School (Nuxalk College)**.
- An Implementation Memorandum (IM) is in development stages. This IM falls under that **Memorandum of Affiliation that was signed between Musqueam First Nation and UBC**. The IM is for developing curriculum materials for the Faculty of Education's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary legacy Musqueam art and education project.
- **Research: BC Aboriginal Capacity and Developmental Research Environments (ACADRE)** based in the Institute for Aboriginal Health has been developing research capacity of our communities over the past five years – **Aboriginal communities** participate in establishing research priorities and the **BC ACADRE Elders' Council** guides the research ethics.
- The **Chinook Program**, Sauder School of Business has an **MOU with five provincial post-secondary institutions**, including the Institute for Indigenous Governance to articulate curricula and **ladder Aboriginal students** into the **Bachelor of Commerce Program**.
- The **First Nations House of Learning President's Advisory Committee** made up of **Aboriginal community members** and UBC faculty and staff meets three times a year for program review and development. Over the past year the UBC **Aboriginal Task Group** reviewed, revised and reinvigorated the FNHL President Advisory Committee to enhance achievement of goals established in Trek 2010.

## **Students:**

UBC's Aboriginal student population continues to grow in all faculties and programs. Currently there are 507 Aboriginal undergraduate students at UBC's campuses. UBC, as a comprehensive university has numerous Aboriginal program/academic initiatives, student services, community affiliations/linkages, and research projects. UBC has offered Aboriginal specific programs for 32 years.

**Students from urban and rural Aboriginal communities across the country can be found on the University's campuses; pursuing studies towards undergraduate, graduate, doctoral degrees and professional designations. Doctoral studies programs**

are another success area with the most Aboriginal doctoral students enrolled in a Canadian Faculty of Education.

Aboriginal post doctoral and graduate students are engaged in research and teaching in a number of programs and faculties. **Aboriginal students are active in student government** on both campuses and have been elected to **the student union council and hold executive positions.**

Most Aboriginal students that are admitted to the University are admitted on their marks. However, for students who do not program specific requirements, most often the competitive average, Undergraduate Admissions is utilizing Dean's Discretion and the Aboriginal Admission Policy to admit students.

Student Financial Assistance and Awards currently administers, in collaboration with the First Nations House of Learning, Aboriginal specific scholarships, bursaries and awards. The University has over 200,000 in Aboriginal specific awards for either Aboriginal students or students in Aboriginal focused programs.

**At spring convocation 2006** at UBC Vancouver 75 Aboriginal students from sixteen programs, schools and faculties graduated: Fifty-two with bachelor's degrees, nineteen masters, two doctorates, and two medical degrees.

## **Infrastructure & Resources:**

UBC provides long-term core funding for established Aboriginal programs and student support services in: **FN Studies Arts, Enrolment Services, the First Nations House of Learning, Forestry, the Institute for Aboriginal Health, Law, Land & Food Systems/Science, Medicine, NITEP/ Ts'kel, the Xwi7xwa Library** and for programs and services at UBC-O. The University also provides resources to nurture and develop new program areas.

The **First Nations House of Learning, a unit within the President's Office**, is located in **the Longhouse**, a focal point for Aboriginal activities on the UBC-V campus. Elders and Aboriginal community members from across the province participated in the planning of the Longhouse which was built in 1993. **The 22,000 sq. ft facility, serves as a "home away from home"** where Aboriginal students, faculty, families and friends can gather to study, share and socialize in an environment that reflects the cultural traditions of Aboriginal people. Within the Longhouse are: **the Sty-Wet-Tan Great Hall**, an Elder's lounge, computer lab, learning commons, student support services, and administrative offices.

Adjacent to the Longhouse is the **2130 sq ft. Xwi7xwa Library a unique Aboriginal Library** at UBCV. It is one of the only established Aboriginal libraries in Canada: open to the public, with a globally accessible catalogue on the web, and reference staff to assist with the use and interpretation of its collections. The collection comprises over 12,000

items and 150 serial subscriptions and focuses on First Nations in British Columbia with an emphasis on Indigenous scholarship and perspectives. Xwi7xwa is part of an academic library network that provides world wide access to its catalogue of holdings, shares material resources with libraries (both public and academic) throughout North America and the world, and is part of a provincial media co-operative for the interloan and booking of video resources.

Xwi7xwa undertakes the development and maintenance of a unique Aboriginal (Brian Deer) classification scheme and First Nations subject headings that aim to accurately and meaningfully represent Aboriginal worldview and experience, including Aboriginal names of Nations, people, places and concepts.

The library attracts researchers from the local to the global to use its unique collections and to learn more about Indigenous knowledge management. The library provides student practica and job placements for future practitioners and researchers in the emerging field of Indigenous library and information science. The knowledge and skills gained will contribute to the preservation of First Nations/Aboriginal cultural heritage and scholarship. These new librarians will also play a role in educating the broader community about First Nations cultural and intellectual heritage and intangible property rights.

Xwi7xwa provides services that are unique within the UBC libraries. At national and international levels it provides leadership and innovation in the field of Indigenous Library & Information Science.

Dedicated space and resources are available for Aboriginal students, staff and faculty across campus in a number of Faculties: Arts, Business, Education, Forestry, Medicine, Science/Land & Food Systems,

**UBC-O** has completed a consultation process with Aboriginal communities in the Okanagan region. This consultation has resulted in guidelines for the **development of an Okanagan Centre** which will serve four general functions:

- To honour Okanagan culture and traditions
- To facilitate teaching and learning
- To support students
- To facilitate community participation and activities.

## **Faculty and Staff:**

For several decades BC has taken the initiative in the recruitment and appointment of Aboriginal Faculty. **Currently sixteen tenured and tenure track Aboriginal faculty** members hold appointments in programs and faculties across its campuses. Aboriginal faculty members are actively engaged in teaching, research and community based endeavours locally, nationally and internationally; and as **members of the UBC Indigenous Academic have decision-making input in all areas.**

Aboriginal people are working in positions throughout the institution. Across UBC campuses over **twenty Aboriginal Program Coordinators and Advisors** are engaged in curriculum and program development, student program support, and recruitment in: **NITEP, Native Legal Studies, FN Studies Arts, Medicine, the First Nations House of Learning, Chinook Business, Institute for Aboriginal Health, Arts, Education, Science/Land & Food Systems, Forestry, and Social Work.**

All Aboriginal faculty and staff play important leadership roles across campuses in their respective disciplines and in the community. A number of **Aboriginal faculty have been appointed to senior positions in the institution:**

- **Presidents Office: Director, First Nations House of Learning, and Senior Advisor to the President on Aboriginal Affairs.**
- **A/VP Student Services UBC-O**
- **Faculty of Arts: Director First Nations Studies.**
- **Faculty of Education: Assoc. Dean Indigenous Education, Director NITEP; Director, Ts`'kel Graduate Studies.**
- **College of Health Professions: Director, Institute for Aboriginal Health.**
- **Faculty of Medicine, Dept. of Family Practice: Director of Aboriginal People's Health Division**
- **Faculty of Law: Director, Native Legal Studies Program.**
- **Canadian Research Chair in World's Indigenous Peoples**

Over the past several years Aboriginal faculty members have begun to meet on an informal but regular basis to address topics of mutual interest and concern and have established the UBC Indigenous Academic Caucus. Although a recent phenomenon the Caucus has already been called upon for consultation and input into major University initiatives. In a similar manner, the Aboriginal community members of Program Advisory Committees are also called upon on an ongoing basis to share their expertise with regard to program curricula, and to advise how the needs of their respective communities can best be addressed by the University.

### **Chronology of UBC Aboriginal Initiatives:**

1974 Native Indian Teacher Education Program NITEP

1976 Native Legal Studies

1983 Mokakit Education Research Association founded

1987 First Nations House of Learning established as Program in the President's Office

1988 First Nations Health Careers established

1988 Summer Science Program for Youth



1993 FNHL Longhouse opened, Xwi7xwa Library opened  
1993 Initiatives in Fisheries, Forestry, Commerce, Applied Science  
1995 Admissions policy in Social Work for BSW and MSW Program  
1996 Musqueam Language Program  
1997 UBC Aboriginal Admissions Policy passed by Senate.  
1998 Institute for Aboriginal Health established  
1999 Chinook Program in Commerce receives BC Gas grant  
2001 Faculty of Arts establishes First Nations Studies major  
2001 Faculty of Medicine targets 5% admissions for Aboriginal students  
2002 Faculty of Medicine establishes Aboriginal Residency Program for Family Practice  
2002 BC ACADRE CIHR/IAPH grant awarded  
2002 Chinook Program partners with five colleges and institutes  
2003 Musqueam/UBC Bridge through Sport Aboriginal youth soccer tournament  
2003 First Nations BSW satellite program Squamish First Nation/School of Social Work  
2005 Science/Land Food Systems CEDAR Day Camp and After School Program  
2006 Appointment of Senior Advisor to the President on Aboriginal Affairs