

Post-secondary Education: In Support of First Nations and Inuit Students

Saskatchewan Ministry of Education

Diverse Education Systems
and Learning Animation
Theme Bundle

ABORIGINAL LEARNING

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The AbLKC is guided in its work by a Consortium of over 100 organizations and institutions, a Steering Committee, and six Animation Theme Bundles (Bundles) led by members of the Consortium. The Bundles are:

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3. Aboriginal Languages and Learning – Dr. Leona Makokis, Blue Quills Community College, St. Paul, AB
4. Diverse Educational Systems and Learning – Saskatchewan Ministry of Education (Ted Amendt), Regina, SK
5. Pedagogy of Professionals and Practitioners – Dr. Sakej Henderson, Native Law Centre, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, SK
6. Information Technology and Learning – Genesis Group, John and Deb Simpson, Yellowknife, NWT

From the start, the AbLKC recognized that the reporting and monitoring function of the Canadian Council on Learning required a dialogue with Aboriginal Peoples to define successful learning from Aboriginal Peoples' perspectives. Together with CCL, the national Aboriginal organizations and interested individuals who have taken up this work in communities and institutions across the country were invited to share their philosophies and understandings of successful learning. The result was three Holistic Learning Models with shared philosophical values and principles. It is the view of the AbLKC that the 'living' Models which can be found at our website www.ccl-cca.ca/aboriginallearning/ will serve as a framework for development of indicators to report and monitor successful learning and planning for successful learning for individuals and communities, and in discerning what is, indeed, 'a promising practice'. We believe there are many other potential applications of these Models.

In working toward an understanding of what constitutes successful learning and what Aboriginal Peoples aspire to and need to succeed in their learning endeavours, AbLKC wishes to acknowledge that what is available as evidence of success in the existing literature is partial, often unclear and largely undefined and may not always be representative of Aboriginal Peoples' perspectives. Responding to the aspirations and needs of Aboriginal learners means valuing their collective intellectual traditions and identities as Aboriginal Peoples.

This publication, *Post Secondary Education: In Support of First Nations and Inuit Students* is available electronically on CCL's Aboriginal Learning Knowledge Centre website at www.ccl-cca.ca/aboriginallearning and the AERC website www.aerc.usask.ca and at the FNAHEC website www.fnahec.org. An executive summary of the report is available in both French and English.

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Executive Summary

Quality post-secondary education (PSE) is an overlooked and often unseen factor in the promotion of the spiritual, emotional and physical well-being of First Nations and Inuit peoples. The numbers back this up; on average, First Nations and Inuit peoples have lower PSE achievement levels, higher rates of unemployment and lower incomes than non-Aboriginal people. In addition to educational and economic advantages, higher educational attainment levels have been shown to be related to improved health and a better standard of living. Therefore, the promotion of increased post-secondary education for First Nations and Inuit peoples is by default promoting an invigorating, fortifying future for Aboriginal people, families and communities.

However, there are a multitude of challenges that First Nations and Inuit peoples face on their path to acquiring post-secondary qualifications. These include:

1. historical obstacles
2. educational obstacles
3. social, economic and geographical obstacles
4. cultural and pedagogical obstacles
5. lack of role models/lack of career counselling, and
6. financial obstacles

Although these challenges may seem daunting, progress can be seen in the increasing number of First Nations and Inuit peoples who are currently attending, and completing, post-secondary programs.

Still, success is so much more than enrolment numbers and retention rates. This report measures success by programs, practices, models and initiatives which have conscientiously responded to the aforementioned challenges. For example, one aspect of such success is reflected within those post-secondary institutes and programs which manifest First Nations and Inuit self-determination. Success is also exemplified in programs that accommodate transitional supports, the wisdom of Elders, Aboriginal resources, Aboriginal instructors and staff, community-based programs, and curricula as well as andragogy that mirrors Aboriginal languages, cultures, beliefs and values.

Unfortunately, one aspect of First Nations and Inuit post-secondary education that is experiencing only limited success is in the area of funding. In order to improve success in First Nations and Inuit programs, it is vital that adequate finances be supplied to First Nations and Inuit students and post-secondary institutes.

First Nations University of Canada, the Institute of Indigenous Government in British Columbia, the Brandon University of Northern Teacher Education Program (BUNTEP) in Manitoba and the Nunavut Arctic College, which headquartered in Arviat, are all examples of institutions that are meeting the specialized needs of First Nations and Inuit peoples. Through explication of the governmental influences, the policy structures, and the curricular elements of these post-secondary institutions/programs a number of generalizations can be made about successful PSE for First Nations and Inuit peoples.

In accordance with the points made above, these institutions/programs are managed by First Nations and Inuit leaders. The policies directing these institutions/programs are intended to reflect and perpetuate First Nations and Inuit cultures and values. The curriculum which is utilized within these centres and programs focuses upon the cultural values and social needs of First Nations and Inuit peoples. As a result, success is an eminent component within these organizations and programs.

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POST-SECONDARY SUPPORT OF FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT STUDENTS

The success of First Nations and Inuit peoples within post-secondary education (PSE) is the focus of this paper. Throughout Canada, increased access to and success in post-secondary education are fundamental in order to improve the social and economic conditions of First Nations and Inuit peoples and communities (Brunnen, 2004; Hill, Hoffman, & Rex, 2005).

Achieving higher levels of education is related to a better standard of living, as exemplified through greater employment satisfaction, higher income levels, improved health, and longevity of life (Sloane-Seale, Wallace, & Levin, 2004). Consequently, Stonechild (2006) identified higher education as the *new buffalo*¹ crucial to the modern-day survival of First Nations and Inuit peoples.

Although the number of First Nations and Inuit peoples who are attending and completing post-secondary education is increasing (Friesen & Friesen, 2005; Hull, 2005; Rae, 2005), Aboriginal participation in post-secondary education still lags well behind that of the general population (Hull, 2005). Captured herein are demographic trends which emphasize the reasons why First Nations and Inuit peoples need to be provided with opportunities to succeed in post-secondary education. Obstacles facing First Nations and Inuit post-secondary education are discussed, and various means for overcoming these challenges are provided. As well, a variety of exemplary programs, practices, models, and initiatives are listed. Attention is then devoted to describing specific post-secondary institutions and programs, which have successfully addressed First Nations and Inuit educational challenges. Within each of these institutions and programs, the governmental influences, policy structure, and curricular elements, and assessment are explicated.

Throughout Canada, there are literally hundreds of promising First Nations and Inuit post-secondary programs, practices, models, and initiatives, which already exist or are currently in the process of being created. This plethora of programs is sponsored through the realms of universities, colleges, technical institutions, federal and provincial agencies, and various community organizations. For reasons of simplicity and succinctness, most, but not all, of the

¹ Education as a *new buffalo* is a phrase used by Aboriginal Elders to signify the importance of education to their communities. Just as the buffalo once provided for the essential needs of the community; education now serves to meet those needs.

post-secondary education programs and initiatives referred to within this document are affiliated with Canadian universities or colleges. An across-the-country scan of college programs and initiatives available for First Nations and Inuit peoples is presented within Appendix A (University of British Columbia), Appendix B (University of Saskatchewan), Appendix C (Cape Breton University), and Appendix D (Inuit regions).

A final important point to bear in mind while reading this paper is that the information provided within is not meant to represent a compilation of all the post-secondary programs, practices, models, and initiatives available for First Nations and Inuit peoples throughout Canada. As a result of limited space and time factors, there are many programs, practices, models, and initiatives which are not included within this document, and, undeniably, those negated programs are, in many ways, just as worthy of praise as the ones identified herein.

The Importance of First Nations and Inuit Post-secondary Education

Before describing the challenges and successes of First Nations and Inuit post-secondary programs, a demographic, social, and educational overview of First Nations and Inuit peoples is useful. By becoming acquainted with this background, the reader has a better understanding of why Aboriginal post-secondary graduates are currently in high demand throughout Canada, and why the success of these students will be of even greater importance for the future.

Population Highlights

As quoted by Statistics Canada (2008), based on the 2006 Census the number of Canadians who identified themselves as Aboriginal—either First Nation, Métis, or Inuit—surpassed one million. Between 1996 and 2006, the Aboriginal population in Canada grew 45%; nearly six times as fast than the non-Aboriginal population at 8%.

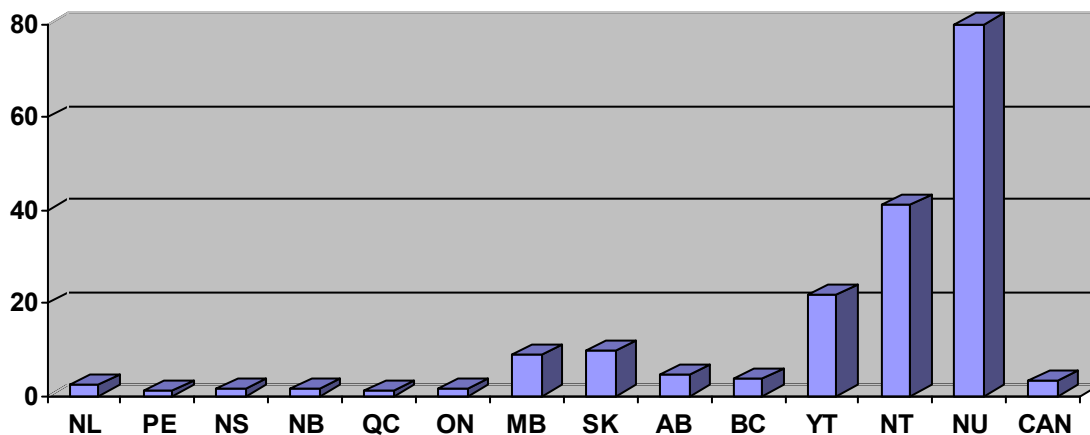
During this same period, the First Nations and Inuit populations grew 29% and 26% respectively. Currently the First Nations population accounts for 60% of the total Aboriginal population in Canada, the Inuit population represents 4% of the total Aboriginal population.

Within Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut, First Nations and Inuit peoples make up a substantial proportion of each territory's population (see Figure 1). Despite the fact that almost

one-quarter of Canada's First Nations and Inuit population lives in Ontario and another one-fifth of this same population lives in British Columbia, First Nations and Inuit peoples only account for about 1% of Ontario's total population and about 3% of British Columbia's total population. On the other hand, within Saskatchewan and Manitoba, First Nations and Inuit peoples constitute approximately 9% of each province's total population. Within Alberta and British Columbia, First Nations and Inuit peoples respectively make up about 5% and 4% of the provinces' total populations.

Political implications are bound within these population statistics. The economic vitality and social well-being of Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and to a lesser extent Alberta and British Columbia, are dependent upon the educational success of Aboriginal peoples. This point is even more applicable within the territories. The rapidly growing First Nations and Inuit labour force represents a badly-needed and under-utilized source of human capital (Holmes, 2006). Furthermore, promoting post-secondary opportunities for First Nations and Inuit peoples will assist in alleviating some of the inequitable social and economical conditions which have been consistently endured by First Nations and Inuit peoples.

Figure 1: First Nations and Inuit Population as a Percentage of Total Population



Source: Statistics Canada. 2008a. *Aboriginal identity population by age groups, median age and sex*, 2006 counts from Canada, provinces and territories.

Median Age

The information in Table 1 reflects the median age of First Nations and Inuit peoples across Canada and compares that information with the median age of non-Aboriginal people. As a result of higher birth rates among Aboriginal people (Statistics Canada, 2008b), Table 1 indicates First

Nations and Inuit people are, on average, about 15 years younger than non-Aboriginal people. The youngest portion of First Nations and Inuit peoples is concentrated within Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Nunavut.

A number of things are obvious when studying this age profile. To start with, timing is crucial. Developing and sustaining quality First Nations and Inuit post-secondary education needs to be a top priority among government leaders and among Aboriginal communities right now, because placing a current focus on post-secondary education for First Nations and Inuit people will set the stage, so to speak, for tomorrow. In the next ten years, as the overall population of Canadians ages and nears retirement, a larger, younger proportion of First Nations and Inuit peoples will be ready to enter the workforce. First Nations and Inuit peoples hold tremendous economic and labour force potential for the future of both their communities and Canada.

Table 1: Median Age of First Nations and Inuit People Compared to Non-Aboriginal People

Area	First Nations	Inuit	Non-Aboriginal
NL	33.4	30.8	41.9
PE	23.4	9.1	40.6
NS	25.4	29.2	41.8
NB	27.1	23.8	41.4
QC	30.2	20.8	40.7
ON	27.9	21.2	38.9
MB	21.2	21.5	40.4
SK	19.6	26.9	41.4
AB	22.8	21.8	36.4
BC	27.2	25.0	41.1
YT	30.0	20.0	41.0
NT	26.1	23.3	35.1
NU	30.5	20.1	36.8
Canada	24.9	21.5	39.7

Source: Statistics Canada. 2008a. *Aboriginal identity population by age groups, median age and sex*, 2006 counts from Canada, provinces and territories.

Average Income Aligned with Education

In order to secure employment, education matters more than it did in past generations. Statistics Canada (2005) stated that an education from a post-secondary institution—such as trade school, college or university—is responsible for considerably decreasing unemployment rates. A high-school diploma is now the minimum requirement for many entry-level jobs. Those aspiring to secure average to well-paying jobs generally need to secure a certificate from a post-secondary institution (Richards & Vining, 2004).

A number of points can be drawn from the information highlighted in Table 2. First, data in Table 2 indicate that men and women's average incomes generally increase with educational attainment. Second, First Nations and Inuit men generally have a higher average income than First Nations and Inuit women; however, the income disparity between genders is less among First Nations and Inuit peoples as compared to non-Aboriginals. A third important aspect of education and income reflected through Table 2 is that there exists a large income gap between individuals who have completed a specific level of education and those who have not. For example, those people with a high-school certificate (grades 9-13) have a higher average income than those people without a high-school certificate. Similarly, those people who have attained any type of post-secondary certification (i.e., certificate, diploma or degree) have a higher average income than those people who were enrolled in a post-secondary institute but did not graduated from the program. Therefore, not only is it important that First Nations and Inuit peoples are provided with post-secondary opportunities, support needs to be provided to First Nations and Inuit peoples throughout the duration of the program to accentuate program completion.

Table 2: Average Income (in \$) for Males and Females Reflected by Highest Level of Education, Age, and Identity Groups, Canada, 2001

Group /Highest Level of Education	Age 15-24 Male/Female	Age 25-44 Male/Female	Age 44-64 Male/Female	Age 65+ Male/Female	Total 15+ Male/Female
First Nations					
Less than grade 9	4,854 / 5,488	14,289 / 11,488	15,979 / 9,971	17,238 / 14,399	14,317 / 11,175
Grade 9-13 without certificate	5,395 / 5,240	17,903 / 13,859	21,898 / 13,652	18,910 / 14,622	13,708 / 10,611
Grade 9-13 with certificate	10,579 / 8,179	24,078 / 17,545	28,825 / 20,063	22,731 / 15,175	20,819 / 15,174
Post-secondary without certificate	9,991 / 8,730	20,865 / 17,180	24,148 / 17,943	18,309 / 16,202	19,006 / 15,298
Post-secondary with certificate	12,933 / 11,247	27,379 / 23,145	30,948 / 24,367	23,641 / 19,204	27,052 / 22,498
Inuit					
Less than grade 9	5,943 / 6,241	17,211 / 16,013	21,721 / 14,273	21,085 / 15,173	17,865 / 14,179
Grade 9-13 without certificate	6,313 / 6,478	20,526 / 18,531	27,113 / 19,434	* / *	14,000 / 12,765
Grade 9-13 with certificate	11,341 / 12,371	25,353 / 22,666	34,192 / *	* / *	20,476 / 19,063
Post-secondary without certificate	11,304 / 10,538	22,353 / 21,269	33,906 / 22,832	* / *	21,710 / 18,650
Post-secondary with certificate	16,263 / 14,493	31,995 / 29,213	38,036 / 40,585	* / *	32,073 / 30,260
Non-Aboriginal					
Less than grade 9	10,564 / 7,162	22,515 / 13,705	25,899 / 13,263	21,296 / 15,053	22,721 / 14,249
Grade 9-13 without certificate	7,490 / 5,283	30,511 / 17,944	34,716 / 18,571	27,515 / 17,975	25,531 / 15,581
Grade 9-13 with certificate	12,762 / 8,935	34,994 / 21,682	40,597 / 23,469	31,915 / 20,350	32,041 / 20,363
Post-secondary without certificate	11,179 / 8,775	35,664 / 23,521	44,486 / 26,112	34,643 / 22,610	29,936 / 19,457
Post-secondary with certificate	16,405 / 13,247	47,250 / 30,621	58,002 / 34,448	41,890 / 26,822	48,371 / 29,958

* no information available

Source: Statistics Canada. 2006a. *Table 35: Average income of females 15+ with income by highest level of schooling, age and identity groups, Canada, 2000* and 2006b. *Table 34: Average income of males 15+ with income by highest level of schooling, age and identity groups, Canada 2000.*

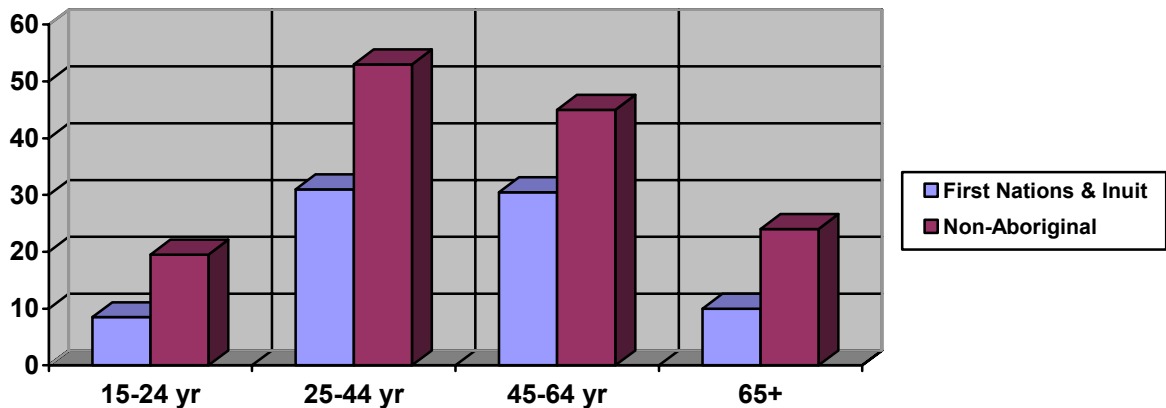
Educational Attainment

Education appears to be especially important for Aboriginal People, since failure to complete schooling is more strongly linked to unemployment for First Nations and Inuit peoples than it is for non-Aboriginal people (Statistics Canada, 1993). A study done for the Saskatchewan Treaty Commissioner confirmed that the financial benefits incurred by improving First Nations and Inuit school attendance, facilities, and participation at post-secondary institutes outweigh costs by at least two to one (Ross & Usher, 1992). The Ontario Native Education Counselling Association (2007) also reported that social assistance programs are 20 times more expensive than a university education.

Figure 2 depicts the percentage of First Nations and Inuit people and the percentage of non-Aboriginal people who have post-secondary certificates. Across all age groups, Aboriginal peoples have lower rates of post-secondary certification, as compared to non-Aboriginal peoples. Among First Nations and Inuit peoples aged 15–24, less than 10% have a post-secondary certificate. By ages 25–44, the percentage of First Nations and Inuit peoples with a post-secondary certificate is about 30%. The gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal post-secondary certification is most prominent within the 25–44 age group.

Although not portrayed in Figure 2, Hull (2005) identified the number First Nations and Inuit peoples who obtained university certification. In 2001, only about 5% of First Nations peoples and 2% of Inuit had university degrees (Hull, 2005). Comparatively, the proportion among the non-Aboriginal population with similar qualifications was about 18% (Hull, 2005). The implications from these data is that if post-secondary certification levels for First Nations and Inuit peoples are to reach parity with the general population, improvements in enrolment and retention rates at all ages and at all post-secondary levels are imperative.

Figure 2: Population Percentage with Post-secondary Certificate, by Age & Identified Groups, Canada 2001



Source: Hull (2005) . *Post-secondary education and labour market outcomes Canada, 2001*.
Ottawa: Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Overcoming Obstacles of First Nations and Inuit Post-secondary Education

There are a multitude of obstacles that First Nations and Inuit peoples must overcome as they acquire post-secondary qualifications. These challenges include:

1. historical obstacles
2. educational obstacles
3. social, economic, and geographical obstacles
4. cultural and pedagogical obstacles
5. lack of roles models/lack of career counselling, and
6. financial obstacles..

Although overcoming these formidable barriers may seem like a daunting task, progress has been made, as is reflected by the increasing number of First Nations and Inuit peoples who are currently attending and completing post-secondary programs. Still, success is so much more than enrolment numbers and retention rates. Within this document, the success is measured by programs, practices, models, and initiatives which have conscientiously responded to the aforementioned challenges of First Nations and Inuit post-secondary education. In sum, this section acknowledges the obstacles associated with First Nations and Inuit post-secondary education, describes various means for overcoming these challenges, and acknowledges specific

post-secondary programs, practices, models, and initiatives which have successfully addressed the challenges.

An additional point to bear in mind while reading this section is that although the following information directly focuses within the domains of post-secondary education, much of the information and many of the suggestions provided are easily transferable to a variety of First Nations and Inuit educational landscapes. That is, across Canada, mainstream elementary schools, high schools, trade schools, colleges, and universities can create a more learner-friendly, enticing, successful environment for First Nations and Inuit peoples by reflecting upon and responding to the key messages portrayed throughout this synopsis, which describes challenges and corresponding successes of First Nations and Inuit post-secondary education.

Historical Obstacles

Prior to the 1960s, post-secondary education for First Nations and Inuit peoples was almost nonexistent. The unpopularity of post-secondary education among Aboriginal peoples was largely due to the fact that, historically, governmental policies used education as a way to aggressively assimilate First Nations and Inuit peoples into mainstream Eurocentric society (Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation, 2004; Vickers, 2002). The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) acknowledged that many of the social problems presently affecting Aboriginal communities can be traced back to the debilitating experience that Aboriginal students faced while in residential schools. From mandatory religious training, to rules which forbid the use of Indigenous languages and cultures, residential schools and their oppressive form of education had devastating effects upon the First Nations and Inuit peoples (Grant, 2004). Even today, many Aboriginal peoples regard post-secondary education as an assimilative-type of coercion; one which forces First Nations and Inuit peoples to *fit into* a dominant Eurocentric culture (Friesen & Friesen, 2005; Holmes, 2006; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996).

Overcoming Historical Obstacles

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) stated that where Aboriginal people have exercised control over their own education, success rates have been higher. Additionally, a number of other reports confirmed that when First Nations and Inuit peoples self-manage and

develop their own Indigenous-focused curricula, enrolment numbers, retention rates, and overall student satisfaction within these programs increase (Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation, 2004; Holmes, 2006). Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (2007) concurred post-secondary programs “...must be bold, innovative, generous and all-encompassing with a focus on successful student learning rather than on the perpetuation of colonial and sometimes rigid institutionalized systems” (p. 3).

To empower the autonomy and voice of First Nations and Inuit peoples, processes need to be put in place that will allow First Nations and Inuit leaders, Elders, instructors, staff, students, and community members to become integral components within the governing, planning, and decision-making structures of curriculum and programs. For example, on behalf the Inuit culture, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (2007) stipulated that programs need to be developed, delivered, and administered within Inuit communities by Inuit educators.

There are additional means of promoting First Nations and Inuit self-determination within post-secondary programs. For instance, the availability of First Nations and Inuit counsellors help students cope with the discrimination and marginalization constantly faced by many Aboriginal people. The presence of resident Elders assists in bringing Aboriginal philosophy and traditional values to the institution. Adequate library resources focusing on First Nations and Inuit issues promote the academic and cultural needs of Aboriginal peoples. First Nations and Inuit gathering centers, which honour guest speakers, social celebrations, and Aboriginal ceremonies, need to be readily available for instructors, students, and the school-community.

Exemplary Post-secondary Programs/Initiatives

Over the years a number of programs and initiatives have attempted to address the historical obstacles facing First Nations and Inuit in PSE.

In 1992, Queen’s University in Ontario established an Aboriginal Council with the mandate to ensure that Aboriginal peoples have access to higher education and that the institution will be responsive to the broader needs of Aboriginal peoples (Holmes, 2006).

There has been a trend whereby universities have appointed Aboriginal members to their Board of Governors. Simon Fraser University (British Columbia), the University of Manitoba, and the First Nations University of Canada (Saskatchewan) are among these institutions (Holmes, 2006).

The First Nations University of Canada incorporates an Aboriginal perspective into all of its programs (First Nations University of Canada, n.d.).

Trent University in Ontario was the first university in North America to establish a department dedicated to the study of Aboriginal people. Established in 1969, the now-called, Department of Indigenous Studies delivers an abundance of degrees including a three-year Bachelor of Arts, a four-year Bachelor of Arts, a Masters of Arts, and a Native Studies Ph.D. program (Trent University Indigenous Studies: Our History, n.d.).

The University of British Columbia offers programs in Aboriginal Forestry at the undergraduate and graduate levels. This university also has a graduate program in Aboriginal Fisheries (Holmes, 2006).

The Integrated Science Program (also known as *Toqwa'tu'kl Kijitaqnn*) at Cape Breton University combines the knowledge of Aboriginal science with that of conventional science (Cape Breton University, 2008b).

In 2005, the Aboriginal Education Research Center (AERC) opened at the University of Saskatchewan. This Center is dedicated to promote aspirations among Aboriginal peoples through collaborative research efforts, while ensuring “Aboriginal voices are heard, understood, and translated into innovative, exemplary, and ethical practices” (AERC Aboriginal Education Research Center, 2007, para. 3).

The First Nations University of Canada's Department of Indian Languages, Literatures and Linguistics has partnered with the Miyo Wahkohtowin Community Education Authority to create a web-based interactive Cree dictionary and various other curriculum-based resources to support the use of Cree language (First Nations University of Canada, 2007).

Educational Obstacles

In order for First Nations and Inuit people to enrol in post-secondary programs, they need to complete high school. Of those First Nations and Inuit peoples between the ages of 15 and 24, 72.4% of males and 66.5% of females have less than a high-school certificate (Hull, 2005). Many First Nations and Inuit children live in small remote communities where the quality of education is often below that received within larger communities. A number of studies have indicated that the education First Nations and Inuit peoples received at the elementary and high-school levels did not adequately prepare them for a future in post-secondary education (Hull, Phillips, Polyzoi, 1995; Hull, 2000; Nora & Cabera, 1996; Wells, 1997). Lack of study skills, program requirements and academic knowledge—especially in the areas of Math and Science—also prevent students from entering post-secondary education (Hardes, 2006).

Overcoming Educational Obstacles

Typically, the acceptance of a student into a post-secondary program is dependent upon his/her high-school marks (Kvale, 2007). While selection by grade percentages might appear to be neutral in regards to social class discrimination, it is not. The mainstream educational system is built around White-dominated, middle-class values and beliefs (Goodman, 2001), and marks attained from participation in school-related activities and assessment procedures is only one dimension of learning. For this reason, admission policies within First Nations and Inuit post-secondary institutions need to be reconsidered so as to incorporate the life experiences of First Nation and Inuit peoples. For example, many First Nations and Inuit peoples are experienced in the areas of hunting, fishing, and trapping (Nadasdy, 2001). The collective knowledge they have accumulated—such as the contour of the land, the elements of water, and the characteristics and behaviours of birds, plants, animals, and fish—is not something that can be represented within futile boundaries of a number or mark. Post-secondary acceptance which wholly focuses on a grade-point average does not adequately capture the experience and intelligence of many First Nations or Inuit students. Therefore, enrolment requirements need to be adjusted for First Nations and Inuit students so as to incorporate life experiences and specialized Aboriginal knowledge.

The educational barriers that First Nations and Inuit encounter when pursuing post-secondary educations can be overcome through a number of additional means. For those First Nations and Inuit students accepted into post-secondary programs, if needed, academic supports for First

Nations and Inuit students must be available. For instance, transition-year programs would assist First Nations and Inuit peoples who may not meet general admission standards (Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, n.d.). The provision of tutors and supplementary workshops after classes facilitate comprehension of content material. Reorganizing the length of programs is another way of dealing with the high academic pressure of post-secondary education. In such a case, a two-year program would be extended over three years (Holmes, 2006).

Exemplary Post-secondary Programs/Initiatives

The following are exemplary programs and initiatives that respond to improving educational obstacles of First Nations and Inuit post-secondary education.

- 1) The University of British Columbia enforces an *Aboriginal Admissions Policy*. To decide whether or not an Aboriginal student is accepted into a program, the educational history, work experience, educational goals, and other achievements of prospective students are taken into account (University of British Columbia, 2007a).
- 2) At the University of Alberta, the faculty of Graduate Students and Research has developed a series of recruitment and retention initiatives. As such, Aboriginal students may be considered for admission on the basis of life experience (University of Alberta, 2007).
- 3) The Nunavut Arctic College offers an *Adult Basic Education* program. The goals of this program include improving basic literary skills and attaining recognition for Grade 12 classes. Students acquire skills needed to meet personal goals, employment requirements, or any other educational demands (Nunavut Arctic College, 2005-2007).
- 4) Carleton University Centre for Educational Initiatives in Ontario offers an *Aboriginal Enriched Support Program* which is a transition program offered to Aboriginal student before pursuing an undergraduate degree (Carlton University, 2008a).
- 5) In Nova Scotia, the *Cape Breton University Access Program* (also known as *Elmitek*) is a one-year university transition program for Mi'kmaq students. This program delivers several classes to students within their home communities. Workshop sessions are scheduled to prepare students for their classes and assignments. A coordinator is assigned to maintain supportive contact with students (Cape Breton University, 2008a).
- 6) The University of Saskatchewan's *Program of Legal Studies for Native People* (PLSNP) is an eight-week pre-law program open to Aboriginal students. "The program is designed to introduce students to the process, substance and demands of the first year of law school, with particular emphasis on the skills required to succeed in law school" (University of Saskatchewan, n.d., para. 3). The PLSNP has a high success rate, and about 85% of the students it recommends for admission to law school successfully complete their law degrees. About 75% of Canada's Aboriginal law graduates attended the PLSNP (University of Saskatchewan Integrated Planning, 2003).

Social, Economic and Geographic Obstacles

First Nations and Inuit peoples have long endured a host of unfair social, economic, and geographical barriers, which have had traumatic effects upon Aboriginal peoples and their families. For example, within many Aboriginal communities, housing conditions are sub-standard (Holmes, 2006), and compared to the rest of Canada, infant mortality is double (Friesen & Friesen, 2005). Suicide rates are five to seven times higher for First Nations youth as compared to non-Aboriginal youth; among Inuit youth, suicide rates are 11 times the national average (Johal, 2007). Poverty, unemployment and poor health conditions are stark realities for many First Nations and Inuit peoples (Friesen & Friesen, 2005).

On top of this persistent inequality, many First Nations and Inuit peoples have to move to urban areas in order to attend or access PSE. Once there they are faced with a myriad of other challenges including housing shortages and lack of quality childcare (Friesen & Friesen, 2005; Prokop & MacDonald, 2004). Aboriginal students are more likely than non-Aboriginal students to have dependent children (Holmes, 2006), and being a student at college or university is far more difficult when simultaneously assuming the full-time responsibility of raising children. For those First Nations and Inuit students who do not complete post-secondary programs, family duties and financial insecurity are the two most powerful determinants of their decision (Statistics Canada, 2007).

Because few universities have information on the specifics of Aboriginal identity, reliable data on First Nations and Inuit retention rates are hard to come by; however, some information is available. For example, in 1988–1999, the University of Saskatchewan, which hosts the largest population of Aboriginal students in Canada, reported that 43.9% of Aboriginal first-year students in the College of Arts and Science either withdrew from their program or were required to discontinue. This number compares with 20% of non-Aboriginal students who withdrew or were required to discontinue their program (University of Saskatchewan Integrated Planning, 2003). These figures are particularly worrisome because securing Arts and Science classes is generally a mandatory requirement needed for entry into Health Sciences and various university colleges.

Overcoming Social, Economic, and Geographic Obstacles

One way to deal with the social, economic and geographic challenges of post-secondary education is by bringing post-secondary education to First Nations and Inuit peoples within their communities. Human Resources and Social Development Canada (2006) explained that community-based programs, synonymous with *outreach* programs, have the advantage of allowing students to remain in their home communities while simultaneously maintaining family ties and community support. The Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (2007) acknowledged the many benefits of community-based programs. For example, community-based programs: 1) increase the accessibility of post-secondary education for First Nation and Inuit adults who have extensive family and community commitments; 2) place higher emphasis on the inclusion of cultural knowledge; 3) eliminate cultural shock often associated with moving to urban areas; 4) provide authentic work experiences; and 5) contribute to improved retention rates. Similarly, a variety of colleges and universities have linked community-based programs with increased enrolments and improved completion rates for First Nations and Inuit peoples (Friesen & Friesen, 2005).

Undeniably, there are many challenges associated with community-based programs. For example, students enrolled in these programs have limited access to primary learner resources and have a more-limited number of course choices. Both of these challenges may easily extend a program's completion time. Increment weather and harsh roads conditions sometimes cause barriers to the delivery of face-to-face instruction, especially in northern regions of Canada. Furthermore, travelling time of college or university educators raises concerns when determining the overall workload of those instructors (Human Resources and Social Development Canada, 2006).

Due to such realities, wherever possible, it is important that various community-based courses be collaboratively offered by a variety of post-secondary institutions, and that credits for these courses are transferable across various institutional domains. As well, wherever possible, First Nations and Inuit educators from local communities can assist in the instruction and delivery of the program. Also, allowing free use of community facilities for the delivery of instruction is accommodating for community-based programs (Human Resources and Social Development Canada, 2006).

As mentioned above, multiple challenges are faced by First Nations and Inuit students who move to the city in pursuit of higher education. Providing family housing, day care on campus and transportation for any dependents who attend elementary and high school, would assist in alleviating some of these migratory problems (Harden, 2006; Prokop & MacDonald, 2004). As well, counselling facilities, offices for Elders, and meeting rooms for Elders, guest speakers and students meet some of the cultural and social needs of First Nations and Inuit students (Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, n.d.).

Exemplary Post-secondary Programs/Initiatives

The following are exemplary programs and initiatives that respond to improving the social, economic, and geographic obstacles of First Nations and Inuit post-secondary education.

- 1) The Bachelor of Social Work in First Nations at Carleton University is a community-based program delivered to northern communities in Ontario and Quebec. This six-year program is geared toward people working full-time in Aboriginal communities, courses are designed with some Aboriginal content, and some classes are conducted using WebCT (Carleton University, 2008b).
- 2) In 2004, there were 474 Aboriginal students enrolled in community-based programs, which were being delivered through the University of Manitoba (Holmes, 2006).
- 3) The Brandon University of Northern Teacher Education Program (BUHEP) is a successful community-based teacher education program currently serving over 25 Aboriginal communities within Manitoba. It has a high rate of student retention and completion. There is no requirement to move to a university campus; courses are delivered using a combination of visiting staff, local staff, and Web-based courses (Brandon University, 2006).
- 4) The Indian Teacher Education Program (ITEP) at the University of Saskatchewan boasts of retention rates ranging from 80% to 88%. Individual support and a welcoming environment are partially credited for the successes of their students (ITEP Annual Report, as cited by University of Saskatchewan Integrated Planning, 2003).
- 5) The Aboriginal Business Education Program at the University of Manitoba provides academic support, personal support, financial support, and summer internship to Aboriginal management students while they pursue their Bachelors of Commerce degree (Aboriginal Business Educational Program, n.d).
- 6) The Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Program (ACAP) at the University of Regina (Saskatchewan) operates in conjunction with the First Nations University of Canada (Saskatchewan). ACAP is delivered through several workshops and educates the general public about Aboriginal culture (Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, 2007).

Cultural and Andragogical² Obstacles

The language, learning styles, teaching styles, communication modes and cultural patterns which are reflected within most post-secondary institutions differ greatly from the traditional teaching pedagogy of Aboriginal peoples. To begin with, for many First Nations and Inuit peoples English is not their first language. In 2006, 50% of the Inuit population reported Inuktituk as their mother tongue, while 51% of First Nations people living on a reserve conversed in their Indigenous language (Fitzpatrick, 2008). Few post-secondary institutes provide instruction in an Indigenous language (Hardes, 2006).

In addition, the mainstream educational practices of many colleges and universities reflect learning expectations denoted through competitiveness, individuality, status projection, and judgment (Gorman, 1999). Conversely, Aboriginal pedagogy prioritizes learning that is acquired through cooperation, storytelling, group discussion, demonstration, modelling, and observation (Gorman, 1999; Hardes, 2006). The holistic style of Aboriginal education incorporates practical, spiritual, physical, and emotion knowledge, passed on from the Elders to the rest of the community (Hardes, 2006; Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2007).

The concept of assessment is also viewed differently within Western cultures as compared to Aboriginal cultures. For example, formative test-taking measures and teacher-focused feedback are often the predominant types of assessment strategies utilized within mainstream post-secondary education (Kvale, 2007). As explained by Louise Legare, an instructor at the Indian Teacher Education Program at the University of Saskatchewan, the assessment of Aboriginal students incorporates a dimension of self-reflection and self-growth, which is an extremely personalized process, manifested within the spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical realms of each student (L. Legare, personal communication, February 4, 2008).

Overcoming Cultural and Andragogical Obstacles

The inclusion of First Nations and Inuit culture, values, and educational pedagogy into content delivery is fundamental to the program's success. Successful programs are those which build upon the needs of Aboriginal Peoples and their communities. Therefore, whenever possible,

² "Andragogy" is the current term used in academic circles to describe learning and teaching practices associated with adult learners; as distinct from "pedagogy" or learning and teaching practices associated with children and youth.

course content should be connected to relevant issues reflected within local Aboriginal communities (Friesen & Friesen, 2005). Non-Aboriginal instructors must be cognizant of the pedagogy of Aboriginal education and utilize a variety of student-focused, cooperative teaching strategies such as learning circles, storytelling, journaling, field trips, and peer tutoring (Friesen & Friesen, 2005). Wherever possible, student participation should be voluntary (Friesen & Friesen, 2005; Harges, 2006).

Post-secondary programs that cater to First Nations and Inuit students need to have more of a focus on experiential learning either through practicum, cooperative or work-placements. Such opportunities promote hands-on learning, the practicality of learning and the applicability of knowledge—all of which are valued by First Nations and Inuit peoples (Harges, 2006). As well, when trying to overcome cultural and pedagogical obstacles facing First Nation and Inuit students, the participation and presence of Elders cannot be overestimated. Elders add a rich dimension of cultural, emotional and spiritual wisdom to any post-secondary program (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2007).

Exemplary Post-secondary Programs/Initiatives

The following are exemplary programs and initiatives that respond to improving cultural and andragogical obstacles of First Nations and Inuit post-secondary education.

- 1) The Cooperative Education Program at the First Nations University of Canada (Saskatchewan) incorporates classroom theory and practice into real-life, work environments. Students obtain their degree by alternating academic studies with paid credit work-terms (Holmes, 2006).
- 2) In the Language and Culture Program at Nunavut Arctic College, students receive 75% of their instruction in Inuktitut from Inuit staff in an empowering learning environment reflective of Inuit culture (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2007).
- 3) At Thompson Rivers University in British Columbia, a key feature of The Gathering Place, Aboriginal Cultural Centre is the Elder in Residence program. The presence of an Elder on campus acts as a cultural anchor and a guide to Aboriginal students. The Elder also promotes understanding of Aboriginal history, culture, tradition, and information on contemporary issues (Thompson Rivers University, 2005).
- 4) The University of British Columbia's First Nations Longhouse is a 22,000 square foot, custom-built facility on the main campus designed to facilitate Aboriginal needs and learning styles. Services within this facility include: a coordinator so student services, First Nations personal counselling, a computer centre, subsidized childcare, an Aboriginal library, social activities, Elders programs, and graduation ceremonies (Holmes, 2006; University of British Columbia, 2007b).

- 5) Through the *LE, NONET* program (meaning “success program”) at the University of Victoria, students receive funding and course credit for working within Aboriginal communities on projects that are jointly defined. This internship program links up to 25 individual students with Aboriginal communities for 200 hours each. Each university student receives a stipend of \$3,500 (University of Victoria, 2006).

Lack of Role Models/Lack of Career Counselling

Many of the First Nations and Inuit students attending post-secondary institutes are among the first in their families to leave their homes in pursuit of higher education. Often these first-generation students lack mentors to help them with post-secondary educational transitions (Harden, 2006). Within many remote First Nations and Inuit communities, post-secondary career promotion and information is severely lacking. Across Canada, there is a substantial need for more First Nations and Inuit instructors and staff to be employed by universities, colleges, and other post-secondary institutions (Harden, 2006). In the same realm, First Nations and Inuit faculty members are under-represented in high-profile administrative jobs (Holmes, 2006).

Overcoming Lack of Role Models/Lack of Career Counselling

Post-secondary recruitment programs and resources intended for elementary and high-school students need to be promoted within First Nations and Inuit communities. Then, when arriving to post-secondary institutions, mentoring programs need to be put in place to assist new First Nations and Inuit students during their transition into this new environment (Harden, 2006). Through a variety of institutionally-sponsored activities, new students can pair with returning students. Post-secondary institutions need to welcome Elders and other Aboriginal community members to their campuses to serve as student advisors, counsellors, guest lectures, and resource personnel (Holmes, 2006). Increasing the number of First Nations and Inuit instructors needs to be a top priority among post-secondary institutions.

Exemplary Post-secondary Programs/Initiatives

The following are exemplary programs and initiatives that respond to improving the lack of role models/lack of career counselling within First Nations and Inuit post-secondary education.

- 1) The Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement (SAGE) program in the Indigenous Education Institute of Canada (University of British Columbia) aims to produce 250 Aboriginal Ph.D./Ed.Ds in British Columbia, by the year 2010 (Faculty of Education, University of British Columbia, n.d.).

- 2) The Native Ambassador Post-secondary Initiative (NAPI), piloted in 2004-5, is a collaborative project between the University of Calgary (Alberta), the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT), and Mount Royal College (Alberta). Ambassadors from each of these institutes visit Aboriginal youth in junior and high schools and provide campus tours for visiting schools. This program is designed to provide positive role models and information on post-secondary education to Aboriginal youth around the province (University of Calgary, n.d.a).
- 3) The University of Toronto (Ontario) offers a Summer Mentorship Program. Through this program approximately 120 students from underrepresented groups, such as Aboriginal groups, are brought on campus in the summer to explore the programs within a dozen different faculties (University of Toronto, 2007).
- 4) In an effort to encourage a future in post-secondary education, the University of British Columbia offers free one- and two-week summer camps in July and August for Aboriginal students, Grades 6 to 8 (Holmes, 2006).
- 5) CareerTrek is a unique program sponsored by the University of Manitoba, the University of Winnipeg (Manitoba), and the Red River College (Manitoba). CareerTrek program interacts with children from the age of 10 and works with them for eight years. This program works with students and their families to provide and opportunity to understand the importance of education, careers, and lifelong learning (CareerTrek, n.d.).
- 6) At the Queen's University Medical School (Ontario), the Admissions Committee recognizes the critical shortage of Aboriginal physicians in Canada both to serve the needs of Aboriginal people and to serve as role models within Aboriginal communities. The Committee has developed an alternate process for assessing Aboriginal candidates, and up to four qualified Aboriginal students may be admitted into the program (Queen's University, 2007).
- 7) The faculty at the First Nations University of Canada (Saskatchewan) is around 50% Aboriginal (Holmes, 2006).

Financial Obstacles

Though attending university can be an expensive venture, approximately 50% of all Canadian post-secondary students exit without accumulating a significant debt (Holmes, 2006). This point is largely due to the fact that many students assume part- or full-time employment, have scholarships, and/or rely on the financial support of their families.

The other half of post-secondary students who do incur debt, take out various types of loans and/or are employed (Holmes, 2006). Many First Nations and Inuit post-secondary students encounter higher costs while assuming post-secondary education. For example, many of the First Nations and Inuit students who move to the cities for their higher education are faced with

additional costs associated with travel, accommodation, and child care (Holmes, 2006).

Compounding these personal difficulties, many First Nations and Inuit students do not rely on financial support from their families.

Although First Nations and Inuit peoples are eligible to receive federal funding from the Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP), a number of issues must be addressed by these aspiring students before such funding is secured. First, to receive this financial assistance (which is granted by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada), a prospective student must be a registered member of a band. Funding is then subject to band council approval (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2000). Because of location, individuals living off-reserve often have additional challenges when securing finances (Holmes, 2006).

Furthermore, when a student receives government support from his/her band, he/she is generally ineligible for other federal and provincial loans (Holmes, 2006). Status and non-status students who live in the Northwest Territories, Yukon, or Nunavut may be funded directly by their territorial governments for recognized programs.

To make matters worse, although the number of First Nations and Inuit students attending post-secondary institution is increasing, the number of First Nations and Inuit students being funded is decreasing. In 1995–1996, 27,183 students were funded by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, as compared to around 25,000 in 2000–2001 (Holmes, 2006). The Assembly of First Nations estimated that more than 8,000 eligible students did not get any funding during the 2000–2001 school year (Holmes, 2006). For the 2007–2008 school year, the Ontario Native Education Counselling Association (2007) stated that close to 3,000 Aboriginal students were denied funding for post-secondary education. Lyle Whitefish, Vice Chief of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, commented, “There is a wait list on every reserve of students wanting to continue on past Grade 12 and [due to lack of funding] we can’t accommodate them all” (Warnyca, 2008, p. 10).

In addition to the lack of available funding for students, most of the First Nations and Inuit institutes, themselves, are insufficiently funded (Human Resources and Social Development Canada, 2006). Why is this?

First, understanding which level of government has jurisdiction and responsibility for funding First Nations and Inuit post-secondary education is not a clear-cut endeavour. The federal government claims that post-secondary education clearly falls under the auspices of the provincial government; however, the provincial government views funding arrangements as a responsibility secured within federal realms (Stonechild, 2006). As a result, many First Nation post-secondary programs are either funded inadequately or are not funded at all. In Ontario during the 2007–2008 school year, Aboriginal post-secondary institutions received as little as \$1,527 per student, as compared to an average of \$9,669 per student in mainstream colleges and universities (Ontario Native Education Counselling Association, 2007). Exacerbating these challenges, the cost of classes for First Nations and Inuit students as compared to mainstream classes is often higher (Human Resources and Social Development Canada, 2006). The higher expenditure associated with Aboriginal classes is, in part, due to lack of Aboriginal resources and lack of infrastructure (Associate Universities and Colleges of Canada, n.d)

Overcoming Financial Obstacles

The federal and provincial governments must ensure sufficient finances are available to all First Nations and Inuit students who wish to receive post-secondary certification. As well, in an effort to meet program goals, federal and provincial governments need to provide adequate funding to First Nations and Inuit post-secondary institutions. In order for post-secondary institutions to fully meet the specialized needs of Aboriginal students, the operational capacity of First Nations and Inuit institutes needs to improve. For example, increasing library resources, improving and developing infrastructure, and creating additional Aboriginal-focused curricula (Associate Universities and Colleges of Canada, n.d.) are imperative to improve the quality and success of post-secondary programs. In addition, application and funding procedures are a tedious bureaucratic task, often involving layers of federal and provincial/territorial governance departments. This administrative burden must be eased for Aboriginal Peoples (Assembly of First Nations, 2005). Increasing the quality and quantity of various scholarships, bursaries, and other financial aids sponsored by governments, post-secondary institutions, and community organizations can make a huge difference to those First Nations and Inuit students in need of extra finances.

Exemplary Post-secondary Programs/Initiatives

The following are exemplary programs and initiatives that respond to improving the financial obstacles of First Nations and Inuit post-secondary education.

- 1) The National Association of Indigenous Institutes of Higher Learning (NAIIHL) promotes self-governance within higher education, cultural preservation, and addresses issues such as inadequate funding and inter-institutional cooperation (Assembly of First Nations, 2000). This organization also lobbies the federal government for capacity-building funding for Aboriginal post-secondary education (Assembly of First Nations, as cited by Stonechild, 2006).
- 2) The First Nations and Adult Higher Education Consortium (FNAHEC) is dedicated "...to build and maintain partnerships in the development and monitoring of appropriate legislation, policies, and regulations for First Nations adult and post-secondary educational programs and institutions (First Nations and Adult Higher Education Consortium, n.d., para. 4).
- 3) The Chief Dan George Centre for Advanced Education (CDGC) in British Columbia is an example of collaborative efforts in management and funding. The CDGC, located in Vancouver, is partners with Simon Fraser University (British Columbia) and several other educational/community organizations. The CDGC is funded by the City of Vancouver, Western Economic Diversification Canada and a number of other organizations. This institute offers non-degree certificates and diplomas in several areas including Aboriginal Tourism and Small Business and Aboriginal Leadership and Management (City of Vancouver, 2006).
- 4) The *LE, NONET* pilot project, funded by the Millennium Scholarship Foundation at the University of Victoria (British Columbia) allocates some of its Aboriginal student financial support to funding bursaries for peer mentorship, research initiatives, and on-campus apprenticeships (Holmes, 2006).
- 5) The University of Northern British Columbia waives a registration fee of \$100 for First Nations and Inuit students (Holmes, 2006).
- 6) At the University of Calgary (Alberta), the Native Centre provides both financial advice and advocacy for Aboriginal students (University of Calgary, n.d.b).

Governance, Policy and Curriculum: First Nations and Inuit Post-secondary Success

A variety of programs which have successfully addressed the needs of First Nations and Inuit post-secondary education have been acknowledged above. In an effort to more-fully understand why specific organizations are successful, this section focusses on a few of the more-widely known First Nations and Inuit institutions/programs. The particular institutions/program examples have been selected because they conscientiously respond to the aforementioned barriers of First Nations and Inuit post-secondary education. For each institution/program, specific

reference is given to the governance, the policy/objectives, and curricular elements of the institution/program. (For a synthesis of this information, see Appendix E.)

In accordance with the points made above, the governance within these institutions/programs reflects First Nations and Inuit self-governance and autonomy. The policies directing these institutions and programs are intended to ensure the perpetuation of First Nations and Inuit cultures and values. The curriculum utilized within these centres/programs is focused around the cultural values and social needs of First Nations and Inuit peoples. As a result, success is an eminent component within these organizations/programs.

First Nations University of Canada (Saskatchewan)

The First Nations University of Canada is the largest and best known semi-independent post-secondary institution in Canada. When it opened in 1976, the First Nations University of Canada was known as the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College (SIFC). In 2003, the college changed its name to the First Nations University of Canada (Anaquod & Lafond, 2005). Presently, the First Nations University of Canada has campuses at the University of Regina, in Saskatoon, and at the Northern Campus in Prince Albert. Through its Prince Albert location, programs are offered to more remote First Nations communities via face-to-face instruction or through distance learning opportunities (Richardson & Blanchet-Cohen, 2000). All courses are accredited through the University of Regina.

Governance

The college was established under the legislative domains of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, which continues to retain authority over the institution (Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, 2007). Governance for the First Nations University of Canada consists of three parts. A Board of Directors is appointed by Chiefs of Saskatchewan (First Nations University of Canada, n.d.) and is responsible for financial management, appointment of the President and his/her responsibilities, and the direction of the university's strategic plan. The *kēhtē-ayah* (*Keeper of the Ceremony*) is composed of two Elders who preside over the convocation and Community Assembly. The Community Assembly is an annual forum, whereby the university annually reports to the Community Assembly forum regarding new

initiatives and consults with the Community Assembly about future directions in academia (Anaquod & Lafond, 2005).

Except for a small provincial grant, the First Nations University of Canada is funded by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) and through tuition fees (British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, Training & Technology, 1995). This university is the only First Nations-controlled university in Canada; it has the largest concentration of Aboriginal faculty in one institution in the world (Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, 2008).

Policy/Objectives

In 1977, an ad hoc committee, which was composed of about 35 First Nations individuals convened to discuss the goals and objectives of the university (Stonechild, Asikinack, & Miller, 2002). The committee believed that in addition to the academic focus of the institute, the culture and social needs of First Nations students needed to be top priorities for the university.

Importance was placed on ensuring SIFC and its program foci would not become segregated from the current needs of Aboriginal communities. Input from Elders and community leaders in the areas of curriculum development and designing of college programs was another top priority. It was recommended that, whenever possible, community-based programs should be brought to Aboriginal people in their communities.

In the 1990s, the goals of the college were revised, and further emphasis was directed to such things as: 1) countering the marginalization of Indigenous history, knowledge, and issues; 2) making post-secondary education more culturally relevant; 3) promoting student retention; 4) educating the Canadian public, at large, about Indigenous issues; 5) providing traditional teachings offered by Elders; 6) developing theoretical approaches, methodologies, and paradigms based on Indigenous perspectives (Stonechild, Asikinack, & Miller, 2002). At all times, the First Nations University of Canada is committed to promoting "...a sense of community togetherness and family well being with a basis of First Nations understanding and values" (Prokop & MacDonald, 2004, p. 5).

Curricula/Programs

The Department of Indian Studies is considered to be the academic core of the university and endorses classes specific to First Nations culture, history, and identity, with an additional focus on research (Stonechild, Asikinack, & Miller, 2002). In terms of degrees, the college offers a Bachelor of Arts (with Cree/Ojibway, Indian Studies, Indian Art, or Indian Fine Arts majors as possible majors) and a Bachelor of Education (elementary and high school). Additional degrees offered by the college include: Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Applied Science, and Bachelor of Administration. Certificate courses include: Indigenous Business Administration, Indian Health Studies, First Nations Banking, First Nations Banking Administration, and Indian Social Work (Richardson & Blanchet-Cohen, 2000). The First Nations University of Canada also offers a Master of Business Administration and Masters of Arts program in English, Indian Languages, Literature and Linguistics, and Indian Studies (Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation, 2004).

The Institute of Indigenous Government (British Columbia)

In 1991, the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs established the Institute of Indigenous Government, an Indigenous-controlled post-secondary institute dedicated to develop self-governance skills among Indigenous peoples (Stonechild, 2005).

Governance

Governance for the Institute of Indigenous Government is provided by a Board of Governors, appointed by the province of British Columbia, through nominations from the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs (Stonechild, 2006). The Board of Governors is composed of a minimum of eight and a maximum of 23 British Columbia of Aboriginal representatives. In addition, the Chief Council of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs appoints an Elder Senate to advise the Board of Governors (Richardson & Blanchet-Cohen, 2000).

Funding for the establishment and development of the institution, up until 2000, was provided, for the most part, through the Strategic Initiatives Agreement that existed between the province of British Columbia and the Government of Canada. This Agreement provided for matching

contributions between the province of British Columbia and the government of Canada (Human Resources and Social Development Canada, 2006).

Policy/Objectives

The Institute provides a learning forum to support and promote effective Indigenous governance throughout Canada. The mission of the Institute of Indigenous Government is to provide post-secondary accredited opportunities that empower Indigenous peoples to self-govern in ways that reflect Indigenous philosophy, values, and experiences (Human Resources and Social Development Canada, 2006).

Curricula/Programs

The focus within the Institute of Indigenous Government program is upon Indigenous Governments Studies, with the four specialization strands of learning, which include: 1) Political Development and Leadership; 2) Indigenous Government Administration; 3) Economic and Social Development; and 4) International Indigenous Relations (Indian and Northern Affairs, 2006). To address the specific needs of Aboriginal students, the curriculum incorporates Indigenous philosophy, cultural values, and life experiences.

The Institute of Indigenous Government offers a two-year program which leads to an Associate Degree in Indigenous Government Studies (Human Resources and Social Development Canada, 2006). Recently, the institute has developed an Associative Science program to train students interested in pursuing health and science careers (Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation, 2004). As well, the institute offers a one-year certificate program (Human Resources and Social Development Canada, 2006).

In an effort to enhance Aboriginal retention rates and overall student success, there is an abundance of student supports present at the Institute of Indigenous Government. For example, resident Elders, Aboriginal counsellors, academic supports, library resources, and a variety of community-based courses are provided (Human Resources and Social Development Canada, 2006).

Brandon University Northern Teacher Education Program (Manitoba)

The Brandon University Northern Teacher Education Program (BUNTEP) is a community-based program for residents of Manitoba who wish to secure a university degree and enter a career in teaching. The program offers an alternative to traditional campus-based teacher training. Due to location, lack of finance, and/or educational preparedness, many residents of Northern Manitoba are unable to attend a university campus. By offering the program on-site to remote communities, the program contributes to the educational and economic development of northern and rural communities within Manitoba (Brandon University, 2008).

Governance

BUNTEP is associated with the Faculty of Education at Brandon University and governed by the regulations of Brandon University. An Advisory Committee, overseeing the program, includes representatives from the Hutterian Brethren Education Committee, the Department of Education, Manitoba School Superintendents, the BUNTEP student body, the Faculty of Education, and BUHTEP staff (Brandon University, 2006).

Policy/Objectives

The goals of this program include: 1) delivering post-secondary education and teacher certification to people in communities who, traditionally, have not had the opportunity to access this experience; 2) delivering services utilizing available resources within a community; 3) involving students in the planning and implementation of the program; 4) supplying trained personnel to satisfy the public employment needs; and 5) developing innovative techniques for delivery of services to Northern and rural communities

Curricula/Programs

Each academic year is divided into four terms: fall, winter, spring, and summer. Courses are delivered in four- to five-week block, and at least one block each year is devoted to student teaching within the community. Depending upon the class, courses consist of lectures, discussions, assignments, film, labs, and field trips. The BUNTEP program offers a B.A. or B.Sc. undergraduate degree and a B.Ed. After Degree (AD). Within this university, an emphasis is placed on teacher training (Brandon University, 2008).

Additional Teacher Training Programs

There is an abundance of Aboriginal teacher education programs which are recognized by various universities throughout Canada. Some of these programs include:

- 1) Native Teacher Education Program (NTEP) through Brock University (Ontario) and Lakehead University (Ontario) (Faculty of Education, Brock University, 2008);
- 2) Aboriginal Teacher Education (ATA) at Queen's University (Ontario) and at the University of Alberta (Faculty of Education, Queen's University, 2007; Faculty of Education, University of Alberta, 2008);
- 3) Indian Teacher Education Program (ITEP) at the University of Saskatchewan (University of Saskatchewan, College of Education, n.d.);
- 4) Northern Teacher Education Program (NORTEP) through the University of Saskatchewan and University of Regina (Saskatchewan) (Faculty of Education, University of Regina, n.d.);
- 5) Community-based Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (CATEP) at the University of Winnipeg (Manitoba) (Council on Post-secondary Education: New Programs, n.d.);
- 6) Yukon Native Teacher Education Program (YNTEP) through the University of Regina (Saskatchewan) (Yukon College, 2006);
- 7) First Nations Teacher Education through the University of Victoria (British Columbia) (Faculty of Education, University of Victoria, 2006).
- 8) Native Indian Teacher Education Program (NITEP) through the University of British Columbia (University of British Columbia, 2007-2008);
- 9) NWT Teacher Education Program through the University of Northwest Territories Aurora College (Holmes, 2006).

Nunavut Arctic College

In 1968, the Government of the Northwest Territories, in partnership with the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs and Development, inaugurated the Adult Vocational Training Centre located in Fort Smith (Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials, 2004a.) Over the years, the institute underwent changes and became the Thebacha (College Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials, 2004a). Programs were expanded to include certificate and diploma-level courses. Geographical considerations and the *Arctic College Act* of 1984 inducted various northern colleges to create the Arctic College, designed to promote accredited community-based programs (Nunavut Arctic College, 2005–2007. In 1995, the Arctic College was divided into two colleges: the Aurora College, predominantly serving the Northwest

Territories and the Nunavut Arctic College predominantly serving the Nunavut region (Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials, 2004a; Nunavut Arctic College, 2005–2007).

The Nunavut Arctic College is currently situated on three campuses and offers various community-based programs located within 24 of Nunavut's 26 communities. The College's head office is located in Arviat (Nunavut Arctic College, 2005–2007).

Governance

Through the authority of the Nunavut government and under *Section 7* of the *Public Colleges Act* of 1988, the Nunavut Minister of Education is responsible for post-secondary education (Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials, 2004c). As directed by the *Public Colleges Act*, which was adopted by the Nunavut government through the *Nunavut Act* of 1999 (Health Canada, 2004), the Minister of Education formally establishes all post-secondary programs and endorses all policies within post-secondary colleges (Government of Northwest Territories, 1997). A Board of Governors directs the Nunavut Arctic College. The Board of Governors is appointed by and is accountable to the Minister of Education (Nunavut Arctic Education, 2006b). The Board of Governors recommends priorities for programs, establishes college admission requirements, and creates bylaws with respect to academic standards (Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials, 2004c).

Nunavut Arctic College is a fine example of how collaborative efforts between educational institutions can greatly enhance the quality and quantity of post-secondary educational opportunities available for First Nations and Inuit peoples. The Nunavut Arctic College in partnerships with post-secondary institutions offers numerous programs and has a variety of credit-transfer arrangements with these partner organizations. A list of some of the post-secondary institutions with which the Nunavut Arctic Colleges collaborates includes: 1) Athabasca University (Alberta); 2) Aurora College (Northwest Territories); 3) Council for Advancement of Native Development Officers (Canada-wide); 4) Dalhousie University (Nova Scotia); 5) McGill University (Quebec); 6) Nunavut Sivuniksavut; 7) Royal Roads University (British Columbia); 8) St. Francis Xavier (Nova Scotia); 9) University of Alberta; 10) University of Calgary (Alberta); 11) University of Lethbridge (Alberta); 12) University of Manitoba; 13) University of Prince Edward Island; and 14) University of Regina (Saskatchewan) (Nunavut Arctic College, 2005-2007; Nunavut Arctic College, 2008).

Nunavut students may be eligible for financial assistance through three main fiscal initiatives. The Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students (FANS) is administered by the government of Nunavut to residents of Nunavut (Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials, 2004b). Financial assistance can also be secured through Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and through various regional Inuit organizations (Nunavut Arctic College, 2005-2007).

Policy/Objectives

The mission statement of the Nunavut Arctic College endorses educating Nunavut adults and strengthening regional communities through quality career programs delivered in partnerships with various post-secondary institutions (Nunavut Arctic College, 2005-2007). The goal of the College is to support its students so they can achieve personal goals, become well-equipped to serve their families and communities, and become better able to support and strengthen Nunavut communities. The College provides its students with community-centred education encapsulated within an environment of inclusiveness and bolstered by respect for Inuit knowledge, values, and traditions (Nunavut Arctic College, 2006a).

Curricula/Programs

The programs offered through the Nunavut Arctic College are diverse. There are over 40 career-oriented programs in the following broad areas: 1) educational assessment and counseling; 2) adult basic education and literacy; 3) continuing education in certificate, diploma, and degree programs; 4) skills development programs; 5) language and cultural programs; 6) personal development courses; 7) support for distance education learners; 8) a Master of Education program; and 9) various other programs and courses dependant upon interest and availability of funding (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2007; Nunavut Arctic College, 2005–2007).

Although a wide range of programs and services are offered through the Nunavut Arctic College, what follows is a description of a few specific programs. Trades-preparatory programs include: 1) Carpentry; 2) Cooking; 3) Drywall and Taping; 4) Flooring, Interior Trim and Carpentry; and 5) Millwright; 6) Plumbing; and 7) Small Motor Repair. The Nunavut Arctic College, in collaboration with Dalhousie University, offers a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. The new Teacher Education program is another example of the extensive partnerships which are established between Nunavut Arctic College and various other Canadian educational institutions.

From 2007 to 2010, this teacher preparation program is collaboratively offered through the Nunavut Arctic College and the University of Regina (Nunavut Arctic College, 2008). Supported by a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), an agreement was made between the Nunavut Arctic College, the University of Prince Edward Island, and Saint Francis Xavier University to provide a Masters of Education in Leadership and Learning for Inuit educators (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2007).

As recognized through this description of programs, a choice of certificates, diplomas, trade qualifications, and university-transferable credits are attainable by enrolment at the Nunavut Arctic College (Nunavut Arctic College, 2005-2007). The length of each program varies from eight weeks (trades programs) to two years (Canadian Information Center for International Credentials, 2004b). In general, certificate and university-transfer programs involve one year of full-time studies, while diploma programs involve two years of full-time studies. In lieu of some courses, the Nunavut Arctic College often recognizes the learning and work experiences of its students (Canadian Information Center for International Credentials, 2004b).

Concluding Remarks

First Nations and Inuit peoples are a significant, growing part of Canada's population. While the number of First Nations and Inuit peoples with post-secondary qualifications has increased over the past two decades, the attention, energy, and finances devoted to improving post-secondary education for First Nations and Inuit peoples need to be ranked as a higher priority among Canadian leaders. The urgency of and the benefits from endorsing post-secondary education for First Nations and Inuit peoples is supported by statistical information.

Compared to non-Aboriginal people, First Nations and Inuit peoples have lower levels of post-secondary certification, higher rates of unemployment, and below average incomes. Advocating increased post-secondary education for First Nations and Inuit peoples is advocating an invigorating, fortifying future for First Nations and Inuit peoples, their families, and their communities.

In order for First Nations and Inuit peoples to be able to overcome a multitude of obstacles which weaken prospects of educational success, the programs, themselves, must be specialized to

conscientiously meet the needs of First Nations and Inuit peoples. Post-secondary education and training programs need to be innovative, supportive, and empowering for First Nations and Inuit peoples. First Nations and Inuit self-governance in post-secondary institutes is an important component which contributes to the success of post-secondary education for Aboriginal Peoples. Fortunately, progress is being made in this area as Indigenous governments and leaders continue to assert autonomy within post-secondary education. Such advancement, however, is often hampered by lack of recognized self-governance from federal/provincial organizations and by lack of adequate funding, both of which are critical for the promotion and sustainability of First Nations and Inuit educational systems.

First Nations and Inuit students who aspire to succeed in post-secondary institutes must be supported by a variety of initiatives. For example, career advice in middle school and high school, transitional supports in post-secondary institutes, the presence of Elders, First Nations and Inuit resources, First Nations and Inuit instructors and staff members, community-based programs, and curricula and andragogy reflective of Aboriginal cultural beliefs and values must be prioritized initiatives within First Nations and Inuit post-secondary education. In order to achieve these results, once again, it is vital that adequate finances be supplied to and ease of access to funding be improved for First Nations and Inuit students and post-secondary institutes. Generous investments of time, money, and effort need to be continually and increasingly devoted to existing and new First Nations and Inuit post-secondary programs, thereby improving the wellness and prosperity of Canada.

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Appendix A: Inventory of Aboriginal Programs and Support Services at University of British Columbia

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Area of Focus					
		Recruitment / Admission	Aboriginal Content	Outreach Programs	Support Service	Governance	Graduate & Research
Aboriginal Admissions Policy	As guidelines for admission, this policy recognizes such things as educational history, work experience, and personal goals.	X					
Aboriginal Recruitment	UBC actively recruits Aboriginal students through school visits, college visits, career fairs, community visits, tours of campus, and referrals.	X					
The Cedar Program	A free two-week summer camp in August for Aboriginal middle school students to encourage enrollment into university.	X					
GEERingUP	Non-profit, community-based summer program offered by Engineering students associated with the Faculty of Applied Sciences.	X					
Naïve Youth Program at the UBC Museum of Anthropology	Offers Aboriginal youth the chance to research and interpret their cultures in a museum setting.	X					
The Bridge Through Sport System Program	Designed to get Aboriginal youth interested in pursuing higher education through team-building activities like soccer and other sports.	X					
Access Studies	Allows student to take a limited number of upgrade courses.	X					
First Nations Language Program (FNLP)	An arrangement made between the Ministry of Education and UBC where FNLC courses may be taken by students who are still in high school.		X				
First Nations Native Studies Program	An interdisciplinary First Nations Studies program offered as a major and minor, through the Faculty of Arts.		X				
Chinook Aboriginal Business Program	This program is offered at the Sauder School of Business		X	X			
Native Indian Teacher Education Program	This is a teacher preparation program.		X	X			
First Nations Legal Studies	A Law program representing students from more than 25 First Nations across Canada.		X				
Aboriginal Residency Program	Within the Faculty of Medicine, this program offers Aboriginal students experience with Aboriginal patients within various communities, family practices, and hospitals.		X				
First Nations Concentration	A First Nations library and archival information for MAS and MILS programs.		X				
Certificate in Aboriginal Health Care Administration	About 50% of this program is offered on-campus and 50% through means of on-line instruction.			X			
Various Support Services	First Nations personal counseling				X		
	Computer center				X		
	S'Takya Childcare Center				X		
	Xwi7xwa Library				X		
	Social Activities				X		
	Elders Program				X		
	Graduation Ceremonies				X		
	The Longhouse Center				X		
	There are about 60 scholarships, awards, and prizes for Aboriginal students amounting to approximately \$200,000.				X		
FNHL President's Advisory Committee	This Committee includes representatives from Aboriginal communities, of the UBC faculty, and of Aboriginal students.					X	
First Nations BSW Program	Is delivered in partnership with the Squamish First Nation.					X	
T'kel Graduate Studies Program	Available through the Faculty of Education for qualified First Nations people who are enrolled in Med, MA, EdD, and PhD programs.						X
Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement (SAGE)	Directed at Masters students intending to continue to a PhD.						X
Aboriginal Graduate Student Program	Masters and Ph.D. in Fisheries						X

Source: Holmes (2006)

Appendix B: Inventory of Aboriginal Programs & Support Services at University of Saskatchewan

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Area of Focus					
		Recruitment / Admission	Aboriginal Content	Outreach Programs	Support Service	Governance	Graduate & Research
Admission Policy	The Colleges of Arts and Science, Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy & Nutrition, the School of Physical Therapy, and the Western College of Veterinary Medicine provide spaces for applicants of Aboriginal descent who are Saskatchewan residents and meet the minimum admission guidelines.	X					
Recruitment Team in Student and Enrollment Services	This team participates in a number of career and educational fairs across the province. As well, this team visits many high schools with a large population of Aboriginal students.	X					
Experience Us!	An annual open house at the U of S for high school students.	X					
Native Studies Programs	Native Studies Department offers three-year, four-year, and Honours BA degrees, which are taught extensively throughout Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories.						X
Native Studies Graduate Programs	Offered via this program is a MA and special-case Ph.D.s. The Department of Native Studies is currently expanding what it offers by establishing an interdisciplinary Institute of Aboriginal and Indigenous Graduate Studies and Research (IAIGSR).						X
Aboriginal Business Education Programs	Run in partnership with the First Nations University of Canada within the College of Commerce.		X				
Certificate in Indigenous Business	A two-year program offered in association with First Nations University of Canada.		X				
Aboriginal Justice and Criminology Program	Run through the Department of Sociology, this program is for Aboriginal students concerned with issues of social justice and criminology. Graduates receive a Bachelor of Arts degree, with a major in Sociology.		X				
Indigenous Peoples and Justice Programs (IPJP)	An interdisciplinary teaching and research program offered through the Department of Political Science, Sociology, and Law. The goal of this program is to explore Indigenous knowledge/ways of knowing in the realms of justice, law, and social order.		X				
The Native Access Program to Nursing (NAPN)	A support and retention service for Aboriginal nursing students who are enrolled in the Nursing Education Program of Saskatchewan (NEPS).		X				
The Program of Legal Studies for Native People	An eight-week pre-law program open to Aboriginal students across Canada.		X				
Indigenous Peoples and Justice Initiative	A cohort of Aboriginal students within the LLB program at the College of Law.		X				
Aboriginal Teacher Education (ITEP)	Intended for Aboriginal students.		X				
Aboriginal Teacher Education (NORTEP)	Based in La Ronge and jointly run by the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina.		X				
Aboriginal Teacher Education (SUNTEP)	Designed for Métis and non-status Aboriginal students who wish to teach Aboriginal students.		X				
Aboriginal Teacher Education (NWT)	A three-year program leading to a Northwest Territory teaching certificate. This program is offered in association with Aurora College Education Program, Fort Smith, NWT		X				
Aboriginal Awareness Education	Sessions about Aboriginal awareness and culture are offered to members of the university community.		X				
Aboriginal Identity	In 2004-2005, 51% of Aboriginal students identified themselves as Indian, 48% as Métis. About 62% of Aboriginal students identified at the U of S were female.		X				
Community-based Programs	Teacher education programs which include on-line classes, televised classes at more than 50 provincial sites, and off-campus face-to-face lectures at seven sites.			X			
Regional Colleges	Various Aboriginal courses are offered in Kindersley, La Ronge, Melfort, North Battleford, Yorkton, SIAST Woodland Campus in Prince Albert, and St. Peter's College in Muenster.			X			

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Area of Focus					
		Recruitment/ Admission	Aboriginal Content	Outreach Programs	Support Service	Governance	Graduate & Research
The Mathematics and Science Enrichment Program (MSEP)	A transition program funded by Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan and provides a foundational year in mathematics and science to Aboriginal students.				X		
The Aboriginal First Year Experience Program (AFYEP)	A transitional program open to all Aboriginal students who have been accepted into the University of Saskatchewan.				X		
Residential Summer Program	The College of Arts and Science offers this program to assist Aboriginal students in the transition to first year studies in the College of Arts and Science.				X		
Support Services	Aboriginal Students Center offers a variety of services including free faxing, assistance with student load applications, Elder counseling, campus tours, and access to a maximum of four hours of tutoring each week.				X		
	Indigenous Students Council is a peer support and advocacy group for Aboriginal students at the U of S.				X		
	Coordinator of Academic Programs for Aboriginal Students				X		
	There are at least 17 awards specifically targeted at Aboriginal students.				X		
Research and Graduate Studies	Annually, \$50,000 in scholarships is awarded to assist graduate programs meet Aboriginal equity goals within graduate programs.						X
Aboriginal Education Research Center (AERC)	A newly-created Aboriginal research center within the College of Education.						X
Special Advisor to the President on Aboriginal Initiatives	This position and appointment is a five-year renewable term.					X	
Aboriginal Caucus	The Caucus advises the President.					X	
Wanuskewin Portal Initiative	Intended to develop a website that will connect faculty, staff, and students to a comprehensive description of Aboriginal programs and services available through the U of S.	X	X	X	X	X	X

Source: Holmes (2006)

Appendix C: Inventory of Aboriginal Programs and Support Services at Cape Breton

University (Nova Scotia)

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Area of Focus					
		Recruitment / Admission	Aboriginal Content	Outreach Programs	Support Service	Governance	Graduate & Research
Aboriginal Recruitment Officer	CBU is promoted via Aboriginal media and has a section on its website for Mi'kmaq students.	X	X				
Native Studies Program (Mi'kmaq Studies)	Mi'kmaq Studies is offered as a three-year BA general or a BACS		X				
Integrative Science Program (Toqwa'tu'Kl Kijitaqnn)	Courses combine the knowledge of Aboriginal science with conventional science. This program is incorporated into the four-year Bachelor of Science in Community Studies (BScCS) program.		X				
Bachelor of Arts in Community Studies	Three- and four-year programs are delivered partly on online.		X				
Certificate in Mi'kmaq Cultural Heritage Preservation	Planned and delivered by the CBU School of Arts and Community Studies in collaboration with on-campus Mi'kmaq Resource Center, the Beaton Institute, and local museums and cultures centers across Cape Breton Island.		X				
Aboriginal faculty	Aboriginal representation among faculty and staff is 0.05%		X				
Mi'kmaq Business Development Program	A community-based program which is customized to be effective and applicable within Mi'kmaq communities.			X			
Certificate in Natural Resources	A community-based program which offers training in the skills needed to assist in the safety components of fisheries.			X			
Court Workers Certificate	A community-based program which enables Mi'kmaq court workers and prospective court workers to respond to legal questions and issues relevant to court appearances.			X			
Distance Education Programs	A variety of degree programs can be completed through distance education.			X			
Cape Breton University Access Program for First Nations Students (Elmitek)	A one-year transitional program designed for Mi'kmaq students who wish to update their academic credentials in order to enroll in university.			X			
Mi'kmaq Science Advantage Program (MSAP)	A transitional program providing a scientific foundation so that Mi'kmaq students will have more opportunities to succeed in post-secondary science and technology programs.			X			
Student Supports	Mi'kmaq College Institute provides a meeting place, common area, telephones, computers, message and bulletin boards for Mi'kmaq students.				X		
	Mi'kmaq Resource Center				X		
	Mi'kmaq Student Association sponsors a number of projects including graduation banquets, cultural festivals, and guest speakers.				X		
	There is one graduate award scholarship, two non-renewable entrance scholarships, and four in-program awards.				X		
Board of Governors	There are two Aboriginal people on the Board of Governors.					X	
Advisory Committee	Reports to the President and speaks on behalf of various Aboriginal issues on campus.					X	
Annual Grant	The amount of \$50,000 is received from the provincial government to support Aboriginal programs and student needs.				X		

Source: Holmes (2006)

Appendix D: Inventory of Programs and Support Services within Inuit Regions

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Area of Focus					
		Recruitment / Admission	Aboriginal Content	Outreach Programs	Support Service	Governance	Graduate & Research
Nunavut Arctic College (NAC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has three campuses and 24 Community Learning Centers in 26 of Nunavut's communities. The Fine Arts programs are nationally recognized and produce skilled artisans, important to the economy of the region (As an in-depth example of the specific characteristics of one NAC program, see Language and Culture Program, below). Business and management courses and customized training courses help to train the professional workforce of Nunavut. Has established successful partnerships with a variety of colleges and universities throughout Canada. The Nunavut Research Institute, a division of the College, identifies community needs for research and technology and act as the science advisor to the Government of Nunavut. 	X	X	X	X	X	X
Language and Culture Program (Nunavut Arctic College)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Liberal Arts program was devised and developed by Nunavut educators under the guidance and advice of Elders, Inuit students in the Nunavut Arctic College, and researchers from southern Canada. Has received support from the Iqaluit Elders' Society. Via translated interviews, five textbooks were produced and published. The Iqaluit Francophone Association is a research partner and assists in funding an annual student exchange to the University of Paris. A second exchange takes place with the Cultural Anthropology Department at the University of Leiden (Holland). Students receive 75% of their instruction in Inuktitut from Inuit staff. An agreement with the University of Manitoba allows students to receive two years of transfer credits into their Native Studies program. Transfers to other universities are done by a case-by-case basis. 	X	X	X	X	X	
Masters of Education in Leadership and Learning Program (Nunavut Arctic College)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided through the University of Prince Edward Island, Nunavut Department of Education, Nunavut Arctic College, and St. Francis Xavier University. On-campus and off-campus courses are offered on a part-time basis to students who have experience both living and teaching in Nunavut. An integral part of the face-to-face courses included Elders who would provide knowledge in culture and language. Ten courses touch on aspects of leadership including curriculum, language, literacy, critical pedagogy, research theory, research methods, and technology. 	X	X	X	X	X	X
Traditional Arts Program (Aurora College)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funded by the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (IRC), the Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC), Aurora College, and the Department of Education, Culture & Employment. On-campus and off-campus courses are offered (many through the experience and skill of Inuvialuit and Gwich'in instructors) in cultural history, crafts, traditional and contemporary art. Additional courses are offered in marketing and computer skills. Guided by an Advisory Committee representing the IRC and GTC and is governed by the Aurora College Board of Governors. 	X	X	X	X	X	

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Area of Focus					
		Recruitment/ Admission	Aboriginal Content	Outreach Programs	Support Service	Governance	Graduate & Research
Occupational Standards and Certification (Northwest Territories)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a unique alternative to apprenticeship training for people who have work experience, but lack formal training. Students are evaluated on their knowledge, performance, on-the-job assessment, and then offered short courses, if required, to fill in specific gaps. Upon completion of program, students receive a Certificate of Competence from the NWT Apprenticeship, Trade and Occupations Certification Board, which has the same status as a journey person. 	X	X	X	X	X	
Inuit Teacher Training Program (Kativik School Board and McGill University)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In partnership, Kativik School Board and McGill University offer a Certificate of Education for First Nations and Inuit peoples and a Bachelor of Education. Governed by a Steering Committee, a Joint Committee representing Kativik School Board, McGill University, and the Quebec Ministry of Education. High retention rates. Inuit teacher candidates are placed under the supervision of experienced Inuit teachers. Priority is placed on receiving training through experience in K-3 classrooms. Elders have an integral role in several courses. Inuktitut is the language of instruction for many courses and cultural knowledge and values are foundational to the program. 	X	X	X	X	X	
Nunavik Post-secondary Student Sponsorship Program (Kativik School Board)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purpose of this two-year program is to achieve CEGEP, which qualifies students to apply to university or other post-secondary institutions. Through conversations and promotion videos, career guidance and post-secondary information is provided before entering the program. In an effort to raise academic standings, Nunavik students attend John Abbot College (English) or College Marie Victorien (French). During the first-year away from home, students live in supervised residence. Tutors are provided when needed. 	X	X	X	X	X	
Nunatsiavut Government Community-Based Adult Training for Inuit (Nunatsiavut)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operated by Inuit Pathways through an agreement between the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement (AHRDA) and the Nunatsiavut Government. Students receive either on-campus or off-campus training (depending on the course) in the areas of carpentry, crane operation, driller blaster assistant, heavy equipment operator, marine emergency, conservation officer, early childhood education, community health worker, office administration, and computer studies. Students benefit from low student-teacher ratios and the infusion of Inuit cultural elements such as presentations by Elders and community leaders. 	X	X	X	X	X	
Post-secondary Student Support Program (Nunatsiavut)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduced by the Nunatsiavut government to increase opportunities and improve accessibility for Inuit who want post-secondary education and training. The three interconnected features include: 1) the Career and Guidance Program; 2) the Transition Program; and 3) the University Transfer Program. The Career and Guidance Program welcomes counselors into five Inuit communities to advise and monitor Inuit high school students. The Transition Program, offered by the College of the North Atlantic, gives Inuit students an opportunity to strengthen their academic background and complete academic entrance requirements of post-secondary programs. The University Transfer Program allows students to stay in Nunatsiavut for the first year of the post-secondary education. Courses taken through this program can be transferred to institutions outside the region. 	X	X	X	X	X	

Sources: Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (2007); Nunavut Arctic College (2005-2007)

Appendix E: A Synopsis of First Nations and Inuit Post-secondary Programs

Name of Program	Governance	Policy/Objectives	Curricula/Programs
<i>First Nations University of Canada (Saskatchewan)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board of Directors, appointed by the Chiefs of Saskatchewan. Kēhtē-ayah (<i>Keeper of the Ceremony</i>) Community Assembly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies and objectives include to: 1) counter the marginalization of Indigenous people; 2) promote culturally-relevant post-secondary education; 3) promote student retention; 4) educate the public about Indigenous issues; 5) provide traditional teachings offered by Elders; 6) develop theoretical approaches, methodologies, and paradigms based on Indigenous perspectives; and 7) promote a sense of community togetherness and family well-being within a context of First Nations cultures, values, and beliefs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centered around cultural and social needs of First Nations students and their communities. A myriad of diverse classes across various academic disciplines. Bachelor degrees offered include: 1) B. of Arts; 2) B. of Education; 3) B. of Science; 4) B. of Applied Science; 5) B. of Administration. Masters degrees offered include: 1) M. of Business Administration; and 2) M. of Arts (English, Indian Languages, Literature and Linguistics, and Indian Studies). Certificate courses offered in: 1) Indigenous Business Administration; 2) Indian Health Studies; 3) First Nation Banking Administration; and 4) Social Work
<i>The Institute of Indigenous Government (British Columbia)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board of Governors consists of a minimum eight and a maximum of 23 Aboriginal representatives from B.C. Elder Senate, appointed by the Chief Council of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies and objectives include to: 1) provide a learning forum to support and promote effective Indigenous governance throughout Canada; 2) empower Indigenous peoples to self-govern in ways that reflect Indigenous philosophy, values, and experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four specialization strands of learning: 1) Political Development and Leadership; 2) Indigenous Government Administration; 3) Economic and Social Development; and 4) International Indigenous Relations. Certification offered as a two-year program for: 1) Associate Degree in Indigenous Government Studies; and 2) Associative Degree in Science Some one-year certificate programs are also offered.

Name of Program	Governance	Policy/Objectives	Curricula/Programs
<i>Brandon University of Northern Teachers Education Program (BUNTEP) (Manitoba)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governed by regulations of Brandon University. An Advisory Committee overseeing the program includes representatives from the Hutterian Brethren Education Committee, the Department of Education, Manitoba School Superintendents, the BUNTEP student body, the Faculty of Education, and BUNTEP staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies and objectives include to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) deliver post-secondary education/ teacher certification to people who traditionally have not had this educational opportunity; 2) deliver services using available resources within a community; 3) involve students in the planning & implementation of the program; 4) supply trained personnel to satisfy the public employment needs; and 5) develop innovative techniques for delivering education to remote communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor degrees offered include: 1) B.A.; 2) B.Sc.; and 3) B.Ed. After Degree (AD). Courses consist of lectures, discussions, assignments, film, labs, and field trips, depending upon class.
<i>Nunavut Arctic College</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Board of Governors is appointed by and is accountable to Nunavut's Minister of Education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies and objectives include to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) strengthen the people and communities of Nunavut by further educating its adults via career programs delivered in partnerships with various post-secondary institutions; 2) support students so they can achieve personal goals, become well-equipped to serve their families and communities, and become better able to support and strengthen Nunavut communities; 3) provides students with community-centered education encapsulated within an environment of inclusiveness and bolstered by respect for Inuit knowledge, values, and traditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are over 40 career-oriented programs in the following broad areas: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) educational assessment and counseling; 2) adult basic education and literacy; 3) continuing education in certificate, diploma, and degree programs; 4) skills development programs; 5) language and cultural programs; 6) personal development courses; 7) support for distance education learners; 8) a Master of Education program; and 9) various other programs/courses dependant upon interest and funding availability. Trades-preparatory programs include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Carpentry; 2) Cooking; 3) Drywall & Taping; 4) Flooring, Interior Trim & Carpentry; 5) Millwright; 6) Plumbing; & 7) Small Motor Repair. The Nunavut Arctic College, in collaboration with Dalhousie University, offers a B. of Science in Nursing. A Teacher Education program has been established between the Nunavut Arctic College and the University of Regina. The Nunavut Arctic College, the University of Prince Edward Island, and Saint Francis Xavier University together provide a Masters of Education in Leadership and Learning.