

IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES
FOR THE ABORIGINAL STRATEGIC PLAN
FEBRUARY 2009

The Aboriginal Strategic Plan Working Group has identified initiatives it recommends for immediate attention over the next six months and has sought the advice of Aboriginal faculty groups at UBC Okanagan and UBC Vancouver in reviewing these before finalizing this document.

These initiatives fall into two general categories: those that are best organized or coordinated centrally, and those that, even when distributed across campuses, arise more directly from actions taken on the unit level as they are integrated into unit plans. Some very important initiatives may require minimal funding and depend on commitments of time, energy, and attention. Others will require additional resources, either allocated to units to support their integration into unit plans, or funded as centrally organized initiatives.

It is critical that the identification of centrally funded initiatives not preclude or divert attention from initiatives that arise out of unit assessments of local circumstances and opportunities for contribution.

Because of the distinct funding and academic governance structures of UBC-V and UBC-O, most initiatives, even when addressing the same issues, will be best developed locally. Coordination or liaison between local efforts, however, may produce substantial benefits or may be required in some cases (e.g., certain applications to government). Close and effective communications should be maintained between UBC-V and UBC-O.

Some of these immediate priorities are likely to require significant additional resources for their implementation, while others will require fewer resources, but clear focus, attention, and direction. Those likely to require significant additional resources are listed first below here, with the others identified in a following section.

INITIATIVES REQUIRING SIGNIFICANT ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Initiatives to be Developed at the System Level or Simultaneously on Both Campuses:

- * **Communications Strategy.** Aboriginal communications strategies should begin with the development of comprehensive websites at UBC-O and UBC-V, and must be coordinated at the system level.
- * **Recruitment of Graduate Students.** Graduate admissions policies should be reviewed to consider the inclusion or expansion of broad-based admissions criteria for Aboriginal students and others. The ability to offer competitive funding packages for qualified Aboriginal graduate students should be developed as soon as possible.

- * **Financial Support for Aboriginal Students in Undergraduate and Professional Programs.** More adequate levels of financial support for Aboriginal students should be developed through central and unit initiatives, fundraising, and lobbying with governments.
- * **Faculty Recruitment and Support.** Efforts to continue to attract highly qualified Indigenous faculty and other scholars working in Indigenous research areas should continue to be supported with attention to developing flexible plans for responding to opportunities with resources, as necessary. Particular attention should be paid to areas of high Aboriginal interest and demand. A working group to review UBC promotion and tenure policies and their support of activities critical to Aboriginal initiatives (e.g., community based research, service on development initiatives) should be formed. This group should include representation from both UBC-V and UBC-O.
- * **Fundraising & Development.** Responsibility for fundraising for Aboriginal initiatives should be clearly assigned and evaluated within the Development Office. Centralized lobbying for scholarship support from governments should be pursued.
- * **Indigenous Languages.** Strategies for extending and supporting work to stabilize and recover Indigenous languages, especially in BC, should be developed.

Initiatives Specific to UBC Vancouver

- * **Aboriginal Student Services, Recruitment, and Community Contact.** A review of Aboriginal student services should be conducted that includes academic and administrative support, orientation and mentoring programs, housing, daycare, advising, and other services, and services should be restructured and supplemented as necessary. Recruitment efforts in communities should be assessed and provision for additional UBC engagement with communities developed. A team to complete these reviews should be assembled and a recommendations for restructuring and development, as necessary, made within six months.
- * **Youth Engagement.** Summer programs for Aboriginal youth should be coordinated and assessed. Successful existing programs should be stabilized and, in some cases, expanded. New opportunities should be investigated. Partnerships with selected K-12 schools with high Aboriginal enrolments should be developed to provide university-oriented curriculum and support for Aboriginal students. Opportunities for partnerships with urban Aboriginal organizations to develop mentoring and community service learning opportunities should be actively explored.

- * **Community Relations.** Funding for existing community initiatives, especially those cooperatively developed with Musqueam should be stabilized, and funding sought for new initiatives as they are identified.

Initiatives Specific to UBC Okanagan

- * **Community Relations.** Work should continue in further developing relations and building on Memoranda of Affiliation with the En'owkin Centre, the Okanagan Nation Alliance, and other community entities. Further development of the relationship with the En'owkin Centre in particular may require additional resources. Attendance at community events should be encouraged and supported.
- * **Recruitment and Student Support.** Recruitment efforts in communities should be assessed and provision for additional UBC engagement with communities developed. The success of the Access program in recruitment and support should be monitored and strategies to ensure its continuation developed as warranted. Aboriginal student support, including cultural activities, should be expanded. The adequacy of housing support for Aboriginal students should be assessed and measures taken to expand it as necessary.

INITIATIVES REQUIRING FEWER ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (*Both Campuses*)

Cultural Diversity Policy. Work should be finalized on a UBC cultural diversity policy and code of conduct.

Campus Climate Initiatives. Central support for initiatives at the Faculty level to improve the classroom climate and develop more effective approaches to cross-cultural dialogues should be developed.

Aboriginal Research & Intellectual Property Initiatives. Aboriginal Research Groups should be formed for the purposes of exchange of information and development of larger projects. Task groups on intellectual property rights should also be formed and their efforts coordinated.

Aboriginal Urban Strategy. Strategies for more effective engagement of urban Aboriginal children and youth should be developed.

Curriculum. Work to expand both undergraduate and graduate offerings should continue.