

## **“CONCRETE STEPS TO BUILD THE FIRST NATION PUBLIC SERVICE & IMPLEMENT DRIPA”**

### **DISCUSSION PAPER BY THE FIRST NATIONS PUBLIC SERVICE SECRETARIAT**

**Last Updated: December 14, 2020**

#### **1. SUMMARY/OVERVIEW:**

This paper discusses proposed action items that focus on two fundamental pieces required to successfully implement the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People across all sectors. These are: (1) a well trained and well supported Indigenous workforce that can achieve the implementation of self-government in First Nations; and, (2) established and supported governance supporting institutions (First Nation Organizations) working in a coordinated manner for the benefit of First Nations.

This submission proposes concrete actions to be taken in the short term, as well as goals for the medium and longer term, that will support achieving the above fundamental outcomes.

#### **Over the short term, it is proposed:**

That the Indigenous Youth Internship Program (IYIP) be jointly reviewed, revised, and expanded by the BC Government in collaboration with BC First Nations and First Nation Organizations; and, at minimum, increased support by BC for more intern placements, for longer periods in a more diverse range of First Nation Governments and Organizations.

#### **Over the medium/long-term it is proposed:**

- That a First Nation controlled Indigenous Institution be established to provide institutional supports for public servants in BC First Nation Governments and First Nation Organizations.
- The role and priorities of the Indigenous Institution will be defined by BC First Nations, with guidance and direction from the BC First Nations Leadership Council.
- Consultation with BC First Nations will take place in 2021-2022 to determine the priorities and administrative structure and functions of the Indigenous Institution.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

### **2A. Revise and Expand IYIP**

As a concrete commitment under the BC Government DRIPA Action Plan, it is proposed that the Indigenous Youth Internship Program (IYIP) be jointly reviewed, revised, and expanded by the BC Government in collaboration with BC First Nations and First Nation Organizations. A commitment is also being sought for the BC Government to support increased IYIP placements, and for more even distribution for intern placements both geographically and between BC Ministries and First Nation Governments and Organizations.

The IYIP program has been widely recognized for its success. It has launched the careers of many Indigenous professionals and has also provided for significant relationship-building between the BC Government and First Nation Organizations.

However, program participation and placement numbers have remained relatively flat over the last ten years, and from the information that has been made available, the program has focused more on placements in First Nation Organizations rather than First Nation Governments. This information also indicates there is limited recruitment geared at youth living in communities and few on-reserve placements in First Nation Governments and administrations. While joint analysis is still required, it is likely there is significant room to both increase and adapt recruitment to make a greater impact in First Nation communities. A greater focus on community-level recruitment and more broad reaching placements in First Nations Governments is highly desirable. The program could also be adjusted to provide additional, and longer, placements in First Nation Governments.

A joint approach to the review and revision of the IYIP program would continue the long-standing tradition of joint coordination on this program. The program has fostered relationship building over the years as its program goals are founded in partnership. To explain, a key program goal of IYIP is to “Encourage Indigenous youth to consider the BC Public Service or Indigenous organizations as a place to pursue a rewarding career.” This is important because it actively recognizes that the program is successful when Indigenous youth choose either BC Government or Indigenous organizations as a career. It demonstrates the Provincial Government’s awareness that the recruitment of Indigenous employees in First Nation organizations is something the Provincial Government should continue supporting, in addition to increasing Indigenous hiring in their own public service.

A collaborative analysis of the IYIP program would help determine what has worked well in the past and where revisions could be required in the future. As well, the program could be reviewed for other areas of improvement or changes that support relationship building and reconciliation among the Province and First

Nations. As part of this joint review, it would be useful to further analyze where IYIP participants have obtained placements and the geographic spread across BC. Detailed information could be used to help structure a revised program going forward. Analysis could also be undertaken on the scope of the program and how it could be best structured to support provincial and First Nation staffing needs for Indigenous professionals over the long term.

It is understood that the IYIP program alone is not the only method by which training and recruitment of Indigenous Youth for both the provincial and First Nation Public Service will occur. Currently, there are many First Nation Organizations and post-secondary institutions who undertake this work. However, the IYIP program is a unique, long-standing, and innovative program, and it could serve an important role in recruiting Indigenous Youth into both provincial and First Nation administrations.

Both the BC Government Public Service and the BC First Nation Public Service would benefit from an expanded program to meet the renewal of the public service as a whole and to increase the number of Indigenous professionals in the public sector. As an initiative mandated to support First Nations across BC, with established relationships across the BC Government and in First Nations and First Nations Organizations, the First Nations Public Service Secretariat is prepared to lead this joint work on behalf of the BC First Nation Public Service.

## **2B. Establish an Indigenous Institution.**

Over the medium/long-term it is proposed that a concrete commitment in the BC Government DRIPA Action Plan be to establish a First Nation controlled Indigenous Institution to provide institutional supports for public servants in BC First Nation Governments and First Nation Organizations.

At present, many small First Nations Governments are taking on large responsibilities – ones that are typically associated with a larger public service infrastructure. In BC, First Nations have struggled to build relevant and supporting structures for the BC First Nations Public Service that are comparable to those in other levels of governments. As well, many public servants in First Nations Governments are overwhelmed, and in some cases, not fully trained to do the jobs they are undertaking. Successful operations hinge on having a strong and well trained First Nations Public Service; our administrations need additional supports and better access to training that is relevant to First Nations Governments.

Currently, non-First Nation Governments (and their public servants) are supported by long-established institutions and resources that help their administrations with complex undertakings such as: coordinating pan-governmental or cross-governmental initiatives; building a network of experts in specific areas to share knowledge and research; or recruiting, training and developing public servants. For these Governments, there

are many structural supports and institutions to support leadership and administrations when tackling problems or issues that are beyond their area of expertise.

The BC First Nations Public Service would benefit from similar structural supports. Establishing these supports in the form of an Indigenous Institution is essential to further develop the BC First Nations Public Service. This Institution would work to strengthen the First Nations Public Service, and through this, assist with the implementation of DRIPA in BC across all sectors and commitments.

It is envisioned the Indigenous Institution would provide:

- (i) lateral support for First Nation inter-organizational collaboration,
- (ii) leadership on urgent or important matters requiring communications coordination,
- (iii) intergovernmental cooperation on inter-agency engagement & shared Initiatives, and,
- (iv) relevant core public administration training and mentorship for Indigenous public servants.

#### **i. First Nation Inter-Organizational Collaboration**

An Indigenous Institution would support First Nation inter-organizational collaboration. In October 2019, ten First Nation Organizations came together to sign the Protocol on Communication and Cooperation. This Protocol brought together many First Nation leaders and organizations to begin collaboratively planning for future initiatives. However, the coordination work that is required for such an undertaking is both staff and time intensive<sup>1</sup>. The intention of the Protocol Partners is to bring on additional signatories and continue collaborative efforts as existing resources permit. Despite the lack of dedicated resources for this work (and due to Covid-19), plans for future work are moving forward, albeit slowly.

A core-funded and professionally staffed Indigenous Institution would provide secretariat support to the Protocol Partners (or similar tables) and allow for pan-BC collaborative activities to be planned, supported and implemented. Further, through coordination efforts, staff at the Indigenous Institution would work to share knowledge among, and leverage the existing work of, First Nations Organizations. Work has already begun on summarizing the services, training, and capacity building work that First Nation Organizations undertake to support the First Nation Public Service (See Annex A, Snapshot of First Nation Organizations, 2019). However, ongoing discussion, meetings and analysis is needed to identify potential areas of overlap and gaps, as well as to more effectively coordinate activities to support the BC First Nation Public Service. Examples of activities

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<sup>1</sup> Coordination work and secretariat support for the Protocol Partners currently resides with the First Nations Public Service Secretariat.

that would benefit from coordination may include: engagements/consultations, conflicting meetings with BC First Nations, conferences, training and workshops, and policy and legislation development.

Resources to support coordination are required to capitalize on the existing collaboration efforts, training, and other existing supports for BC First Nations, and to ensure that information is communicated outward to, and accessed by, BC First Nations, from the various First Nation Councils, Organizations and Institutions in BC.

## **ii. Matters of Regional or National Importance**

An Indigenous Institution may also have a role with respect to matters of national or regional importance (for example, Covid-19). During these times, reliable and responsive two-way communication is an important requirement of modern administrations. At present, there is no core-funded First Nation Organization who fulfills an information services or First Nation communication office and coordination role in BC. Instead, there are numerous First Nation Organizations who coordinate their roles in an ad-hoc manner. A professionally staffed Indigenous Institution could provide coordination with First Nations leadership during these times, as well as provide for two-way communications channels between First Nations Governments and other levels of government.

This work would be distinct from the functions of the First Nation Leadership Council member organizations, who as elected officials and bodies with First Nation Leader members, have an advocating role and a mandate to advance issues of highest importance to BC First Nations. An Indigenous Institution would not have a political mandate but would be a support to those First Nation Leaders in their political work.

In the absence of a core-funded coordinating/communications body, the First Nations Public Service Secretariat has stepped in to partially fill this role during these last nine months of the Covid-19 pandemic.

FNPSS has spent many hours working to communicate to, and support First Nations as they initially responded to the pandemic and then later during the staged re-opening of Band Offices. To support staged re-opening of Band Offices, FNPSS held a virtual forum on relevant topics, including human resource challenges, mental health, and leadership during uncertainty.

FNPSS is continuing its work to support First Nations through the pandemic and will continue hosting webinars connecting First Nation communities who are addressing Covid-19 in their communities. This work follows months of FNPSS actively working with federal and provincial governments to get information out to First Nation communities; opportunities for First Nations to connect and learn from each other through 20 Webinars; government townhall meetings; and website and fact sheet information relevant to First Nations.

The FNPSS also brings to this work “on-the-ground” knowledge of First Nations, a strong pre-established network with First Nations, and a strategic lens through its advisory group, the Band Administrators Advisory Committee.

The Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated how essential the work of a First Nations coordinating body is with respect to intergovernmental coordination and communications.

### **iii. Intergovernmental Cooperation on Inter-Agency Engagement & Shared Initiatives**

An Indigenous Institution would foster greater intergovernmental relationships among the First Nations Public Service and public servants in other levels of government (federal, provincial, municipal), and contribute to exchanges and work on projects of shared interest or necessity.

The Institution would provide knowledge and advice to First Nations Governments and First Nation Organizations on the operations of Government and current initiatives and trends in Government. Further, it would provide information to municipal, federal and provincial agencies on current initiatives, working styles and trends in First Nation Governments. The Institution would also arrange for knowledge sharing and information exchanges to foster relationships and reconciliation.

One area that could serve as an initial area of shared interest would be to collaborate on recruitment for the public service. The recruitment and training of Indigenous public servants is extremely important for both the BC Government and the BC First Nation Public Service. It will take collaboration to meet the recruitment needs of both parties. As mentioned above, FNPSS has established relationships across the BC Government and could also assist with a joint review, and expansion of the IYIP program, and other recruitment and retention initiatives.

An Indigenous Institution could also function as a trusted, first point of contact for many First Nations who are seeking to interface with First Nations Organizations or other levels of government. The staff at the Indigenous Institution would assist with connecting First Nation organizations and federal, provincial or municipal agencies, staff, or officials, where appropriate.

Much of this work outlined above already taking place in some degree through the work of the First Nations Public Service Secretariat. However, dedicated resources would allow for additional work to be undertaken and at a pace that would further support the implementation of DRIPA.

#### **iv. Core Public Administration Training**

An Indigenous Institution would work to continue and expand offerings of relevant core administration training in areas such as Human Resources, Policy Development, and Records & Information Management. Current offerings of this training by FNPSS have been over capacity since their inception. The success of this training is attributed to a delivery model that is accessible to First Nations as well as course content that is relevant to First Nations administrators and staff.

Research undertaken in 2019 identified significant gaps in public administration training for BC First Nations, with limited offerings of accredited courses in the above topics in BC. The fourth core area of public administration, Financial Management, has been well served by existing organizations.<sup>2</sup> Research also identified challenges in sustaining and growing accredited BC degree and diploma programs specific to First Nations public administration. While there are several programs in existence, the programs are often not supported by core funding and typically rely on project funding. Without multi-year funding, the programs have difficulty gaining momentum. As well, some of the programs have seen high attrition rates which have been attributed to travel constraints or work/family responsibilities. An Indigenous Institution would work with post-secondary partners to help tackle systemic barriers to accessing vital public administration post-secondary programs. (See Annex B, Snapshot Report: First Nations Public Administration Programs, BC Post-Secondary Institutions, 2019).

### **3. CONSIDERATIONS**

First Nations Governments have inherent rights to self-government and self-determination in Canada and maintain a unique place in the Canadian Constitution. Their complex operations require skilled administrators who can interface with multiple levels of government with varying statutes and bylaws (Indigenous, Federal, Provincial, and Municipal). Training for Indigenous public servants needs to be accessible and relevant.

BC First Nations need highly trained staff and administrators to support their uptake of jurisdiction, greater responsibilities, and the implementation of Self-Government and DRIPA. First Nations with a strong public service will be better equipped to respond to requests from other levels of government and to engage in discussions around economic development and renewal in their communities and traditional territories.

Structural and institutional supports for the BC First Nations Public Service are urgently needed to support BC First Nations.

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<sup>2</sup> Through: Aboriginal Financial Officers Association; the Financial Management Board; the First Nations Taxation Commission; the First Nations Finance Authority; and Tulo Centre of Indigenous Economics.

The public sector needs ongoing renewal and Indigenous youth and professionals can help fill this need through ongoing training and recruitment through a variety of programs, including IYIP.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Under the BC Government DRIPA Action Plan, it is recommended that several actions take place:

##### **Short-Term:**

1. That the Indigenous Youth Internship Program (IYIP) be jointly reviewed, revised, and expanded in collaboration with BC First Nations and First Nation Organizations.

##### **Medium-Long Term:**

2. That multi-year funding be provided to establish a First Nation controlled Indigenous Institution. The Indigenous Institution will provide institutional supports to the BC First Nation Public Service and will establish a plan to move forward on the challenges outlined above.
3. Following a period of consultation, the role and priorities of the Indigenous Institution will be defined by BC First Nations and the BC First Nations Leadership Council in 2021-2022.



**SNAPSHOT REPORT – PART A  
FIRST NATION ORGANIZATIONS**

**Draft of February 22, 2019**

**1A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Preliminary analysis identifies limited offerings of First Nation governance capacity building courses (that are offered by BC First Nations organizations) in several areas of public administration, such as: Human Resources; Planning; Communications, Policy Development, Management and Leadership Skills.

Some areas, such as land management, tax administration, and financial management, have greater educational offerings as well as several organizations that support capacity building.

**1B. INTRODUCTION**

This report is a summary of governance capacity building activities that are specific to First Nations Governments and/or the First Nation Public Service in British Columbia. The following information summary is the first part of a two-part report (Part A and B). The information contained within is based on an initial review of **publicly available information on organizational websites**.

The attached Matrix (Section 2) and accompanying Summary (Section 3) are not exhaustive, and they do not list every program or initiative. It is intended to be a first look at offerings in BC that are delivered by either First Nation organizations directly, or indirectly. There are likely additional educational offerings and programs for administrators that are not offered by a First Nation specific organization. Part B of this report will look at these offerings.

In the Matrix (pages 2-5) the governance capacity building programs have been loosely categorized as belonging to specific areas of First Nations administration, such as: Lands Management; Financial Standards; Tax Administration; Human Resources; Policy Development & General Planning; Public Leadership & Management Skills; Economic Development; and, Other.

To guide the reader through the summary portion of the report (Section 3, pages 6-16), it has been organized by grouping First Nations institutions as follows: (A) Financial; (B) Accredited Education Programs by First Nations organizations<sup>3</sup>; (D) Province-wide organizations; (E) Economic Development and Trusts; (F) Lands Management and Infrastructure; (G) Health and Education; and (H) Other, or Unique.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Additional research required in this area.

<sup>4</sup> First Nations Child and Family Service Agencies websites are not included because they went beyond the scope of this report.

**2. MATRIX: FIRST NATION SPECIFIC GOVERNANCE CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMS IN BC**

Organization	Economic Dev.	Lands Mgmt.	Financial	Tax Admin.	Human Resource	Policy Devt., Planning	Leadership, Mgmt Skills.	Other
<b>Financial</b>								
AFOA, AFOA-BC			Certification program, ladders into ACAF by CPA				Two short certification programs. One exec. Intensive.	Conferences, workshops.
Financial Mgmt. Board			Workshops; Certifications			Policy support for financial standards		
First Nations Tax Commission				See Tulo below		Policy support for tax admin.		
First Nations Finance Authority			Capital planning advice and services					
Tax administrators Assoc.				Certification, annual conference				
<b>Accredited Education Programs</b>								
Tulo Centre	Program in Applied Economics (listed below)	Program in Lands Mgmt (listed below)		Program in Tax Admin.				
<b>Province Wide Orgs</b>								
AFN-BC	Workshops; Economic Black-book sessions							Advocacy; conferences; Governance Reports
<b>Organization And Page No.</b>	<b>Economic Dev.</b>	<b>Lands Mgmt.</b>	<b>Financial</b>	<b>Tax Admin.</b>	<b>Human Resource</b>	<b>Policy Devt., Planning</b>	<b>Leadership, Mgmt Skills.</b>	<b>Other</b>
UBCIC		Lands research workshops						Workshops & training on Specific Claims Research
First Nations Summit & FNPSS					Human Resources Workshop	Policy Workshop		Advocacy; conferences
<b>Economic Development</b>								
New Relationship Trust	Economic Development & Capacity building funding					Tribal Council policy devt. initiative; Case Studies in CCP		Funding streams. Best practices; Proposed
First Nations Major Projects Coalition	Advice and services related to Major Projects		Options for financial benefits for major projects			Some planning support		Services that support First Nations in Major Project Negotiations
First Nations Energy and Mining Council	Sector specific workshops							
First Nations Forestry Council	Sector specific workshops							Sector specific;



Organization	Economic Dev.	Lands Mgmt.	Financial	Tax Admin.	Human Resource	Policy, Planning	Leadership, Mgmt. Skills.	Other
								training in field.
<b>Lands Mgmt. and Infrastructure</b>								
<b>LAB &amp; First Nations Land Mgmt. Resource Centre</b>		Support for FNLMA. Numerous workshops. Advice. Mini-courses						
<b>First Nations Housing and Infrastructure Council</b>								Engagement activities and conference.
<b>NALMA, and BC-ALMA</b>		Lands Mgmt. Certification with some transferable credits. Workshops.						
<b>Health and Education</b>								
<b>First Nations Health Authority</b>						Planning for health initiatives.		Workshops, planning, funding.
<b>First Nations Education Steering Committee</b>								Workshops, Conferences, Curriculum dev.
<b>First Nations Schools Association</b>								School certifications Workshops
Organization	Economic Dev.	Lands Mgmt.	Financial	Tax Admin.	Human Resource	Policy, Planning	LeadershipMgmt. Skills.	Other
<b>Other/Unique</b>								
<b>First Nation Emergency Services Society</b>		Emergency services training and relevant areas				Training: fire department administration training	Training: fire protection leadership governance	Training for people pursuing a career in emergency services.
<b>First Nation Technology Council</b>	Training for technology sector	GIS mapping courses						Technology training.
<b>CFN-GBI</b>	Engagement activities; stewardship.	Steward Training Program with VIU Technical						Steward Training Program with VIU Technical
<b>The Centre for First Nations Governance</b>						Workshop	Workshop, mentoring, multi-year support.	Governance research project with Carleton.
<b>First Nations Information Governance Centre</b>						Data gathering initiatives.		Fundamentals of OCAP (see page xx).

First Peoples Cultural Council						Monitoring of status of Aboriginal languages.		Funding and programs for Language, Arts and Culture
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### 3. SUMMARY OF CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

#### 3A. Financial Organizations

##### AFOA and BC AFOA

AFOA is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to helping Indigenous people better manage and govern their communities through enhanced financial and management practices. There is a national organization as well as a BC organization.

##### National AFOA

**Staff:** 15

**Board:** 9

**Capacity Building:** 3 certifications, courses, tool-kits, templates, conferences, a la carte workshops.

**Clientele:** First Nations administrators across Canada

The AFOA has several certification programs. These are: (1) Certified Aboriginal Financial Manager Designation (CAFM); (2) Certified Aboriginal Professional Administrator; and, (3) The Certified Indigenous Leadership Program

##### Certified Aboriginal Financial Manager Designation

This designation requires completion of 14 courses; a professional exam; and two years of work experience in the field. The designation may also be obtained through other avenues such as having previous work experience and educational credentials reviewed. Of the 14 required courses, five of the courses are completed on-line through AFOA and the remaining nine courses are delivered through a post-secondary institution.

The courses delivered through AFOA are: Aboriginal Business Law, Aboriginal Strategy and Decisions; Aboriginal History and Developments; Aboriginal Ethics Case Study; and Aboriginal Human and Fiscal Issues. The courses delivered through a post-secondary institution are: Introductory Financial Accounting; Introductory Management Accounting; Intermediate Financial Reporting 1; Intermediate Financial Reporting 2; Corporate Finance & Fundamentals; ACAF Audit & Assurance Course; Business Communications; Information Technology; ACAF Ethics & Workplace Skills Course; and SAGE - Accounting Software Application.

The AFOA CAFM program ladders into the Advanced Certificate in Accounting and Finance (ACAF) that is offered by Chartered Professional Accountants Canada (CPA-Canada). On completion of the AFOA CAFM program participants may work towards CPA-Canada's ACAF. To obtain the ACAF, completion of four additional ACAF courses are required, and the final ACAF National Examination is administered by the CPA profession.

Certified Aboriginal Professional Administrator: Is an 18-day program, with six sessions of 3 days each. Material is delivered on-line and in person.

Certified Indigenous Leadership Program: Is an 8-day program with four 2-day sessions. This program potentially could offer a transfer credit to the Chartered Director (C. Dir.) Program, by the Directors College; a joint venture of The Conference Board of Canada and the DeGroot School of Business at McMaster University.

AFOA also partners with the Harvard Business School to offer a one-week (4 day) intensive Harvard Business School Certificate Program that is delivered in Boston. AFOA also has a partnership with the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada and offers many tools and resources online.

AFOA also provides a la carte workshop offerings and conferences.

## **BC Chapter – AFOA**

**Staff:** 4

**Board:** 9

**Capacity Building:** Regional conferences; a la carte regional workshops; other workshops and training delivered through national AFOA.

**Clientele:** First Nations in BC

The BC Chapter works with the National organization to offer training to First Nations administrators in the areas of financial management. The BC Chapter is also hosting an Economic Development Conference in March 2019 and a First Nations Band Administration Conference in June 2019.

## **Financial Management Board**

**Staff:** at least 36

**Board:** currently 9 (up to 13)

**Capacity Building:** Advice and workshops on request; tools and templates.

**Clientele:** First Nations across Canada

The Financial Management Board operates as a shared governance institution under the First Nations Fiscal Management Act (FMA). The majority of the directors are named by the Governor-in-Council and up to three members are appointed by the Aboriginal Financial Officers Association. The FMB is at arms-length and it is not an agent of the crown: but it is still accountable to the Minister of Indigenous Services Canada.

Some areas of work for the FMB are: (1) to support First Nations to strengthen their own communities through better relationships with financial institutions; business partners and other governments; (2) provide advice, policy research and review services relating to fiscal arrangements; (3) to review and audit First Nations' finance practices; and, (4) set standards for: financial administration laws; and, financial management system and financial performance certifications. The FMB offers advice and workshops to First Nations who are bringing in a Financial Administration Law. The FMB partner with many, including: AFOA; FNFA; FNFC; Tulo Centre for Indigenous Economics; The First Nations Lands Advisory Board; and Assembly of First Nations.

## **First Nations Tax Commission**

**Staff:** not listed

**Commissioners:** 8

**Capacity Building:** Builds capacity for First Nations to administer taxation; toolkits; videos.

**Clientele:** First Nations across Canada; First Nations administrators

The First Nations Tax Commission (FNTC) is a shared governance institution under the FMA. The Governor-in-Council appoints nine of the Commissioners and the Native Law Centre of Canada at the University of Saskatchewan appoints one commissioner.

The FNTC is responsible for maintaining the integrity of First Nations taxation in Canada. Some of the FNTC's policy objectives are: (1) to support First Nation jurisdiction; (2) to promote transparency; (3) support sustainable economic development; (4) reconcile interests for First Nations and stakeholders; (5) promote harmonization; (6) foster administrative efficiencies; and (7) promote understanding. The FNTC also has an advisory function for the development of regulations under the Financial Management Act and it also develops proposals and monitors regulatory impacts. The FNTC also helps to "develop training programs for First Nations real property tax administrators, and to build capacity in First Nations to administer their taxation systems"<sup>5</sup> There are no upcoming training workshops on their website, however, the Tulo Centre indicates on its website that it worked with the FNTC to develop the accredited Certificate in First Nations Tax Administration (see page 8).

## **First Nations Finance Authority**

**Staff:** 12 at least

**Board:** 9

**Capacity Building:** financing, investment and advisory services.

**Clientele:** First Nations across Canada

The First Nations Finance Authority is a statutory not-for-profit organization operating under the authority of the FMA.

The First Nations Finance Authority is a statutory not-for-profit organization operating under the authority of the FMA. The FNFA is an Aboriginal government owned and controlled institution. The FNFA is not an agent of the Crown or a crown corporation; it is governed solely by the First Nations communities that join as borrowing members.

The FNFA provides First Nations with finance instruments that are comparable to other governments in Canada. The FNFA's mandate is to provide financing, investment and advisory services for First Nations. The FNFA's purpose is to provide First Governments with investment options and capital planning advice as well as access to long-term loans. The FNFA can assist First Nations financial managers with budgeting modeling and financing tools and also assists First Nations that do not have immediate borrowing plans with arranging their financial administration so they can better access financing in the future.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> FNTC website

<sup>6</sup> First Nations Finance Authority Website

## **First Nations Tax Administrators Association**

**Staff:** not listed

**Board:** not listed

**Capacity Building:** Annual conference; mentors; certification.

**Clientele:** First Nations across Canada

The First Nations Tax Administrators Association (FNTAA) is a professional association that is dedicated to advancing the professional management of First Nations property taxation systems. The FNTAA: promotes best practices; offers an annual conference; and, provides a certification called “Certified First Nation Tax Administrators”. There are a number of requirements to meet the certification, including experience on the jobs as well as completion of the Tulo Centre “Certificate in First Nations Tax Administration” (see Tulo, below).

### **3B. Accredited Education Programs**

#### **Tulo Centre for Indigenous Economics**

**Staff:** not listed

**Board:** not listed<sup>7</sup>

**Capacity Building:** 3 Certificate programs; courses, workshops, webinars, and free text book.

**Clientele:** First Nations administrators and others who work with First Nations

The Tulo Centre for Indigenous Economics (“Tulo”) is a registered charity and not-for-profit who works to assist First Nations in building legal and administrative frameworks that support markets on their lands. Tulo was established to deliver education programs and conduct research in the areas of First Nation public administration. Tulo partners with many, including: FNTC; Thompson Rivers University; FMB; and, the FNTAA.<sup>8</sup> Tulo’s programs include: (1) Certificate in First Nations Tax Administration; (2) Certificate in First Nation Applied Economics; and (3) Certificate in First Nations Applied Lands Management.

Certificate in First Nations Tax Administration: First Nation Taxation, Establishing Tax Rates and Expenditures, Property Assessment and Appeals, Tax Notices, Collection and Enforcement; Communications; Service Agreements; Development Cost Charges; and, Capital Infrastructure Financing. Accredited.

Certificate in First Nation Applied Economics: economics and english, as well as courses specific to First Nations lands, including: residential and commercial development; investment facilitation; resource development and First Nation Fiscal Relationship and Economic Development. Accredited

Certificate in First Nations Applied Land Management: data capture; digital mapping; land use planning; land tenure; and final project. There are eight courses in total. Accredited.

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<sup>7</sup> Board members not listed on website. As of 2016-2017 Annual Report - Board Chair: Michael LeBourdais

<sup>8</sup> Other Partners listed are: Consensus Building Institute; M.I.T Harvard Public Disputes Program; Institute of Liberty and Democracy; the Ngāi Tahu Research Centre; American Indian Infrastructure Association; and, the National Intertribal Tax Alliance.

### 3C. Province-wide Organizations

#### **BC - Assembly of First Nations**

**Staff:** 7

**Board:** 4

**Regional Chief:** 1

**Capacity Building:** Economic Black Book Sessions; regional discussions and engagement.

**Clientele:** BC First Nations

The BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) is an incorporated society and advocacy organization. It works to advance the rights and interests of BC First Nations and to promote policies and resources for the benefit of First Nations. Current capacity building work at the BCAFN includes economic development toolkits or workshops called the Black Books. These have been designed for First Nations Leaders, Band-owned businesses and First Nations entrepreneurs. The BCAFN is also holding a First Nations Business Forum in February 2019.

#### **The Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs**

**Staff:** 9 approx.

**Executive/Board:** 3

**Capacity Building:** Workshops on research skills training; conferences; on-line tools.

**Clientele:** First Nations in BC

The Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) is an advocacy and research organization that is working toward the recognition, implementation and exercise of Indigenous title, rights and treaty rights. The UBCIC has extensive expertise with specific claims research and they undertake free research and legal analysis on behalf of BC First Nations. The UBCIC also: (1) provides research skills training; (2) hosts conferences and workshops; and, (3) develop research tools and make them freely available. Comprehensive digital resources and guides are available on the website.

#### **First Nations Summit**

**Staff:** 8-9; plus 3 for FNPSS

**Executive:** 3

**Co-chairs:** 2

**Capacity Building:** First Nations Public Service Secretariat; guides and resources.

**Clientele:** BC First Nations

The First Nations Summit (FNS) is a non-profit advocacy organization that works to advance the interests of First Nations in BC. The First Nations Summit works in a number of areas, including: (1) the advancement of treaty negotiations; relationship building; and capacity building. The FNS partners with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities to deliver the Community to Community (C2C) Forums and also houses the First Nation Public Service Secretariat (FNPSS).



FNPS: The FNPSS is working to strengthen the First Nations public service in BC. It currently offers workshops on policy development and human resources. In addition, the FNPSS has an Advisory Committee comprised of First Nations administrators who provide advice regarding the First Nations public service. In addition to research work, the FNPSS has been doing outreach with First Nations and also held a conference in 2018.

### **3D. Economic Development and Trusts**

#### **New Relationship Trust**

**Staff:** 10

**Board:** 7

**Capacity Building:** Funds capacity building projects in a number of areas; best practice reports.

**Clientele:** BC First Nations and BC Tribal Councils

The New Relationship Trust (NRT) is a non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening First Nations in BC through capacity building. The NRT funds projects from a trust in the areas of: governance capacity; education; language and culture; youth and elders; and, economic development. One initiative that assists with policy development and capacity building in BC is the Tribal Councils Policy Initiative. The NRT also has prepared best practice studies in a number of areas, including: Governance; Consultation; Comprehensive Community Planning; Land Use Planning; and, Environmental Assessments. The NRT also delivers the BC Indigenous Clean Energy Initiative that is delivered in partnership with Western Economic Diversification Canada. The NRT partners with a number of organizations, including: the First Nations Technology Council; First Peoples Cultural Council; the NRT Foundation; and, numerous Aboriginal Capital Corporations.

#### **First Nations Major Projects Coalition**

**Staff:** Director, Administration and Technical Team

**Board:** 3

**Capacity Building:** Workshops; support to First Nations for major projects.

**Clientele:** First Nations across Canada; member First Nations

The First Nations Major Projects Coalition (FNMPC) is working to enhance the economic well-being of its member nations. The FNMPC has five business lines: (1) Structure and Governance; (2) Economic Participation and Project Capacity Support; (3) Environmental Stewardship; (4) Community Engagement and External Relations; and, (5) Engagement with Government. The FNMPC provides support to communities regarding major projects taking place in their area. The FNMPC will perform assessment on the readiness of the communities to respond to and participate in the major project. If the project is taken on by the FNMPC for support to the community, the FNMPC may offer a variety of services to the First Nation, including: economic analysis and application of economic participation models; options for legal arrangements, options for benefit sharing models; application of environmental stewardship models; policy and communications. In addition, a number of environmental stewardship workshops were identified as having taken place in 2016-2017.

#### **First Nations Energy and Mining Council**

**Staff:** not listed

**Board:** not listed

**CEO:** 1

**Capacity Building:** Sector specific workshops.

**Clientele:** First Nations of BC

The BC First Nations Energy & Mining Council (FNEMC) is a non-profit organization. The FNEMC's mandate is to "support and facilitate First Nation efforts to manage and develop energy and mineral resources in ways that protect and sustain the environment forever while enhancing the social, cultural, economic and political well-being of First Nations in British Columbia." The FNEMC offers workshops and forums regarding the development of energy and mineral resources and First Nations participation in the sector.

### **First Nations Forestry Council**

**Staff:** 6

**Board:** 3 (one each from FNS, AFN, and UBCIC)

**Capacity Building:** Sector specific workshops and training.

**Clientele:** First Nations of BC

The First Nations Forestry Council (FNFC) is a non profit society supporting BC First Nations' forestry activities, including: policy; legislation; forestry strategy development; jobs and training; stewardship; sustainability; and, business leadership. Within their mission, the FNFC identifies supporting First Nations in their forest, land use and marine planning. Capacity building activities include: (1) dialogue and engagement on First Nations forestry practices; (2) developing the BC First Nations Forestry Strategy; and, (3) career development for those interested in forestry careers.

## **3E. Lands Management and Infrastructure**

### **Lands Advisory Board and First Nations Land Management Resource Centre**

**Staff:** 36-40

**LAB Board:** 16

**Capacity Building:** Support, Services, Mentorship, Workshops, Self-paced Mini-courses

**Clientele:** FNLMA First Nations across Canada

The Lands Advisory Board (LAB) and First Nations Land Management Resource Centre (FNLMRC) work to strengthen the land management practices of First Nations who are signatories to the First Nations Land Management Act ("FNLMA"). The FNLMRC Resource Centre reports to the LAB. The Centre provides support to the 153 First Nations who are signatories to the FNLMA. The Centre has staff in areas such as Environment and Enforcement, Field Services and Planning. Services provided include: assisting with land code development; assisting with community engagement and communication; assisting with ratification votes; and supporting operational First Nations during and after transition to land governance authority under their land code; land use planning, and support services related to surveys and survey related questions. The Centre regularly offers short training workshops across the country. Offerings for 2018-2019 included workshops in the areas of surveys; unregistered interests; law enforcement; regional readiness, environmental management

plan collaboration; and records management. The Centre also offers a Land Governance Manual and has produced over 30 self-paced mini-courses, or ‘courselets’.

### **BC First Nations Housing and Infrastructure Council**

**Staff:** 2

**Board:** 9

**Capacity Building:** not listed

**Clientele:** All BC First Nations

This council was established in October 2017. Its main purpose is to promote the start-up of a BC First Nations controlled Housing and Infrastructure Authority. The Council has undertaken significant engagement activities over the last year and held a conference in the Fall of 2018.

### **National - Aboriginal Land Managers Association & BC Chapter**

**Staff:** Not listed on website.

**Board:** Eight members, one from BC (Osoyoos)

**Capacity building:** Offers 3 day courses; professional certification; partners with Universities.

**Clientele:** First Nations across Canada

The National Aboriginal Lands Manager Association (NALMA) is a non-profit, non-political organization. To raise professional standards in land management, the organization focuses on three areas: (1) technical support; (2) networking and communication; and, (3) professional development. In this last area, NALMA provides training and capacity building opportunities for First Nation land managers. Nationally, the organization offers a Professional Lands Management Certification. The program was developed in collaboration with INAC and subject matter experts. The program is offered through two levels of learning: Level 1 – post-secondary, University of Saskatchewan; and, Algoma University; and, Level 2 – technical training through NALMA. The post-secondary courses completed at Algoma University are transferrable credits at the University.

In addition to the certification program, specialized workshops are offered, including: Additions to Reserves & Reserve Creation; Introduction to Land Management; Land Regime; Locatee Leasing; Environmental Management; Land Use Planning; Commercial Leasing; Matrimonial Real Property; and, Reserve Land Designations. A number of upcoming offerings were listed on the website. NALMA also partners with the Centre for Excellence for Matrimonial Real Property. Three new tool-kits were developed in 2018 and released: These are: Provisional Federal Rules toolkit; MRP Lawmaking and Ratification Toolkit; and, (3) Implementation of an MRP Regime Toolkit.

### **BC Chapter of Aboriginal Land Managers Association**

**Staff:** unknown

**Board:** Not listed, chair is from BC

**Capacity Building:** In conjunction with national group

**Clientele:** First Nations in BC

The BC Chapter was established in 2012 by a vote of NALMA. The founding members were: Coldwater, Penticton, Shuswap and Skeetchestn.

### **3F. Health and Education**

#### **First Nations Health Authority**

**Staff:** 500 (aprox)

**Board:** 9

**Capacity Building:** Workshops, planning, funding, engagement.

**Clientele:** Aboriginal people in British Columbia

The First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) delivers services in many areas, including: Healthy Living; Communicable Disease Control; eHealth; Environmental Health; Research, Knowledge Exchange and Evaluation; Maternal Child and Family Health; Mental Wellness and Substance Abuse; Traditional Healing; and Nursing Services. In terms of capacity building, the FNHA works in partnership with First Nations communities on planning for health initiatives in their region. The FNHA offers funding for wellness events in First Nations communities and capital funding for community health centres. The FNHA is working on a number of initiatives designed to support communities and their health service organizations, including tools and processes to streamline community planning and reporting.<sup>9</sup>

#### **First Nations Education Steering Committee**

**Staff:** at least 21

**Executive:** 4

**Capacity Building:** Workshops on Local Education Agreements, research, engagement.

**Clientele:** Educators

The First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNEESC) is a First Nations controlled organization that provides a common voice for First Nations in discussions with government and other education stakeholders. It works to facilitate funding and agreements, such as the recently signed BC Tripartite Education Agreement. Programs and activities include: cooperative education; research; First Nations languages and culture; and, information systems. Curriculum development is also an important aspect of FNEESC. The organization has worked with FNSA and in collaboration with teachers and partners to develop curriculum resources. FNEESC also offers workshops, including ones on Local Education Agreements. Toolkits and a handbook are also offered.

#### **First Nations School Association**

**Staff:** not listed

**Board:** 10

**Capacity Building:** School assessment and certification process.

**Clientele:** First Nations schools in BC; First Nation Educators

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<sup>9</sup> FNHA website.

The First Nations Schools Association is a non-profit society that works on behalf of First Nations schools in BC. The organization has a mandate to “support those schools in creating effective, nurturing, and linguistically and culturally appropriate education environments that provide students with a positive foundation in all academic areas”. The FNSA offers: ongoing regional workshops on culture and language; a school assessment and certification process; a First Nations parents club; Seventh Generation club; and an annual conference for educators. Most BC First Nations schools are members of the FNSA

### **3G. Other and Unique**

#### **First Nations Emergency Services Society**

**Staff:** not listed

**Board:** 5

**Capacity Building:** Some training geared to First Nation administrators; guidance and support.

**Clientele:** BC First Nations; Aboriginal people pursuing careers in fire-fighting

The First Nations Emergency Services Society is a non-profit organization that works closely with First Nations communities and a variety of partners to implement emergency management for BC First Nations. FNESS also provides community-based guidance, support and assistance to BC First Nations.

Core training is offered in the areas of: fire services; forest fuel management; and emergency mgmt. Courses relevant to First Nations administrations might include: fire department administration training; and, fire protection leadership governance.

#### **First Nations Technology Council**

**Staff:** 12

**Board:** 4

**Capacity Building:** Technology training in a variety of relevant areas.

**Clientele:** Indigenous people in BC pursuing a career in technology.

The First Nations Technology Council (FNTC) is a not-for-profit organization that provides free digital skills training for Indigenous people. The FNTC is also working towards equitable Internet access and high-speed connectivity. Programs offered include: (1) The Foundations Certificate; and (2) the Futures Program. The Foundations Certificate is a 12-week full time certificate program. Courses are offered in the areas of: web development and coding; GIS/GPS mapping; communications and digital marketing; software testing; network set-up and support. The Futures Program allows the student to specialize in the one of the areas they learned in the Foundations Certificate. Numerous offerings of the Futures Program are listed on the website.<sup>10</sup>

#### **Coastal First Nations Great Bear Initiative Society**

**Staff:** 7

**Board:** 9

**Capacity Building:** Steward Technical Training Program, engagement, stewardship.

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<sup>10</sup> The different areas of specialization are delivered in partnership with various organizations including: Red Academy; Lighthouse Labs; Vancouver Community College; and PQA testing.

**Clientele:** Interns from First Nations who are members of the Society

The Coastal First Nations Great Bear Initiative Society (CFN-GBI) is an alliance of nine First Nations. The CFN-GBI promotes self-sufficiency and sustainable economic development on BC's North and Central Coast and Haida Gwaii. CFN-GBI is building a conservation-based economy that protects their culture and ecosystem while also recognizing their Title and rights. The CFN-GBI has worked on many initiatives over the years and delivers training. The CFN-GBI delivers, in partnership with Vancouver Island University a Steward Technical Training Program. In 2017, fourteen students graduated.<sup>11</sup>

### **The Centre for First Nations Governance**

**Staff:** not determined

**Board:** 4-6

**Capacity Building:** 3 kinds of workshops; toolkit; Governance Transition research project.

**Clientele:** First Nations across Canada

The Centre for First Nations Governance (CFNG) is a non-profit organization that was established by former staff of the National Centre for First Nations Governance (2005-2012) which closed due to funding cuts. Workshops noted on their website are: (1) Governance Essentials for Chief and Council; (2) Community Forum: A Vision for Change; and, (3) The Transitional Governance Program, including mentoring and multi-year support. The Centre is also partnering with Carleton University and the Institute of Public Administrators of Canada on a research project, called the Governance Transition project. A governance tool-kit; best practices; and case studies are offered.<sup>12</sup>

### **First Nation Information Governance Centre**

**Staff:** not listed

**Board:** 9

**Capacity Building:** On-line OCAP course

**Clientele:** First Nations across Canada

The First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC) is a non-profit organization operating with a special mandate from the Assembly of First Nations' Chiefs in Assembly. It supports the development of information governance and management at the community level through regional and national partnerships. In collaboration with its partners the FNIGC conducts data-gathering initiatives. FNIGC has partnered with Algonquin College to develop an online training course called the "The Fundamentals of OCAP".

### **First Peoples' Cultural Council**

**Staff:** 25 aprox

**Board:** 13

**Capacity Building:** Funding and programs for First Nations languages/culture/arts.

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<sup>11</sup> CFN-GBI 2017 Annual Report [https://coastalfirstnations.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/CFN-Annual-Report-2017\\_web.pdf](https://coastalfirstnations.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/CFN-Annual-Report-2017_web.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Resources: <http://fngovernance.org/toolkit/resources>

**Clientele:** BC First Nations

The First People’s Cultural Council is a provincial Crown Corporation formed by the BC Government to administer the First Peoples’ Heritage, Language and Culture Program. The FPCC funds initiatives and “monitors the status of BC First Nations languages, cultures and arts” and “develops strategies which help First Nations communities recover and sustain their heritage”.<sup>13</sup>

DRAFT

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<sup>13</sup> FPCC website.

**DRAFT SNAPSHOT REPORT - PART B**  
**First Nations Public Administration Programs**  
**BC Post-Secondary Institutions**

**Draft of July 03, 2019**

**1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The First Nations Public Service Secretariat would like to thank the following individuals for their time and knowledge which was invaluable in the development of this report: Dr. Verna Billy-Minnabarriet, the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology; Dr. Terry Poucette & Heather Kirkham, the University of Victoria; Dr. Gary Wilson, the University of Northern British Columbia; and Kelly Shopland, BSc, BEd, MEd, North Island College.

**2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report looks at First Nations public administration programs in BC post-secondary institutions. There are currently four First Nations public administration programs operational in BC. These are delivered by: (1) Nicola Valley Institute of Technology; (2) North Island College; (3) the University of Victoria; and, (4) the University of Northern British Columbia.

Key successes of the programs include: (1) content that is relevant to First Nations; (2) cohort model with face-to-face instruction; and (3) transferability of accredited programs. Key challenges of the programs include: (1) lack of base-funding by post-secondary institutions; (2) departmental capacity to expand and maintain programs hinges on year-to-year funding; and (3) high student attrition rates for two of the programs.

The scope of this report was limited specifically to First Nations public administration accredited programs delivered by public post-secondary institutions in British Columbia. It does not include: programs delivered outside of British Columbia; programs that are not targeted to First Nations public administration specifically; or (3) programs that are delivered by non-profit organizations. In the case of (3) some of these programs fell into the earlier report, Snapshot Part A, as this is the second half of the two-part report.

**3. INTRODUCTION**

This report summarizes the offerings of First Nations public administration programs offered in BC post-secondary institutions. At present, there are four First Nation public administration programs: (1) the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology; (2) the University of Victoria; (3) North Island College; and, (4) the University of Northern British Columbia.

This report includes an overview of each of these programs and concludes by identifying common themes — including successes and challenges for all programs.



In addition to the above programs, there are three other programs that develop business, leadership and financial skill sets, but these programs are not geared toward First Nation public administrators, specifically. These programs are: (1) the Executive Master of Business Administration in Indigenous Business and Leadership offered by Simon Fraser University; (2) Aboriginal Financial Management offered by the College of the Rockies; and (3) Business Fundamentals for Aboriginal Communities offered by Vancouver Island University. Short summaries of these programs are included in Annex A.

This report is part two of a two-part report (Part A and B). Part A of this report examined capacity building programs specific to the First Nation public service that were delivered primarily by Aboriginal non-profit organizations. Many of these programs were non-accredited, or non-transferable with the exception of two organizations. Please refer to Part A of the report for additional details.

#### **4. METHODOLOGY**

To identify First Nation public administration programs the websites for all public British Columbia post-secondary institutions were examined. Potential programs were reviewed to determine whether the curriculum of the program fell within the scope of this report. Following that analysis, the above four programs were selected for follow-up interviews to gather detailed information. Interviews with administrators or professors from each institution were conducted between April 18 – May 31, 2019.

#### **5. PROGRAM DETAILS**

##### **5A. Nicola Valley Institute of Technology**

###### **Program Overview**

The Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT) is an accredited post-secondary institution that was started by and is controlled by Aboriginal people. NVIT offers both a certificate and a diploma in First Nations public administration. Once a certificate has been completed, there is also an option to complete a diploma with a concentration in the following streams: (1) Band Administration; (2) Education Director; (3) First Nations Housing; (4) Human Services/Social; and, (5) Parks/Public works stream

The NVIT Public Administration Certificate has been delivered for about twenty years, with the curriculum being reviewed every five years. The curriculum was originally developed through conversations and outreach with First Nations leaders, Elders, First Nations communities and potential students.

The certificate program is unique in BC as it is delivered face-to-face in a First Nation community, on a contractual basis. By eliminating the need for travel and increasing face-to-face supports, NVIT's delivery model helps to ensure a high completion rate of students who are enrolled in the certificate. When the certificate is delivered in the community, all, or nearly all students graduate. The program requires 15 students to run, with a maximum of 25 students. The certificate program is also unique in that it has been delivered on a contractual basis to First Nations in other provinces, including Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.

Each of the ten required courses is delivered Monday-Saturday, or one week a month for 10 months. There is also a small on-line component where the students are required to do their advance reading, and also at the end where assignments may be submitted online.

The diploma program tends to be delivered on-line. Detailed statistics for the diploma streams were not available at time of writing. The Education Administration has seen particular success with a high completion rate. For example, the recent Education Administration stream had 44 graduates from an initial group of 47 students.

### **Curriculum Details**

The 30-credit certificate consists of the following ten courses: (1) Negotiations and Contract Management; (2) Introduction to Management; (3) Community Development 1; (4) Finite Mathematics; (5) Organizational Behaviour; (6) Introduction to Economics; (7) Business Law; (8) English Composition; (9) Canadian Govt. & Politics; and (10) Strategies for Success.

To acquire a diploma in Band Administration a further six courses (18 credits) are completed, along with 4 elective courses (12 credits) electives. The required courses for the Band Administration diploma are: (1) Project Management; (2) Aboriginal Governance Development; (3) Contemporary First Nation Issues; (4) Introduction to Statistics; (5) Introduction to Finance; and (6) Human Resources Management.

The 30 and 60 credit programs are generally transferable to other universities.

### **5B. North Island College**

#### **Program Overview**

The Aboriginal Leadership Certificate offered by the North Island College is a new program that started in September 2018. The program was developed through outreach and extensive consultation with local communities and is designed to build skills for public administration in Aboriginal organizations.

The program is a cohort model and offers a blended learning option with course content delivered on-line and then periodic face-to-face intensives at the various campuses. The face-to-face intensives move around to the different communities that the students are from. Elders are involved in the program in a number of ways: they attend the face-to-face intensives and also answer questions and offer emotional support in the online forums.

Most of the people attending the program are already working and many have family and child-care responsibilities. The decision was made to deliver the program full-time (3 courses per semester) so that course participants would be eligible for tuition funding and living allowance funding through their First Nation. To help remove this financial barrier, the college waived tuition for the first semester of the first co-hort.

The first cohort is graduating in December 2019 and a second cohort is tentatively planned for September 2020, based on securing funding. The first cohort started with 15 students – the majority female. All students were from the Northern Island, with a few originally coming from Coastal BC (Bella Bella). Of the original 15 students, 8-9 will graduate. The high attrition rate is attributed to a variety of factors, including: (1) the existing

heavy load of participants; (2) family responsibilities and childcare; (3) the added expense and logistics of travel (on top of tuition); and, (4) the challenge of on-line learning.

Feedback from program participants has been positive and the program participants have particularly enjoyed the face-to-face time and working with Elder mentors to further their knowledge. The face-to-face intensives have been identified as a key success of the program.

### **Curriculum Details**

To obtain a certificate, the following courses must be completed: (1) Effective Organizational Writing or Effective Organizational Communications; (2) Histories & Impacts of Colonization; (3) Governance & Organizational Structures; (4) Vision, Values, Philosophies & Ethics; (5) Politics, Policy & Practise; (6) Community Development & Planning; (7) Economic Development; (8) Human Resources; (9) Communications; and (10) Finance.

The 30-credit program is generally transferable to other post-secondary institutions.

### **5C. University of Victoria**

#### **Program Overview**

The University of Victoria offers a Diploma in Indigenous Community Development and Governance (ICDG). The ICDG Diploma has been offered since 2016. However, the program's predecessor, the Certificate in Administration of Aboriginal Government (CAAG), later called the Certificate in Administration of Indigenous Government (CAIG) program, was operational for many years, dating back to the early 1990s.

The new ICDG program was developed in consultation with First Nation leaders, Elders, communities and potential students. Feed-back during the development of the program included the desire for a rigorous diploma, as well as transferable credits.

The 11-course diploma<sup>14</sup> is delivered part-time through a blended model, with course-work being completed on-line and face-to-face learning taking place throughout the duration of the program. The program is two years in length, with two courses being completed per semester. The week-long face-to-face intensives take place in Victoria three times throughout the program.

The program emphasizes content that is relevant to First Nations and brings in Elders and Indigenous Speakers during the week-long intensives. The program is also distinct from the other First Nation public administration programs because of its focus on upper level (300 and 400) course-work.

Students are typically already working when they undertake this program. With the students already working and having child-care and family responsibilities, there has been some attrition. As the program is delivered on

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<sup>14</sup> Each course is 1.5 units (except for one). The 1.5 unit courses at the University of Victoria are the equivalent to what most other institutions would call their 3.0 credit courses, based on the number of hours in the classroom per week.

a part-time basis, students who take the program are not eligible for funding through their communities nor for scholarships or bursaries.

The program graduated its first cohort of eight students, in 2018. The program started with 13 students but lost five to attrition. The second cohort will have twenty students and has enrolled students from across Canada. Of these, about half are from British Columbia with the remaining students coming from: Saskatchewan; Manitoba; Quebec; Ontario and the Northwest Territories.

### **Curriculum Details**

To obtain the diploma, students must complete the following courses: (1) Skills Workshop and Orientation; (2) Governance in indigenous Communities; (3) Communications in Indigenous Governments & Organizations; (4) Lands, Resources & Economic Development; (5) Strategic Planning & Implementation; (6) Financial Management in Indigenous Governments & Organizations; (7) Human Resource Management in Indigenous Organizations; (8) Managing Change for Effective & Social & Community Development; (9) Indigenous Research & Project Management; (10) Leadership in Indigenous Communities & Governments; (11) Intergovernmental Relations: Working with Others; and, (12) Capstone for Indigenous Governments & Organizations.

Course credits are generally transferable to other Universities. The diploma currently “ladders” into the Bachelor of Public Administration offered by Thompson Rivers University.

### **5D. University of Northern British Columbia**

#### **Program Overview**

The First Nation Public Administration certificate offered by the University of Northern British Columbia is offered through general classes available to all undergraduate students and is not a cohort model. The courses are offered through a variety of departments across the University. Statistics for the number of graduates who received this certificate were not available at the time of writing.

The certificate does not have a program manager to oversee or promote the program and does not receive government funding.

#### **Curriculum Details**

On the university website, the 30-credit certificate indicates the following courses would be required: (1) Financial Accounting; (2) Macroeconomics; (3) Writing & Communication Skills; (4) Research Writing; (5) the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada; (6) Contemporary Challenges Facing Aboriginal Communities; (7) Aboriginal Resource Planning; (8) Law & Indigenous Peoples; (9) Contemporary Political Issues; and, (10) Canadian Government & Politics. Each course is 3.0 credits and may be applied to a degree.

## 6. COMMON THEMES

In speaking with the administrators and professors about the programs, several themes began to emerge. Some of the theme areas were in areas that are described as “unquantifiable” successes. For example, the impact of having trained administrators working in a First Nation community, or having former students return to teach in their programs. Other themes emerged relating to the difficulties experienced in funding, departmental capacity and student attrition.

### 6A. Program Successes

Key successes of the programs include: (1) content that is relevant to First Nations; (2) the benefits of a having a cohort and face-to-face instruction; and, (3) transferability and laddering of accredited programs.

#### **Relevant Content**

The First Nation public administration programs in BC are of a high calibre and the curriculum has been designed to be relevant to First Nations. All three operational programs invested considerable time in consulting with Elders, leadership, First Nations and potential students to develop useful and culturally appropriate content. The programs also work to foster connections with Elders and bring in Indigenous speakers and instructors.

#### **Cohort Model**

The cohort model has been a significant success for these programs. The cohort model is invaluable for building a network and providing supports while completing the program. The cohorts also help to foster connections across communities. Students in the cohort are brought together for face-to-face intensives in two of the programs, while the NVIT program is delivered directly in the community. All administrators and professors interviewed stressed the strength of the in-person learning sessions as being key to the success of their program.

#### **Transferability**

The ability to allow students to earn credit towards a degree is an extremely important component of these programs. Post-secondary institutions indicated that in their consultations for program development, accredited and transferable programs were strongly preferred. All the programs provide for university transfer credit, and in the case of the University of Victoria, their diploma ladders in to the public administration degree offered by Thompson Rivers University.

### 6B. Program Challenges

Key challenges of the programs include: (1) lack of base-funding by post-secondary institutions; (2) departmental capacity to expand and maintain programs hinges on year-to-year funding dollars; and, (3) high student attrition rates.

### **Base-Funding**

As none of the First Nations public administration programs are base-funded by the universities or college, the programs rely on a combination of funding to keep going. Funding sources have included: (1) federal and provincial government program funding; (2) the Vancouver Foundation; (3) the Victoria Foundation; and private donors. All cohort programs indicated they had received some government program funding, whether to get the program up and running or to continue its operation.

The difficulty in developing and maintaining a successful First Nations public administration program has been pronounced. One post-secondary administrator emphasized that the lack of base funding needs to be underscored and that to be seen as a “side program with soft funding has severe limitations”.

### **Fluctuating Program Capacity**

Capacity to expand the programs, or in some cases even keep them running, has been a challenge. Not having sufficient funding means there is often no program coordinator and the program is coordinated “off the corner of someone’s desk”. The lack of a multi-year funding model has hindered the development and renewal of the programs. Having to seek funding renewal every year does not allow the administrators to plan long term or build long-term student recruitment. When funding has been available to support a program coordinator, the programs move forward. However, funding is needed on an ongoing basis to continue the momentum.

A disconnect on the timing of funding was also identified. Several of the programs indicated the timing of some program dollars did not always allow adequate time to recruit students. Students themselves also need to plan ahead and receive acceptance to a program before requesting educational dollars from their First Nation, as well.

### **High Attrition Rate**

Two of the programs have experienced high attrition rates. The high attrition rate is generally attributed to the heavy load that the students are undertaking on top of existing career and family/child responsibilities.

In the case of the UVic and North Island College programs, almost all of the students are women. Program participants are generally working full-time and also have children and family obligations. Child-care arrangements are also needed for travel to the face-to-face intensives.

Financial barriers for travel expenses and tuition are also barriers to completion.

**Draft July 03, 2019**

**Other Programs of Interest**

**Vancouver Island University – Business Fundamentals for Aboriginal Communities**

The Vancouver Island University offers a 24-credit certificate program titled, Business Fundamentals for Aboriginal Communities. The certificate includes eight courses: (1) Introduction to Business; (2) Principles of Management; (3) Intro to College Algebra 1; (4) Intro to Marketing; (5) Intro to Economics; (6) Financial Accounting 1; (7) University Writing & Research and, (8) Student Success or Indigenous Learning & Recognition Portfolio.

**Simon Fraser University: Executive MBA in Indigenous Business and Leadership**

The 25-month program is geared towards mid-career professionals and includes 30-35 days each year of face-to-face intensives. The curriculum focuses on: entrepreneurship and business development; building capacity of people and organizations; sustainable, cultural and environmental stewardship; principled leadership and governance.<sup>15</sup>

**College of the Rockies: Business Management: Aboriginal Financial Mgmt.**

This two-year program is geared towards students who wish to pursue a financial career in Aboriginal organizations. Required courses are: Accounting 1; Strategy and Decisions; Micro-economics; English Composition; Finite Mathematics; Accounting 2; Advanced Professional Communications; Computer Applications in Business; Macroeconomics; Statistics; Business Law; Aboriginal History & Developments; Managerial Finance; Intermediate Accounting; Management Accounting 1; Quantitative Methods; Managerial Finance 2; Intermediate Accounting 2; Management Accounting 2; Aboriginal Ethics Case Study; Aboriginal Human & Fiscal Issues. This is a 63-credit program, with 9 of the credits being taken through partnership with AFOA.

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<sup>15</sup> Source: <https://beedie.sfu.ca/graduate/executive-mba/emba-ibl/about/curriculum/>