

A group of six people are paddling a traditional black canoe with red and orange designs on a calm lake. The canoe is in the foreground, and the water reflects the sky and the people. In the background, there are green forested hills and large, snow-capped mountains under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. A dark red semi-transparent box is overlaid on the upper right portion of the image, containing white text.

Aboriginal Student Support at Northwest Community College 2016 – 2017

NORTHWEST
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



To honour their accomplishments, new NWCC graduates were drummed into the theatre by Gitlaxdax Drummers at the 2016 convocation ceremony.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Programs and Courses with Aboriginal Focus	2
Administration of Education Policy	2
Centre of Learning Transformation	3
Creative Programming and Curriculum Development	4
Pedagogy and Course Content	7
Training Partnerships and Community Engagement	8
Student Supports	11
Team Approach	11
Cultural and Spiritual Activities	12
Additional Supports	12
Aboriginal Service Plan (ASP) Funding	17
Fostering a Culture of Respect	18
Representation	18
Cultural Awareness	19
Conclusion	21
Appendix A: In the Context of Key Documents	24
Appendix B: In-community Courses and Training Partnerships	30
Appendix C: Detailed Course Descriptions	34

Cover image: NWCC students participating in the Kitsumkalum field school in 2016.

NWCC'S EDUCATION IS UNITY POLE

This contemporary totem pole was carved to recognize the importance of education to First Nations of the northwest, now and for future generations. Originally initiated to commemorate the 25-year anniversary of the College, the purpose and meaning of the project grew as we acknowledged the role of post-secondary education in the lives of First Nations people in the region. It symbolizes the *unity* felt by the Wet'suwet'en, Gitksan, Haisla, Talhtan, Nisga'a, Tsimshian, and Haida when it comes to meeting the educational needs of their people.

The first pole to be raised on the NWCC Terrace campus, it represents the four crests common to the northwest coast First Nations people: Wolf, Killer Whale, Raven and Eagle. The power of the pole is at the base, as it must support the rest of the pole. The Wolf crest holding a copper shield imbedded with a robin holds this prestigious position. The Terrace campus of NWCC sits on the traditional territory of the Kitsumkalum Wolf clan. This crest recognizes the power of the "People of the Robin" and the wolf phratry who have granted permission to erect this pole on their territories.

The "People of the Robin" supports the Killer Whale with a grizzly bear blowhole which is a coastal Tsimshian crest. This is followed by the Raven with a crow in the wing to acknowledge the Tahltan people. NWCC reaches out to the Charlottes and this is symbolized by the Haida Watchmen. The watchmen are holding a rainbow and a paddle. The rainbow is significant to the Nisga'a as it relates to a story of a flood and the Creator's promise to the Nisga'a of a time of peace and plenty. The paddle is a symbol relevant to the Gitksan and it refers to guidance and direction that a helmsman gives to a canoe. This paddle recognizes the leadership of our Chiefs and the unity that comes when a team canoes as one. Sitting on the top is the mighty Eagle, messenger from the Creator, this crest is common to all as a symbol of strength and good news. In the ovoid is a beaver to represent a crest particular to the Wet'suwet'en and Haisla.

This pole reflects the seven First Nations that reside in the northwest and take part in the education of the college. It symbolizes those who attend the college and the college's commitment to diversity and equality. It stands as a reminder that education is a goal that draws all nations together. It has taken a long time to come to completion and the efforts of all nations supporting it made it happen through a persistence of spirit that is symbolic of First Nations efforts to build a better tomorrow for the generations that follow.

Raised in November 2004, this pole was carved by students of the First Nations Artist-in-Residence program at NWCC, under the guidance of Master Tsimshian carver Heber Reece of the Gispudwada clan, from the village of Kitselas. NWCC gratefully acknowledges the students, hereditary chiefs and First Nations Council members who participated in this project:

Students: Wilbur Abrahams, Clifford R. Azak, Shirley Bolton, Clyde R. Brown, Trevor J. Reece, Brent W. Stephens, Charles R. Wesley, Sandra E. Wesley

NWCC First Nations Council: Chair Silimks (Irene Seguin) and the FNC Totem Pole Committee in addition to the member of the Council which includes the Education Administrators from all the Villages of the Seven Nations, Friendship Centres in NWCC catchment area, Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Society and the Metis Council, Education Council, NWCC president Stephanie Forsyth and NWCC First Nations Advisors.

Kitsumkalum Hereditary Chiefs: Alex Bolton, Charles Henry Jr., Wayne Robinson Sr., Gerald Wesley, Edward Henry, Alfred Johnson, Joe Mulwain and Vera Dudoward.

Master Carvers: Murphy O. Stanley Sr.; Heber T. Reece | Carvers: Murphy H. Stanley Jr.; Robert E. Stanley; Henry G. Reece



INTRODUCTION

This document represents a sincere first effort to summarize what Northwest Community College (NWCC) is doing to support Aboriginal student success. Many of these activities have become so naturalized in our college culture that it is easy to overlook what we have already achieved in terms of access, cross-cultural understanding and the indigenization of teaching and learning. But we cannot stop here. As a Canadian college we have an obligation to better understand our Aboriginal students' perspectives and support their educational goals. This document can serve as a basis for further discussion, collaboration, and growth for NWCC.

NWCC is committed to continually improving supports and educational offerings for Aboriginal students. We are also committed to fostering collaborative, positive partnerships with First Nations communities, because these partnerships are the foundation of cross-cultural understanding and student success.

There are three key documents that we referenced in the preparation of this report, in order to identify successes to this point. These documents are:

- *The NWCC Stepping Stones to Improved Relationships Action Plan*¹
- *The Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework and Action Plan: 2020 Vision for the Future*²

¹ http://www.nwcc.bc.ca/sites/default/files/content-files/first-nations-council/Stepping_Stones_to_Improved_Relationships_June%202013.pdf

² https://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal/docs/Aboriginal_Action_Plan.pdf

- *The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action*³

The tables in Appendix A outline descriptions of each of these documents, the relevant goals in each, and how those are being addressed at NWCC.

In order to provide a situational analysis of supports for Aboriginal student success, the body of this report is divided into three major areas where we are making an impact. These broad areas are as follows:

- Programs and courses with Aboriginal focus
- Student supports
- Fostering a culture of respect

Within these categories, we've highlighted the success we've had to date, which we hope will stimulate further discussions between First Nations Council and NWCC faculty and staff about our next steps.

³ http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf

ABORIGINAL STUDENTS AT NORTHWEST COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Northwest Community College (NWCC) was established in 1975 in Terrace, BC. It serves the Northwest region marked by the Haida Nation on the West, Wet'suwet'en on the East, Tahltan to the North, and the combined Nations of the Haisla (Kitamaat) and Henaaksiala (Kitlope) to the South. Aboriginal peoples comprise about 30% of the region's population, the highest among all BC college regions.

In 2016, 29% of NWCC students self-identified as Aboriginal (471 students). There are an additional 734 students that have not disclosed information about their cultural background. Based on statistics from the provincial K to 12 system, we estimate that about 50% of these individuals are also Aboriginal. Thus, the percentage of NWCC students that are Aboriginal is likely about 50% (838 students).

PROGRAMS AND COURSES WITH ABORIGINAL FOCUS

FIRST NATIONS COUNCIL: PARTNERS IN STUDENT SUCCESS

First Nations Council (FNC) was established in 1996 as a result of recommendations in the *Stepping Stones to Improved Relationships* document.*

FNC is comprised of representatives from the 27 First Nations band administrations and Aboriginal organizations within the College region, as well as representatives of Aboriginal institutes, student representatives and Elders.

FNC advises the College with respect to First Nations education and student support issues, initiatives, and aspirations.

*The full document can be reviewed at this link: http://www.nwcc.bc.ca/sites/default/files/content-files/first-nations-council/Stepping_Stones_to_Improved_Relationships_June%202013.pdf

There are several ways in which NWCC incorporates an Aboriginal focus into our academic programming: through administration of education policy, through creative curriculum development, and through training partnerships and community engagement.

Administration of Education Policy

Northwest Community College has two key groups that oversee education policy and course and program articulation: Education Council (EdCo) and the Aboriginal, Course, Program Articulation committee (ACPAC).

Education Council (EdCo)

Education Council (EdCo) is the advisory body to the NWCC Board of Governors on major institution-wide issues and educational policy. EdCo assists the College in achieving its mission of creating “positive futures through quality learning experiences in an inclusive and respectful environment.” EdCo members include both elected and appointed representatives of the administration, support staff, faculty, and student body. Ex-officio (non-voting) members include the NWCC President and the First Nations Council Chair.

In order to emphasize NWCC’s commitment to supporting Aboriginal student success and our collaboration with local First Nations communities, EdCo recently updated the course outline template for all new courses to include this statement:

“All NWCC courses acknowledge the traditional lands upon which we teach. Our classes support the

First Peoples Principles of Learning and recognize the relationship between the traditional cultures of our region and success of our students. We strive to provide an inclusive learning environment that respects diversity, tradition, and the values of each individual.”

All new programs or program changes which come to EdCo are first considered for approval at a meeting of the Aboriginal, Course, Program Articulation Committee (ACPAC).

Aboriginal, Course, Program Articulation Committee (ACPAC)

The Aboriginal, Course, Program Articulation Committee (ACPAC) was created to advise and guide NWCC in incorporating First Nations culture and knowledge into courses and programs.

For all new and revised programs and courses ACPAC will examine whether the course/program incorporates an appropriate degree of Aboriginal knowledge, culture, and/or pedagogy. If it does not, ACPAC will review, with the developer, how the course/program can include both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal knowledge, culture and/or pedagogy.

Should ACPAC recommend that the course/program incorporate additional Aboriginal knowledge, culture, and/or pedagogy, ACPAC will offer suggestions to the developer and will refer the developer to specific resources as identified by First Nations Council and supported through the Center of Learning

Transformation. When possible, ACPAC will also assign a mentor to guide and assist with curriculum development.

At present, the ACPAC committee composition includes three voting members from First Nations Council (FNC) and one Aboriginal student-voting member, as well as representatives from college faculties and relevant administrative departments. ACPAC conducts open meetings to encourage input from everyone; only members are eligible to vote.

ACPAC is guided in their considerations by policy and guidelines from FNC and NWCC's Center for Research and Learning Transformation.

Centre of Learning Transformation

The creation of the Centre of Learning Transformation (COLT) occurred in 2015. One of the mandates of the COLT is to focus on the indigenization of curriculum and pedagogy at Northwest Community College. In 2016, the Dean of the COLT facilitated dialogue sessions with First Nations Council to understand community priorities for Northwest Indigenous pedagogy.

After the retirement of the Dean in August 2016, Carrie Nolan, PhD, took over the portfolio. She is currently getting up to speed on the work done so far and will continue to move it forward in 2017.

FIRST PEOPLES PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING

- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.
- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).
- Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.
- Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.
- Learning recognizes the role of indigenous knowledge.
- Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.
- Learning involves patience and time.
- Learning requires exploration of one's identity.
- Learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission and/or in certain situations.

Source: <http://teach.educ.ubc.ca/files/2015/08/Jan-Hare-FPPL-2015.pdf>



Creative Programming and Curriculum Development

All programs and courses listed in this section contain lecture time dedicated to Aboriginal people in Canada and globally, including colonization and the effects of colonization on domestic, social, political, and economic systems and issues.

In collaboration with First Nations Council and First Nations communities, NWCC has developed programs connected to Northwest Coast culture, and the social, political, environmental and economic values and realities of these communities.

Field Schools

Field schools are a chance for students to earn university credit and the opportunity to experience northwest BC's rich history, cultural diversity and environment. These intensive field schools incorporate a full semester of learning into just a few weeks. Field schools allow students to experience local First Nations culture while developing an appreciation for a wide variety of geomorphological processes and landscapes.

- **The Kitsumkalum Field School** is a fantastic way for students to learn in the outdoors and improve their field research skills. Working with a team of students, instructors and members of Kitsumkalum Band, learners experience the culture and environment that make our region so unique.
- **The People of the Skeena Field School** gives students the opportunity to immerse themselves in the rich culture and history of the Gitksan people. They learn cultural practices and shared knowledge while preparing smoked salmon on the river banks of a spectacular outdoor classroom.

- **The Stewart & Telegraph Creek Field School** provides the opportunity for students to go on an adventure to the Grand Canyon of the Stikine River, observe grizzly bears and study volcanic and glacial landscapes in one of the most amazing places on earth. They experience first-hand the impacts of climate change and development on the landscape, ecology, culture, and future of the First Nations in this area.
- **The Haida Gwaii Field School** includes a five-day field trip to Haida Gwaii where the unique biology of the island ecosystem is studied and where students are immersed in the traditional knowledge and practice of the Haida culture. The biology component focuses on the invertebrate phyla in the local coastal marine environment. The anthropology component allows students to review the development of Traditional Knowledge study within Anthropology, consider social applications, resource management, ethics, and be introduced to local systems of knowledge and practice. Through experiential learning, students become familiar with alternative cultural ways of viewing and relating to the environment.
- **NEW! Relationships and Language: Truth and Reconciliation in Northwestern BC Field School** is a newly proposed opportunity for May and June 2017. The target audience for this program is Aboriginal youth between the ages of 18-29, potentially from across Canada, with a portion of the students from our College region. While Aboriginal youth are the target audience, interested applicants from any background may be accepted. The field school will consist of three main themes: Early relationships between First Nations people and European newcomers; language restoration and

revitalization; reconciliation through relationship building and understanding. With a focus on land-based and experiential learning, the field school will include visits to five First Nations communities. Students will engage with the Elders and leaders in each community, working closely with fluent speakers and people committed to revitalizing languages. They will also visit cultural centres and historical sites.

Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art

The Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art brings all nations together in the pursuit of higher education, and sets new standards for aspiring artists. It is the only school of its kind in Canada, focusing on traditional First Nations Pacific Northwest Coast art, with the view of developing skills in fine art.

First Nations Fine Arts (FNFA) is a vibrant, successful two-year diploma program instructed and mentored by world-renowned artists Dempsey Bob (Tahltan/Tlingit), Stan Bevan (Tahltan/Tlingit/Tsimshian), Ken McNeil (Tahltan/Tlingit/Nisga'a), and Dean Heron (Kaska/Tlingit). The program includes field trips to important cultural events and sites, museums and galleries. Visiting artists, dignitaries and cultural advocates enhance the learning environment with their knowledge, wisdom and experience. Students mount a number of public art exhibits each year to hone the skills required by professional artists to display, promote and sell their own creative work.

Students begin with the fundamentals of two-dimensional Northwest Coast art design, drawing and painting basics, followed by building and using traditional tools, and traditional carving techniques. Students carve a number of pieces to build their proficiency. These include small- to medium-sized



Through experiential learning, during the Haida Gwaii field school, students become familiar with alternative cultural ways of viewing and relating to the environment.



The Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art is the only school of its kind in Canada, focusing on traditional First Nations Pacific Northwest Coast art, with the view of developing skills into fine art.

plaques, spoons, portrait masks, and bowls. All students are expected to participate in carving legacy projects that will remain at NWCC campuses and make the College campuses more welcoming and supportive of First Nations learners.

Students can opt for a one-year certificate or complete two years of study to earn a diploma. Students who complete the First Nations Fine Arts Diploma with a GPA of 3.0 or better will be eligible for acceptance into third year of the Bachelor of Fine Arts (Visual or General Fine Arts major) degree program at Emily Carr University of Art + Design.

Through the Freda Diesing School, NWCC also offers the Haida Fine Arts program on Haida Gwaii.

School of Exploration and Mining (SEM)

In partnership with the Smithers Exploration Group and the Province of BC, SEM develops and delivers essential courses and programs targeted for the minerals industry.

In partnership with Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC), NWCC is offering Workforce Exploration Skills Training (WEST), a 40-day training program at a remote camp.

SEM works with the guidance of a First Nations' Elder on campus. The Elder lives in camp, available day and night to provide emotional, social, and cultural guidance and support to participants during their stay. Student feedback has been positive. The Elder's presence assists with the transition to being away from family and community. During the evenings, participants spend time with the Elder taking part in cultural activities, stories, and teachings. Seventy-

two percent of SEM's nearly 1300 graduates are First Nations.

Pedagogy and Course Content

Outside of indigenous specific programs described above, indigenous pedagogy is at the discretion of our faculty members. Therefore, indigenous pedagogy varies within courses and programs. Faculty may invite First Nations community members into the classroom or take field trips to First Nations communities. Many support and respect First Nations cultural expectations, discuss Aboriginal issues and current events, participate in cultural awareness seminars, and endeavor to be sensitive and inclusive in the design and delivery of their courses.

Content

Below is a list of courses that specifically cover experiences of Aboriginal Peoples of Canada. Detailed course descriptions are included as Appendix C.

First Nations Studies Course Offerings

- FNST 101 Introduction to First Nations Studies
- FNST 120 Aboriginal Languages: Preservation and Revitalization
- FNST 200 Aboriginal Community Research
- FNST 210 Aboriginal Health: Community Wellness and Healing
- First Nations Studies 033 Introduction to Aboriginal Health Care (Health Access)
- Provincial First Nations Studies 050

Early Childhood Education (ECE)

All ECE courses are experiential in design. They include work with Aboriginal children and families, provide relationship building opportunities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students and include visits with Elders from local communities.

Women's Studies

- Women's Studies 101 History of Women in Canada
- Women's Studies 102 Introduction to Women's Studies
- Women's Studies 203 Women's Health Issues in Canada

Future Course Offerings being Considered

As a college, we hope to reinvigorate the following First Nations Language Classes if there is sufficient interest from students.

- GITK 101 and 102 Introduction to the Gitksanimx Language 1 and 2
- HAID 101 and 102 Introduction to the Haida Language 1 and 2
- HAIS 101 and 102 Introduction to the Haisla Language 1 and 2
- MICH 101 and 102 Introduction to the Michif (Metis) Language 1 and 2
- SMAL 101, 102, 203, 201, 202 Introduction to the Sm'algayax Language 1, 2, 3 and Intermediate Sm'algayax Language 1 and 2
- TAHL 101 and 102 Introduction to the Tahltan Language 1 and 2.

“In order for education to be meaningful to First Nations, it must be connected to the cultural, political, social, and economic values and realities of First Nations.”

—First Nations Council Stepping Stones to Improved Relationships Action Plan, 1995

FIRST NATIONS ACCESS COORDINATORS (FNACs)

FNACs are a first point of contact for both First Nations students and First Nations Education Coordinators throughout the region.

FNACs provide a welcoming environment for Aboriginal students. They help with the transition to NWCC and provide economic, emotional, and social supports to ensure Aboriginal students have what they need to be successful at NWCC.

FNACs recruit students, coordinate and host a range of cultural events, activities and workshops.

FNACs are critical in making sure that Aboriginal students at NWCC have solutions to any barriers they are facing to their education. FNACs have been known to go to great lengths to help students resolve any number of issues, including the following: living accommodations, emergency grants, access to community and college food banks, student BC identification, transportation, funding applications and liaising with First Nations Band Education Coordinators.

Training Partnerships and Community Engagement

Through the Ministry of Advanced Education (AVED), NWCC is funded to supply in-community training through partnerships with Aboriginal organizations. These training opportunities are designed to meet needs specific to communities, enabling Aboriginal people to benefit from region-specific economic opportunities and industry needs. It also means the learners can remain close to their family and community supports.

Because these training programs are developed in partnership with community groups, they are responsive and relevant to community needs. Our partners in community programming have included local economic development agencies, First Nations governments, and First Nations education societies.

The more that NWCC staff work with First Nations communities, the better we become at developing appropriate programs and delivery models. For example, NWCC is working with the Kyah Wiget Education Society, in Moricetown, to deliver a University and College Entrance Program (UCEP). Aboriginal students are able to take university credit courses in their community, which prepares them to enter diploma and or degree programs.

Workforce Training and Contract Services

Additional in-community training is available through NWCC's Workforce Training and Contract Services (WTCS). Training can be customized to the needs of First Nations communities and delivered in community, on the job site, or in our classrooms. Mobile training units make it possible for NWCC to train students and workers directly in their home communities and on job sites. This saves students, workers, and industry time and money as it eliminates

the need to travel to and from a campus. A list of recently offered in-community courses and training partnerships is included in Appendix B.

Responsive and Relevant Programming for First Nations Communities

In 2016, First Nations Access Coordinators began holding face-to-face meetings with Education Coordinators from all of the First Nations communities in our college region. These meetings focused on the communities' priorities and the responsiveness of NWCC programming to the needs of First Nations communities. Recently, eight First Nations communities expressed the need to support community members in getting their drivers' licenses. NWCC responded by partnering with Industry to buy a new car and offer Graduated Drivers' Training for all the First Nations communities in the Hazelton area.

Intellectual Property

By acknowledging the intellectual property rights of First Nations, the college is building partnerships in the spirit of trust and collaboration. Therefore, the following clause forms a part of Northwest Community College's partnership agreements and client contracts for the delivery of training and educational programs with Aboriginal agencies and/or First Nations communities.

"There is no intention under this Agreement that any cultural intellectual property of the Contract Party used in the Program or to administer the Program will be transferred or assigned to NWCC or licensed to NWCC for any use outside of the Program and NWCC expressly waives any rights to the cultural intellectual property of the Contract Party used in the Program or to administer the Program."



The Kitsumkalum field school is a fantastic way for students to learn in the outdoors and improve their field research skills.



NWCC students can participate in various cultural and spiritual activities, such as cedar bark weaving.



FNAC, Annette Sorenson, with Gitlaxdax Drummers at the 2016 convocation ceremony.



Having Elders on our campuses helps provide a supportive and welcoming environment for Aboriginal students at NWCC.

STUDENT SUPPORTS

Student supports are instrumental in increasing enrollment, retention, and success rates for all students. A staffing structure at NWCC has been developed to better serve the specific needs of our Aboriginal students. To the right, is a portion of the NWCC organizational diagram showing the staff that we have dedicated to delivering the services outlined in this document.

Since the hiring of First Nations Access Coordinators in 1995, Aboriginal student services and community relations have evolved. As of 2016, we now have Ali McDougall in the role of Aboriginal Relations and Executive Advisor to the President's Office. We also have Bridie O'Brien in the role of Associate Dean, Aboriginal Learning Transformation. This team approach means that all levels of college administration are able to collaborate and contribute to Aboriginal student success.

Team Approach

The key roles and responsibilities illustrated on the organizational diagram are as follows:

Aboriginal Relations and Executive Advisor to the President's Office

Responsibilities:

- To build and maintain community partnerships and relationships with First Nations leaders
- To assist with the *Stepping Stones* document, ensuring goals, objectives, and actions are monitored and implemented
- To develop and monitor a First Nations Protocol document
- To work collaboratively with the Associate Dean, Aboriginal Learning Transformation

Associate Dean, Aboriginal Learning Transformation

Responsibilities:

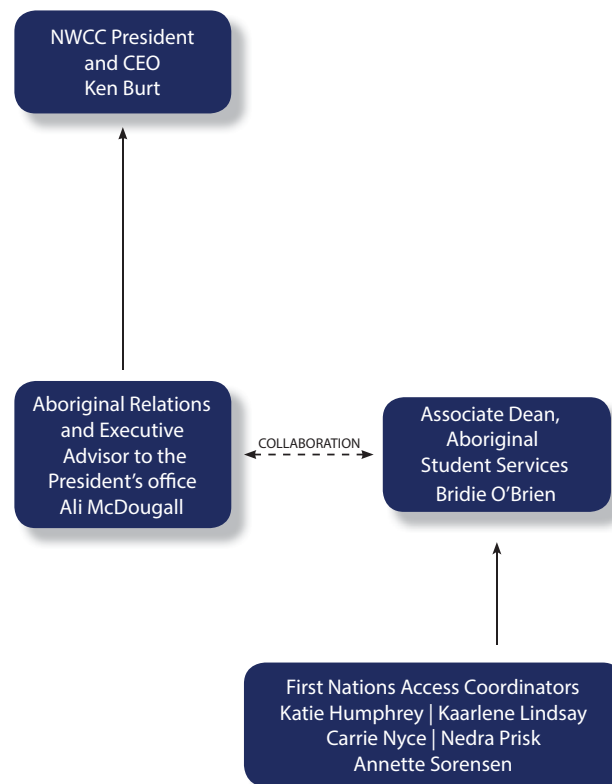
- To lead the development and implementation of services that will enhance Aboriginal students' cultural, academic, personal, and social development at NWCC
- To supervise First Nations Access Coordinators
- To develop and maintain collaborative relationships with local communities and partners
- To act as first-line supervisor for campus staff and students, campus operations, and administration at the Hazelton campus

First Nations Access Coordinators (FNAC)

Responsibilities:

- Be the first point of contact for both Aboriginal students and First Nations education coordinators
- Provide a welcoming and inclusive environment for Aboriginal students
- Assist Aboriginal students in the transition to NWCC
- Provide support in accessing economic, emotional, and social resources
- Ensure Aboriginal students have what they need, to be successful at NWCC
- Undertake Aboriginal student recruitment, when appropriate
- Coordinate and host cultural and spiritual events, activities, and workshops

This segment of the NWCC organizational chart outlines the key roles that are in place to support Aboriginal student success.





Aboriginal student exposure to and participation in cultural and spiritual activities is one of the top priorities for First Nations communities.

Cultural and Spiritual Activities

Aboriginal student exposure and participation in cultural and spiritual activities is one of the top priorities for First Nations communities. In a 2016 student survey, Aboriginal students said they chose to attend NWCC for the following top three reasons: integration of First Nations culture (20 percent), small class sizes (20 percent), and costs (18 percent).

Cultural and spiritual activities that take place at the Houston, Smithers, Hazelton, Terrace, and/or Prince Rupert campuses include the following:

- Regalia design and sewing (traditional button blankets, vests and shawls, rawhide moccasins and gloves)
- Drum making
- Northwest Coast art
- Collecting of native plants and roots to make traditional medicines
- Moose hair tufting
- Birch bark baskets
- Woven cedar hats and baskets
- Talking circles
- Student-led traditional parenting club (Prince Rupert)
- Aboriginal Day celebrations
- Traditional dancing
- Beading
- Preparing traditional foods
- Learning feasts
- Elder's on campus/Elder's Teas

To ensure NWCC is offering activities that are of interest to students, FNACs began to use a participant feedback form in October 2016. The form includes a space to suggest ideas for activities, events, speakers and Elders that the students would enjoy. Results from

the feedback form will be used to schedule events throughout the school year, thus ensuring cultural and spiritual activities are meeting the needs and interests of our Aboriginal students.

Smudging

At the Terrace campus, students use Waap Galts'ap (the community longhouse), to share in organized individual or group spiritual (smudging) ceremonies. Students living in the residences may also smudge in the residences. Smudging is a traditional belief and ritual to cleanse one's aura, self-energy, luck, etc. using smoke from smoldering plants or roots.

Community Outreach

All campuses are encouraged to partner with other organizations to promote culture, tolerance and acceptance. Recently, the Houston campus volunteered to be the lead agency for the Organizing Against Racism and Hate (OARH) initiative, funded through Embrace BC. Racial tension in Houston can be targeted towards an increasing urban Aboriginal population in the community. Free bentwood box making workshops were hosted in Houston to bring Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people together, bridge the divide between age groups, and invite businesses and organizations in the community to participate. Working on bentwood boxes together through the leadership of a First Nations artist provided a non-threatening mechanism to grow cultural understanding. Bentwood boxes made by organizations can serve as a reminder to those organizations of the need to be inclusive.

Additional Supports

More than just cultural and spiritual activities and events, FNACs are critical players in making sure that Aboriginal students at NWCC have solutions to





The People of the Skeena Field School gives students the opportunity to immerse themselves in the rich culture and history of the Gitksan people.

any barriers they are facing to their education. FNAC supports include assisting in finding accommodations, procuring emergency grants, accessing community and college food banks, acquiring student identification, securing transportation, completing funding applications, and liaising with First Nations Band Education Coordinators.

Aboriginal Emergency Assistance Funding

BC's Ministry of Advanced Education (AVED) provides grant funding to NWCC for the purpose of assisting Aboriginal students with unforeseen and urgent financial needs that may affect their ability to continue their studies. First Nations Access Coordinators are responsible for conducting student interviews to determine need and distribute the grant. The maximum amount an individual student may receive in each academic year is \$700. NWCC provides AVED with annual reports indicating the number of students who received funding and the total amount disbursed. For the period May to November 2016, 40 Aboriginal Emergency Assistance grants were distributed to Aboriginal students throughout the region to help them continue with their studies.

Scholarships and Bursaries

The NWCC College Advancement department supports Aboriginal students with opportunities to apply for scholarships and bursaries.

Current bursaries and awards specifically for Aboriginal students at NWCC are the Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art Bursary and the Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art Mature Student Award.

In addition, all students at NWCC have access to numerous local, provincial, and national scholarships, bursaries, and awards. Aboriginal students are encouraged and supported to apply for these as well.

Transition from High School into College

NWCC staff and faculty work hard to make the transition from high school into college as seamless as possible using various strategies including:

- Partnership programs with Secondary Schools (ACE IT programs and dual credit opportunities)
- Career fairs, Test-Drive orientation, and campus tours
- Brochures and website
- Academic assessments
- Education plans customized for each student upon request
- Study- and life-skills workshops

When students know what to expect and where to go for help, they are much more likely to make the transition to post-secondary education successfully.

“It’s great to see how NWCC does so much to support Aboriginal students.”

—Brianna Gibson,
Metis Employment and Training
Client Support Worker

Aboriginal Service Plan (ASP) Funding

BC's Ministry of Advanced Education (AVED) established the goal of increasing the number of credentials awarded to Aboriginal learners by 75 percent by 2020. Early indicators are that this goal will be successful; there was an increase of 27 percent between 2009 and 2015. To achieve this benchmark and the other goals

laid-out in the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework and Action Plan: 2020 Vision for the Future¹, AVED provides funding through the Aboriginal Service Plan (ASP). NWCC received a portion of these funds which we use for a number of important student success programs. These programs are outlined in the table below.

¹ https://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal/docs/Aboriginal_Action_Plan.pdf

PROGRAM FUNDED THROUGH ASP FUNDING	VALUE FOR IMPROVING ABORIGINAL STUDENT SUCCESS
Top-ups for FNAC salaries to bring them from part-time to full-time employees	First Nations Access Coordinators have more available hours to assist students and prospective students, helping to remove barriers to successful completion of programs.
Cultural and spiritual activities	<p>Hosting cultural and spiritual activities, social functions, and learning opportunities to foster a welcoming and inclusive campus environment for Aboriginal students. This helps encourage students to continue and complete their programs of study.</p> <p>These also provide opportunities to bring together Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, promoting cross-cultural understanding on our campuses and in our communities.</p>
Elders-in-residence	With culturally-appropriate support and guidance, students are better able to face challenges. Connecting with Elders helps students keep on track with their studies and feel they are part of a welcoming and inclusive environment.
Cultural Awareness Training	<p>In 2015, at the request of the Board of Governors, a cultural awareness workshop was held during the joint meeting between the Board and First Nations Council. This workshop helped strengthen the collaboration between the two groups.</p> <p>The Board of Governors and NWCC management attended two half-day workshops called Indigenous Awareness Training in December 2016.</p>
Test-Drive	Test-Drive is a bridging program and recruitment opportunity to introduce high-school students to college life. Prospective students have the opportunity to test-drive college classes, participate in social activities and stay overnight in the residences, so that they get a sense of what the benefits and challenges will be and they can prepare.
Development of programming partnerships with Aboriginal communities and organizations	Strengthening partnerships and collaboration to provide more relevant, responsive, and respectful course content and in-community programming .
Aboriginal Community Liaison	Prior to the staffing reorganization for Aboriginal student services and Aboriginal relations, the College employed an Aboriginal Community Liaison. This role existed for two years. Upon completion of the mandate in 2016, some of the ongoing responsibilities were allocated to the FNACs as part of their revised roles.



An ASP funded program, Test-Drive is an opportunity for grade 11 and 12 students to try out college life for a weekend, to help prepare them for the transition to post-secondary education.

FOSTERING A CULTURE OF RESPECT

NWCC CAMPUSES ARE SITUATED ON TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES

Hazelton – Gitksan

Kitimat – Haisla

Masset – Haida

Prince Rupert – Tsimshian

Skidigate – Haida

Smithers – Wet'suwet'en

Terrace – Tsimshian

Representation

Having Aboriginal voices at the tables where decisions are made and engaging in authentic listening are integral to building a culture of respect. A culture of respect results in a learning institution where Aboriginal students can feel welcome and inspired.

To this end, NWCC has shaped administrative protocols to make sure that there is representation of Aboriginal community members and students where issues are discussed and decisions made.

First Nations Council (FNC)

First Nations Council (FNC) was established in 1996, in response to the *Stepping Stones to Improved Relationships Action Plan*¹. FNC has 27 members including First Nations Bands and Aboriginal organizations. The mandate of the advisory council is: “to regularly liaise with and advise the College with respect to First Nations education and student support issues, initiatives and aspirations”². Communication links have been implemented through regular reports from the Chair of FNC to the Board of Governors. FNC’s focus is to develop policy recommendations based on the educational issues and strategies of First Nations communities to assist in increasing student success rates within the NWCC region. FNC policy recommendations focus on student advocacy, program promotion, curriculum design, cultural issues and content, program and education service evaluation, and assist NWCC in improving

1 http://www.nwcc.bc.ca/sites/default/files/content-files/first-nations-council/Stepping_Stones_to_Improved_Relationships_June%202013.pdf

2 Northwest Community College Board of Governors Meeting Minutes 1996

relationships with First Nations communities in the Northwest region.

The *Stepping Stones to Improved Relationships Action Plan* goals and objectives are a standing agenda item at FNC meetings. NWCC employees, particularly the Aboriginal Relations and Executive Advisor to the President, the Associate Dean, Aboriginal Learning Transformation, the Dean of the Centre of Learning Transformation, and the First Nations Access Coordinators, regularly attend FNC meetings and work collaboratively with FNC. See Appendix A for more detail on the Action plan goals and progress.

FNC meets face-to-face every six weeks, providing an opportunity for NWCC to collect feedback and collaborate with the 27 First Nations. In 2016, FNC implemented ‘FNC Community-based meetings’, where all FNC Members go to specific First Nations communities to have the meetings and learn about the culture and heritage of the hosts.

NWCC administratively supports the work of the FNC by assigning certain council duties to the Executive Assistant to the Board and to the President’s Office. These include: coordinating attendance, travel costs and reimbursements, catering, meeting minutes, and ensuring correspondence is shared.

Aboriginal Service Plan Committee (ASPC)

The Aboriginal Service Plan Committee (ASPC) is a subcommittee of the FNC. The FNC Chair also chairs the ASPC. The ASPC oversees the criteria and selections of ASP Community Based Programming

funding. ASP funding is targeted to support Aboriginal student education both on and off campus. ASP community-based programming gives First Nations communities the opportunity to host NWCC programs in their home communities, increasing access to education for Aboriginal students. The ASPC administration support, meeting space, travel, and meals are NWCC base funded.

Aboriginal Student Representatives

One student is elected to represent Aboriginal students as a voting member on First Nations Council, for a term of one academic year. This Aboriginal student representative is nominated by five other recognized members of the student body attending NWCC at the same campus. Nominations and elections are held every autumn. The successful student candidate receives a \$750 stipend per quarter, from base funding, during his/her term.

There is also a First Nations Student voting member on the Aboriginal, Course, Program, Articulation Committee (ACPAC).

Representation on the Board of Governors

The *College and Institute Act* states that the composition of the Board of Governors will consist of 14 members (part 3, sec 9(1)). In 2012 it was mandated that at least one of these members be a First Nations representative. NWCC had met that requirement.

Representation at Education Council (EdCo)

The Chair of First Nations council is an ex-officio member of EdCo.

Representation at the Aboriginal, Course, Program, Articulation Committee (ACPAC)

ACPAC includes three members of First Nations Council and one First Nations student representative.

Aboriginal Employee Representation

FNC has expressed interest in an equitable representation of First Nations employees, to reflect the demographic of the Northwest region.

At present, there is no accurate way to determine the number of Aboriginal staff and/or faculty employed at NWCC. It is a contradiction of the Human Rights Act to request race and ethnicity information from personnel. However, NWCC is seeking ways to increase the number of Aboriginal employees. In 2015, in response to FNC requests, the NWCC Human Resources department began to include the following statement on job postings:

“NWCC provides quality learning experiences that help prepare our students for successful, positive futures. We celebrate the diversity of our northern and First Nations populations and reflect this diversity in our programs, services and workforce. In accordance with NWCC’s strategic plan, we encourage applications from First Nations individuals.”

NWCC is also working with First Nations Council to broaden notifications of job openings at NWCC within First Nations communities.

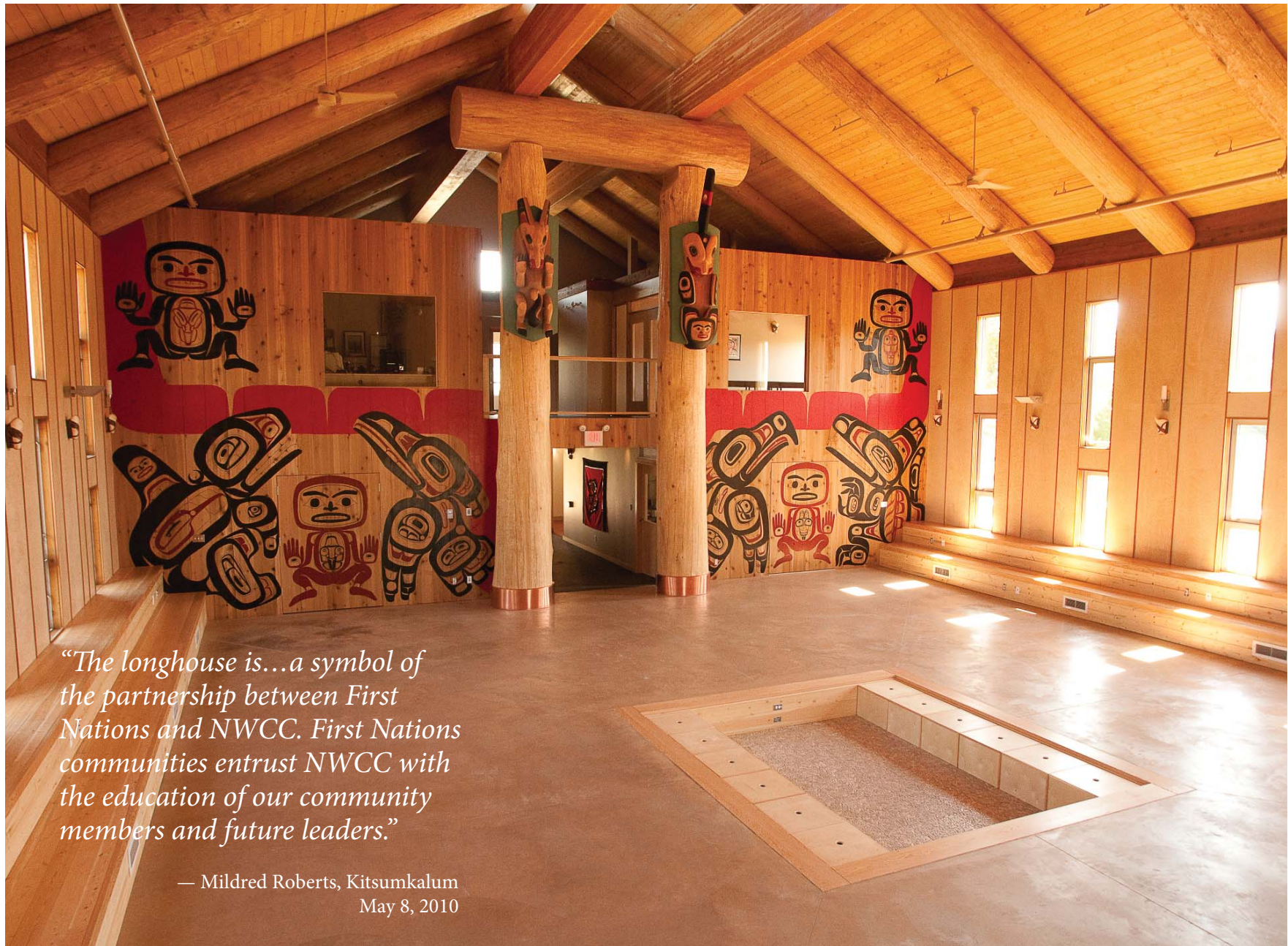
Cultural Awareness

The integration of Aboriginal culture into campus life is one of the top reasons that Aboriginal students selected NWCC, according to a 2016 student survey. Cross-cultural understanding is promoted in many ways that are part of our regular day-to-day work at the college. Some of these are outlined below.

Traditional Territory Acknowledgment

Northwest Community College campuses are located within the traditional territories of Northwest Coast First Nations. NWCC has committed to ensuring that the traditional territories of the respective First Nations are acknowledged prior to the opening for major public forums, functions, and meetings. A traditional welcome is also appropriate if the function has significance for Aboriginal people.

Territory acknowledgments are a recognition of Aboriginal rights and title over the First Nations respective traditional territories. NWCC invites Elders from the respective traditional territories where campuses are located to lead the welcoming and prayer for everyone at the special events.



“The longhouse is...a symbol of the partnership between First Nations and NWCC. First Nations communities entrust NWCC with the education of our community members and future leaders.”

— Mildred Roberts, Kitsumkalum
May 8, 2010

Totem Poles

NWCC has received the blessings of First Nations to raise traditional Totem Poles on the grounds at the Terrace, Hazelton, and Smithers Campuses.

At the Terrace campus the “Education is Unity Pole” symbolizes the unity that is felt by the Wet’suwet’en, Gitksan, Haisla, Tahltan, Nisga’a, Tsimshian and Haida First Nations when it comes to meeting the education needs of their people. The totem pole was raised November 12, 2004, on the traditional territory of the Kitsumkalum Laxgibuu Clan. It was the first totem pole raised by NWCC.

Two, 14-foot, contemporary totem poles were raised at the Hazelton campus on September 11, 2009. Commissioned by NWCC, the poles were carved by Hereditary Chief and Master Carver Delgamuukw (Earl Muldon), Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art Gitksan graduates Rick Wesley and Arlene Ness, both of the Anspayaxw community, with help from carver Dan Yunkws, of the Gitanmaax community.

At the Smithers campus, a 28-foot red cedar totem pole carved by local artists Ron Austin (holder of two chief names, Sggileygit and Dzii Ggot) and James Madam was raised in partnership with the Wet’suwet’en nation. The totem pole was raised September 23, 2011, on the traditional territory of the Wet’suwet’en First Nation.

In addition, each campus displays various Northwest Coast art pieces commissioned from First Nations master carvers and artists. Traditional button blankets, designed and sewn by NWCC students and Elders, are also on display at the Terrace, Hazelton, and Smithers campuses.

Signage

In partnership with FNC, traditional Tsimshian names were chosen for four major buildings at the Terrace campus. A celebration was held in the summer of 2003 to formally recognize these changes.

Former Name	Renamed	Tsimshian Name
Administration	Spruce	Waap Sa’mn
Trades	Cedar	Waap Amgam
Cafeteria	Birch	Waap Haawk
College Services	Jack Pine	Waap Sginiis

Waap Galts’ap - Community Longhouse

The Ministry of Advanced Education (AVED) has, in keeping with our shared goal, contributed capital infrastructure funding to selected colleges and universities to construct gathering space for Aboriginal students. NWCC, in collaboration with First Nations communities, designed and constructed Waap Galts’ap Community Longhouse.

Waap Galts’ap was endorsed by representatives of the Tsimshian Hereditary Chiefs, Elders of the Kitsumkalum, Kitselas Bands, and NWCC’s FNC. Waap Galts’ap is a gathering place for students, a space for College ceremonies, functions and celebrations, and a showcase for First Nations art. NWCC invited the public to share in and witness the grand opening of the longhouse constructed on the NWCC Terrace campus. The ceremony was held on May 8, 2010.

Longhouses were the first structural homes for Northwest Coast First Nations people. Each traditional longhouse would have had crests and carved totem poles which depicted the Clan or Waap

(Wilps) history, stories, and family, all symbolizing the connection First Nations people have with their history. The connection First Nations have to who they are and the stories told by their crests and totem poles is a spiritual one.

Waap Galts’ap is a testament to NWCC’s commitment to serving First Nations learners. It reinforces NWCC’s sincerity in striving to make NWCC a welcoming place for all learners.

Galts’ap Day

One day each year, all campuses are closed for Galts’ap Day, so management, staff and faculty can participate in a professional development day. Galts’ap Day rotates amongst inland college campuses and the agenda usually includes a cultural activity. Scheduled activities have included a tour of a historical First Nations village (Kitselas), creating Northwest Coast art, Northwest Coast Elders storytelling, traditional drum lessons, and tasting traditional foods.

Convocation Ceremony

In 2016, some new traditions were incorporated into the ceremony to highlight the uniqueness of the region. First, to honour their accomplishments, the graduates were drummed into the theatre by Gitlaxdax Drummers. Second, while other institutions typically open convocation by carrying in a mace, NWCC has introduced a paddle, designed and painted by Stan Bevan, Tahltan/Tlingit/Tsimshian master artist and instructor with the NWCC Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art.



NWCC is committed to continually improving supports and educational offerings for Aboriginal students. We are also committed to fostering collaborative, positive partnerships with First Nations communities, because these partnerships are the foundation of cross-cultural understanding and student success.

Community Engagement - Board and Management

The Board of Governors engages with the First Nations communities in the region in a variety of ways.

- Board meetings are rotated throughout each campus in the region.
- Community members are invited to receptions and luncheons before and after the Board meetings.
- The Board also holds annual joint meetings with FNC and extends an invitation to FNC to the Christmas luncheon with the Board, Union Chairs, EdCo, and Management.

In addition to these events, training workshops have been a focus. In 2015, at the request of the Board of Governors, a cultural awareness workshop was held during the joint meeting between the Board and First Nations Council. This workshop was an important step in strengthening the collaboration between the two groups.

CONCLUSION

This report is an analysis of the current state of support for Aboriginal students at Northwest Community College, and can be revisited in the future to determine progress and set new goals. NWCC will continue to support and nurture Aboriginal student success and build collaborative, positive partnerships with First Nations communities, because these partnerships are the foundation of that success.

NWCC's First Nations Council has maintained a steadfast message of inclusion and respect for more than 20 years and their dedication weaves itself throughout this entire report. We are grateful for their guidance and dedication as well as the dedication of the College staff, who go above and beyond, every day, to help students succeed.

APPENDIX A: IN THE CONTEXT OF KEY DOCUMENTS

As noted in the introduction, there are three key documents that we referenced in the preparation of this report, in order to identify successes to this point. These documents are the following:

- *The Stepping Stones to Improved Relationships Action Plan*
- *Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework and Action Plan: 2020 Vision for the Future.*
- *The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action*

In the tables below, you can find the goals identified in each document and related actions that NWCC has taken to meet these goals.

Alignment with Stepping Stones to Improved Relationships Action Plan

The first document referred to in creating this report is the *Stepping Stones to Improved Relationships Action Plan*. This plan reflects the many discussions that took place between First Nations people and NWCC representatives. It is by no means an exhaustive list, however, it does include the most pressing issues in education on the minds of First Nation communities in our region. This plan is now monitored by the President’s Office, in collaboration with First Nations Council (FNC) and is a regular agenda item at FNC meetings.

Key Goals	Actions undertaken to date
Relationship Between the College and the Communities; Understanding and Addressing Conflicting Expectations	
GOAL 1: Establish a Northwest First Nations Education Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established First Nations Council at NWCC, 1996
GOAL 2: Increase cultural awareness and sensitivity of College staff and personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2015, the Board of Governors participated in a cultural awareness workshop, held during the joint meeting between the Board and First Nations Council. • In December 2016, the board of Governors and NWCC management attended two half-day workshops on Indigenous Awareness Training. • Increased collaboration through creation of new positions: Aboriginal Relations and Executive Advisor to the President’s Office and Associate Dean, Aboriginal Learning Transformation. • Protocol document for College staff and instructors is in development .
GOAL 3: Develop effective pathways for communication between the college and the communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pathway through FNC and two new roles: Aboriginal Relations and Executive Advisor to the President’s Office and Associate Dean, Aboriginal Learning Transformation. • Aboriginal representation on major committees and Board of Governors. • Teaching partnerships. • FNACs maintaining ongoing relationships with First Nations Education coordinators.
GOAL 4: Develop programs in partnership with First Nations Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-community programming through ASP funding and Workforce Training . • Field Schools. • Campus orientations, cultural and spiritual activities and events.
GOAL 5: Review/access past relationships between Northwest Community College and the communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops to improve cross-cultural understanding. • HR goals.
GOAL 6: Review hiring practices and policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR statement of inclusion. • HR sharing job openings more widely.

Key Goals	Actions undertaken to date
Self-Government Initiatives	
GOAL 1: Jointly support, develop, and implement First Nations studies programs about the cultures of the Northwest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboratively developed programming. • ACPAC reviews of programs and course.
GOAL 2: Create and support ways to incorporate First Nations culture within the college	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural and spiritual activities on campus, supported with promotional materials. • Visible and authentic representation of First Nations culture on campuses.
Student Support	
GOAL 1: Improve student support services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time FNACs and the newly created Associate Dean, Aboriginal Learning Transformation role. • Aboriginal student representatives on committees and open student feedback opportunities
GOAL 2: Provide sufficient and appropriate space and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main floor of Waap Galts'ap, is available for student activities. • Spaces are provided on all campuses for general student gathering.
GOAL 3: Provide support for bridging and transitions	<p>Facilitating the transition from high school into college through various activities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships with secondary schools – ACE IT programs, dual credit, etc. • Career fairs, Test-Drive orientation, campus tours and orientations, brochures and website content. • Academic assessments. • Education Plans customized for each student, upon request.
GOAL 4: Address issues of education, curriculum and program development in a long-term systematic way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dean of Research and Learning Transformation consultations on pedagogy. • EdCo and ACPAC terms of reference.
GOAL 5: Include holistic approaches to education within structures and policies relating to First Nations education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dean of Research and Learning Transformation consultations on pedagogy. • EdCo and ACPAC terms of reference. • Field Schools.
GOAL 6: Listen to students with respect and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved cross-cultural understanding through training of staff and faculty. • Professional student counselling is available by referral from Student Services or any instructor. • Opportunities for students to participate in talking circles, tea with Elders, etc. • FNAC support and student feedback opportunities.
GOAL 7: Recognize the importance of family and community bonds and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-community training opportunities. • Opportunities for students to participate in field school learning from their own and others' communities. • Community involvement and/or experiential learning through some programs. • Activities including talking circles, tea with Elders, etc. • Regular information sharing between College administration and First Nations communities through Aboriginal Relations Advisor, Associate Dean, Aboriginal Learning Transformation, and FNC.
GOAL 8: Ensure that education for First Nations students is of high quality, with high expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EdCo and academic integrity policies govern education for all students including Aboriginal students.
GOAL 9: Include, in student support programs, processes that help non-aboriginal students gain understanding of First Nations students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course content. • Campus-wide cultural and spiritual activities. • HR working to make sure that Aboriginal people apply for open positions at the college to increase representation and understanding.

Alignment with Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework and Action Plan

The *Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework and Action Plan: 2020 Vision for the Future* was developed by the Ministry of Advanced Education (AVED). It is a plan for improving post-secondary opportunities and outcomes for First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples. It sets out a vision, principles and goals, informed by evidence-based policies and leading practices, to address systemic barriers and support systemic institutional change to support Aboriginal learners.

Key Goals related to NWCC	Actions undertaken to date
<p>GOAL 1: Systemic change means that the public post-secondary education system is relevant, responsive, respectful and receptive to Aboriginal learners and communities and relationships between public post-secondary institutions and Aboriginal communities are based on mutual respect.</p>	<p>Relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field Schools • Early Childhood Educator program with Aboriginal focus • Cultural and spiritual activities • In-community training <p>Responsive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-community programming, such as the UCEP in Moricetown, in community programs like driver training • First Nations Access Coordinators/Student Services Team • Partnerships with local governments, agencies, and industry <p>Respectful:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture of respect and inclusivity on committees, including First Nations Council, the Board of Governors and Education Council • Acknowledgment of traditional territories • First Nations signage at Terrace campus • Creation of two new roles: Aboriginal Relations and Executive Advisor to the President's Office and the Associate Dean, Aboriginal Learning Transformation <p>Receptive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student surveys
<p>GOAL 2: Community-based delivery of programs is supported through partnerships between public post-secondary institutions and Aboriginal institutes and communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASP-funded community-based programming and partnerships • Workforce Training and Contract partnerships with local governments, agencies, and industry • Career and College Preparation programs • Essential Skills for Work program (in-community training program covering math, English, computer, and communication skills, employment exploration and personal development with a strong cultural component.) • ACE IT partnerships (Accelerated Credit Enrolment to Industry Training (ACE IT) program is an Industry Training Authority (ITA) youth initiative that provides financial support to school districts/Board Authorities to provide industry training opportunities to youth in partnership with post-secondary training providers • Mobile Training Units

Key Goals related to NWCC	Actions undertaken to date
GOAL 3: Financial barriers to accessing and completing post-secondary education and training are reduced for Aboriginal learners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing financial barriers: FNACs assist Aboriginal students to secure funding, access food bank and food cards, navigate and secure EI, social assistance programs, and childcare subsidies • Aboriginal Emergency Assistance grants • Scholarships and bursaries
GOAL 4: Aboriginal learners transition seamlessly from K-12 to post-secondary education.	<p>Facilitation of the Transition from high school into college through various activities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships with Secondary Schools – ACE IT programs • Career fairs, Test-Drive orientation, campus tours and orientations • Brochures, and website • Academic assessments • Education plans, customized for each student
GOAL 5: Continuous improvement is based on research, data-tracking and sharing of leading practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking and sharing our practices through this report • Aboriginal Student Success Report • Attend BCAPC provincial Aboriginal Coordinators meetings, Truth and Reconciliation symposiums and conferences to stay informed and challenged • Aboriginal Student engagement: surveys, questionnaires and feedback forms

Alignment with Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action

As a public college, there are many things we can do to help support and further the ongoing process of reconciliation. NWCC is committed to helping this process in ways that align with our role in the community and our role as educators. Some of our activities are noted below, in the context of the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action*. In the future, the *Calls to Action* can be regularly reviewed and areas where we can make a difference can be flagged and actioned.

Key Goals related to NWCC	Actions undertaken to date
<p>Call to Action 5: We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate parenting programs for Aboriginal families.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Childhood Educator (ECE) courses at NWCC are culturally specific and will prepare graduates to support this goal. • Student-led parenting club at the Prince Rupert campus, supported by the local FNAC.
<p>Call to Action 7: We call upon the federal government to develop with Aboriginal groups a joint strategy to eliminate educational and employment gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing barriers to education through First Nations Access Coordinators. • Providing in-community programming.
<p>Call to Action 10: We call on the federal government to draft new Aboriginal education legislation with the full participation and informed consent of Aboriginal peoples. The new legislation would include a commitment to sufficient funding and would incorporate the following principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Providing sufficient funding to close identified educational achievement gaps within one generation. Improving education attainment levels and success rates. Developing culturally appropriate curricula. Protecting the right to Aboriginal languages, including the teaching of Aboriginal languages as credit courses. Enabling parental and community responsibility, control, and accountability, similar to what parents enjoy in public school systems. Enabling parents to fully participate in the education of their children. Respecting and honouring Treaty relationships. 	<p>While this Call to Action is not specific to post-secondary institutions, there are things we do to support it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open and accessible bridging and training opportunities • A growing scholarship and bursary program • Culturally relevant curricula and pedagogy developed • Community input through First Nations Council • Recognition of traditional territories at College events and meetings
<p>Call to Action 11: We call upon the federal government to provide adequate funding to end the backlog of First Nations students seeking a post-secondary education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support students through the college application process • Support students in securing funding through bursaries • Raising funds for bursaries to support students in need
<p>Call to Action 12: We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs for Aboriginal families.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NWCC's ECE training program prepares graduates to provide appropriate early childhood education for Aboriginal families
<p>Call to Action 16: We call upon post-secondary institutions to create university and college degree and diploma programs in Aboriginal languages.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NWCC is considering reinvigorating existing language courses

Key Goals related to NWCC	Actions undertaken to date
<p>Call to Action 23: We call upon all levels of government to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Increase the number of Aboriginal professionals working in the health-care field. ii. Ensure the retention of Aboriginal health-care providers in Aboriginal communities. iii. Provide cultural competency training for all health-care professionals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nursing and Healthcare Assistant programs at NWCC are preparing students to enter the health-care field with appropriate health-care competencies and an understanding of health-care issues specific to Northern and First Nations communities
<p>Call to Action 62:</p> <p>We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students. ii. Provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms. iii. Provide the necessary funding to Aboriginal schools to utilize Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods in classrooms. v. Establish senior-level positions in government at the assistant deputy minister level or higher dedicated to Aboriginal content in education. 	<p>While this call to action is focused on the K to 12 system, we can support it at the college level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACPAC review of new courses and programs to review inclusion of appropriate degree of Aboriginal knowledge, culture, and/or pedagogy • Field School—Relationships and Language: Truth and Reconciliation in Northwestern BC

APPENDIX B: IN-COMMUNITY COURSES AND TRAINING PARTNERSHIPS

Snapshot of community contracts and collaborations through our Workforce Training (WTCS) Department

Client	Start Date	Course or Program
Tricorp Bladerunners	21-Nov-16	Worldhost Fundamentals
	22-Nov-16	E-mail Management
	22-Nov-16	Serving it Right
	23-Nov-16	Working in Teams
	24-Nov-16	Time Management
	25-Nov-16	Cashier Training
	26-Nov-16	Foodsafe Level 1
	28-Nov-16	Safety in the Workplace
	29-Nov-16	Occupational First Aid Level 1
	30-Nov-16	WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System)
Gitksan Wet'suwet'en Education Society	14-Oct-16	Forklift
	7-Mar-16	Forklift
Gitanyow Education Training Institute Hereditary Chiefs - B. Russell	15-Oct-16	Preparing for your Drivers Exam
Secretariat of Haida Nation	1-Nov-16	Intro to Microsoft Windows
	3-Oct-16	Worldhost
	26-Sep-16	Foodsafe Level 1
Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Institute (WWNI)	26-Sep-16	Foodsafe Level 1
Nisga'a Lisims Land and Parks	10-Aug-16	Bear Awareness
Nisga'a Lisims Government	10-Aug-16	Bear Awareness
	14-May-16	ATV Rider
New Aiyansh Elementary Secondary	7-Jun-16	Heavy Equipment Operator (HEO) Simulator
Applied Fire Solutions	22-Jun-16	S-100 Fire Suppression

Client	Start Date	Course or Program
Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government	25-Jul-16	Cashier Training
	28-Jul-16	WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System)
	29-Jul-16	Foodsafe Level 1
	2-Aug-16	Occupational First Aid (OFA) Level 1
	25-Jul-16	Cashier Training
	28-Jul-16	WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System)
	29-Jul-16	Foodsafe Level 1
	2-Aug-16	Occupational First Aid (OFA) Level 1
Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government	30-Jun-16	Confined space
	22-Jun-16	S-100 Fire Suppression
	21-Jun-16	Occupational First Aid (OFA) Level 1
	24-Jun-16	Foodsafe Level 1
	27-Jun-16	WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System)
	27-Jun-16	Transportation of Dangerous Goods (TDG)
	28-Jun-16	H2S Alive
	29-Jun-16	Transportation Endorsement
Gingolx Village Government	16-Jun-16	Bear Awareness
	17-Jun-16	Chainsaw Safety
	20-Jun-16	H2S Alive
	9-Jun-16	Occupational First Aid (OFA) Level 1
	10-Jun-16	Transportation Endorsement
	21-Jun-16	WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System)
	21-Jun-16	Transportation of Dangerous Goods (TDG)
	7-Jun-16	Foodsafe Level 1
Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure	22-Jun-16	Fall Protection
	20-Jun-16	Traffic Control Flagging
Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure	20-Jun-16	Traffic Control Flagging
	20-Jun-16	Traffic Control Flagging
Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program	31-May-16	Watchmen

Client	Start Date	Course or Program
Skidegate Health Centre	30-May-16	Red Cross CPR-C Recertification
	30-May-16	Red Cross CPR-C Recertification
SD #92 Nisg'a Elementary Secondary School	5-Sep-16	Intro to Trades
Ministry of Children and Family Development	20-May-16	Red Cross Emergency Child Care First Aid & CPR
Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure	6-May-16	Occupational First Aid (OFA) Level 1
Kispiox Band -Melanie Stevens	23-Mar-16	Occupational First Aid (OFA) Level 1
Kispiox Band Council	18-Mar-16	WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System)
Gitwangak Education Society	29-Apr-16	Red Cross Emergency Child Care First Aid & CPR
Haida Nation - Mapping Department	27-May-16	Swift Water Rescue
Lake Babine Nation	4-Apr-16	Intro to Timber Cruising
	11-Apr-16	Intro to Silviculture Surveying
New Relationship Trust	22-Mar-16	Word Level 1
Kitsumkalum Fisheries	2-Feb-16	SVOP
CPR C Recert	25-Feb-16	Gitxsan Health Society
Gitxsan Health Society	25-Feb-16	CPR C Recertification
	25-Feb-16	CPR C Recertification
Gitxsan Development Corp	1-Feb-16	Occupational First Aid (OFA) Level 3
Gitwangak band	12-Jan-16	Personal Productivity
	13-Jan-16	Body Language Basics
	14-Jan-16	Assertiveness and Self-Confidence
	15-Jan-16	Conflict Resolution
	18-Jan-16	Money Matters
	19-Jan-16	Job Search Skills
	20-Jan-16	Customer Service
	28-Jan-16	PST Online
Moricetown Band	29-Jan-16	Worldhost
Kyah Wiget Education Society	1-Oct-15	Wet'suwet'en Culture and Language
Kitsumkalum	2-Nov-15	Foodsafe Level 1

Client	Start Date	Course or Program
Kitsumkalum Fish and Wildlife	29-Oct-15	WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System)
	30-Oct-15	Occupational First Aid (OFA) Level 1
Kispiox Band Council	14-Dec-15	GLP
Gitwangak Education Society	12-Nov-15	Occupational First Aid (OFA) Level 1
	13-Nov-15	Transportation Endorsement
Na Aksa Gila Kyew School	23-Oct-15	Friday Trades School
Tahltn	15-Sep-16	GLP Training
Gitwinksihlkw	15-Aug-16	GLP Training
Gitxsan Development Corp.	15-Aug-16	GDC Practical Carpentry Project
Moricetown Band	21-Mar-16	Modified CTHL
GDC - Kitwanga	16-May-16	GLP
GDC - Hazelton	25-Jan-16	GLP - N drivers & Preparing for Your Driver's Exam
Hazelton	9-Nov-15	GLP (TransCanada sponsored)
GDC - Gitsegukla	18-Jan-16	Cooks Helper
GDC - Hazelton	28-Mar-16	Cook's Helper
Skidegate Band Council - finished May 2016	19-Oct-15	Haida Fine Arts - Haida Gwaii
	5-Oct-15	Access to ECE - Haida Gwaii
Wilp Wilxooskwhl Nisga'a Institute (WWNI)	13-Nov-16	CCP - Trades upgrading (math and English)

APPENDIX C: DETAILED COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

First Nations Studies Course Descriptions

FNST 101 Introduction to First Nations Studies

This course is an introduction to the multidisciplinary field of First Nations Studies and its nature and goals as an academic discipline. From multiple Aboriginal worldviews, students will examine Canadian Aboriginal identities, voices, communities, cultures, histories, values, beliefs, languages, oral traditions, literature, and art. Relationships between culture, language and land will also be examined. The course also introduces students to the important historical, cultural, social and political realities that have and continue to impact the lives of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. 3 Credits.

FNST 120 Aboriginal Languages - Preservation and Revitalization

This course examines protocols, planning strategies and methods for data collection, analysis, and organization appropriate for language preservation and revitalization of Aboriginal languages. Students will learn strategies and practical methods for community-based projects such as: intellectual and cultural property, gathering of language materials, digital recording and editing, documenting language (literacy and orthography), and ways to deliver the materials to the community. (3,0,0) Prerequisites: Provincial English 12 or First People's English 12 or ENGL 050 or equivalent. (3,0,0). 3 Credits.

FNST 200 Aboriginal Community Research

This course will provide a basis in the theory and practice of Aboriginal community research. While it

is not intended to provide intensive training in order to carry out research, students will be provided with an overview of a variety of research methodologies and methods, as well as an introduction to planning a research study. The history of research on, for, and with Aboriginal peoples will be examined, as will the ethical issues involved when working with Aboriginal communities. By the end of the course, students will be able to articulate what makes up an Indigenous research paradigm. 3 Credits.

FNST 210 Aboriginal Health: Community Wellness and Healing

This course provides students with an overview of Aboriginal health, wellness, and well-being from an Aboriginal worldview, which encompasses physical, mental, emotional and spiritual factors. The course is premised on the understanding that connection to land, traditional medicine, spirituality, traditional foods, traditional activities, and language are key factors influencing the health and wellness of Aboriginal peoples. Students are introduced to traditional Aboriginal healing practices, which are seen to be a way to restore physical, mental, emotional and spiritual balance to the lives of individuals, families, and communities. Colonization and assimilation policies and their effect on the health of Aboriginal peoples will also be examined. (3,0,0). 3 Credits.

First Nations Studies 033 – Introduction to Aboriginal Health Care (Health Access)

This course will introduce students to health care from a First Nations worldview. From this

perspective, the course will examine First Nations people's relationship with the land and the relationship they have with others (such as family, community members, clan members, and Elders) and how this impacts on their health and well-being. First Nations healers and healing will also be examined. From there, the course will then look at the impact of colonization on First Nations health. Finally, students will have the opportunity to explore health careers and how healthcare workers have an impact on First Nations families and communities. 120 hrs. 3 Credits.

Provincial First Nations Studies 050

This course examines First Nations peoples' cultures, values, beliefs, traditions, history, languages, and land in terms of a holistic worldview. Through this perspective, the course will examine the past, look at the many issues facing First Nations' communities today and consider possibilities for the future. FNS 050 provides learners with information about First Nations cultures in order to gain an understanding of the traditions, history, and present realities of BC First Nations' communities, as well as considering challenges and opportunities in the future. 6 Credits.

Early Childhood Education (ECE)

ECE 141 /209 topics include setting up environments to reflect Aboriginal children and families, use of natural and authentic objects to reflect families, a Family Literacy fair, setting up environments in head start programs. ECE 104 covers the Aboriginal Food Guide, local foods, food security, respect for food, social issues that have impacts on health

and wellbeing of Aboriginal children and families (systemic racism - residential schools, scoop of 60's...) also, teaching with regards to balancing safety and children's needs for being on the land.

Soc 206 (was169) we have asked to have truth and reconciliation as part of this course.

ECE 162, 163, 202 curriculum courses using Pacific Northwest Coast Aboriginal Art; visits to the Freda Diesing school, fish camps (Nass), and a Kitselas canyon field trip.

ECE 168 advocating for childcare, cultural safe practices, ethics, community involvement and participation at Salmon Berry Fairs (Nass Valley).

Practicums include placement in urban and on-reserve child care programs.

GITK 101 - Introduction to Gitksanimx Language 1
Gitksanimx 101 is designed to introduce students to the fundamental use of how words are formed through the forty-six phonetic letters/letter combinations of the alphabet. Students will learn where and how the Gitksan Nation is organized as well as why feasts are held. Everyday words and terms will come into play throughout.

GITK 102 - Intro to Gitksanimx Language 2

In Gitksanimx 102, students shall learn many different terms, commands, location, seasonal times, family and clan connections through the use of the total physical response mode while learning how to

meet and greet people. Proper spelling and using the proper writing mechanics will play a major role throughout the course.

HAID 101 - Intro to the Haida Language 1

This course is designed to introduce the student to the basics of Haida conversation. It is designed for students with little or no background in the language. The primary goal is for students to be able to understand and produce simple, grammatically correct sentences in Haida, and to combine them into a conversation on a variety of basic everyday topics. This course can be taught in either the Old Massett dialect (Xaad Kíl) or the Skidegate dialect (Xaayda Kíl).

HAID 102 - Introduction to the Haida Language 2

This course is a continuing introduction to basic Haida for students with some experience with the language. Students will continue to develop their reading, writing and listening skills while acquiring a vocabulary of approximately 150 additional words. Students will practice everyday conversational phrases including greetings, leavetakings, compliments, exclamations and other phrases for conversational management, as well as many of the core concepts of Y'aad Kíl grammar. This course can be taught in either the Old Massett dialect (Xaad Kíl) or the Skidegate dialect (Xaayda Kíl).

HAIS 101 - Introduction to the Haisla Language 1

This course is designed to provide the learner with the fundamental skills needed to build basic conversation. It will focus on Haisla sounds, structure, vocabulary,

grammar, phrases and sentences. The course will examine how the Haisla language is connected to land, culture, and spirituality. Throughout the course, songs, stories, traditional activities and games will be incorporated. This course will focus on the ability to hear the language and the confidence to speak the language. The students will develop an understanding of the structure of the language as they practice everyday conversation.

HAIS 102 - Introduction to the Haisla Language 2

This course will continue to provide the learner with the fundamental skills needed to build basic conversation. It will continue to focus on Haisla sounds, structure, vocabulary, grammar, phrases and sentences. The course will continue to examine how the Haisla language is connected to land, culture, and spirituality. Throughout the course, songs, stories, traditional activities and games will be incorporated. This course will continue to focus on the ability to hear the language and the confidence to speak the language. The students will continue to develop an understanding of the structure of the language as they practice everyday conversation.

MICH 101 and 102 - Introduction to the Michif Language 1 and 2

This course is an introduction to the Michif language and Michif conversational lessons for beginners. Students will examine the meaning of "Metisness" and how it connects language, culture, land and spirituality. Students will learn Michif language conversational lessons as they explore Métis songs, storytelling and participate in traditional practices.

SMAL 101 - Intro to the Sm'algyax Language 1

This course is designed to provide the learner with the fundamental skills needed to build basic conversation.

It will focus on Sm'algyax sounds, structure, vocabulary, grammar, phrases and sentences. The learner will be introduced to the formal speech which involves the address at a feast. Throughout the course, songs, stories and games will be incorporated. This course will focus on the ability to hear the language and the confidence to speak the language. The students will develop an understanding of the structure of the language as they practice everyday conversation.

SMAL 102 - Intro to the Sm'algyax Language 2

This course is designed to provide the learner with the fundamental skills needed to build basic conversation.

It will focus on Sm'algyax sounds, structure, vocabulary, grammar, phrases and sentences. Throughout the course, songs, stories and games will be incorporated. This course will focus on the ability to hear the language and the confidence to speak the language. The students will develop an understanding of the structure of the language as they practice every day conversation.

SMAL 103 - Intro to the Sm'algyax Language 3

This course will continue to provide the learner with the fundamental skills needed to build basic conversation. It will continue to focus on Sm'algyax sounds, structure, vocabulary, grammar, phrases and sentences. The learner will be introduced to the formal speech which involves the address at a feast. Throughout the course, songs, stories and games will be incorporated, as it was in Sm'algyax 101. This course will continue to focus on the ability to hear the language and the confidence to speak the language. The students will continue to develop an

understanding of the structure of the language as they practice everyday conversation.

SMAL 201 - Intermediate Sm'algyax Language 1

This course is designed to increase fluency in conversational ability, enhance pronunciation and comprehension skills, expand vocabulary, extend literacy and grammatical understanding, and further study of Ts'msyen traditional narratives, (adaawx). This course is organized around thematic units. Learning Sm'algyax, Language of the Ts'msyen, will strengthen the identity and connections to the Adaawx (stories), Ayaawx (laws) and lax yuub (territory) of the generations; past, present and future.

SMAL 202 - Intermediate Sm'algyax Language 2

This course is a continuation of Sm'algyax 201. It is designed to continue to increase conversational ability, enhance pronunciation and comprehension skills, expand vocabulary, extend literacy and grammatical understanding, and further study of Ts'msyen traditional narratives, (adaawx). This course is organized around thematic units. Learning Sm'algyax, Language of the Ts'msyen, will strengthen the identity and connections to the Adaawx (stories), Ayaawx (laws) and lax yuub (territory) of the generations; past, present and future.

TAHL 101 - Introduction to the Tahltan Language 1

This course is designed to provide the learner with the fundamental skills needed to build basic conversation. It will focus on Tahltan sounds, structure, vocabulary, grammar, phrases and sentences. The course will examine how the Tahltan language is connected to land, culture, and spirituality. Throughout the course, songs, stories, traditional activities and games will be incorporated. This course will focus on the ability to hear the language and the confidence to speak the

language. The students will develop an understanding of the structure of the language as they practice every day conversation.

TAHL 102 - Introduction to the Tahltan Language 2

This course will continue to provide the learner with the fundamental skills needed to build basic conversation. It will continue to focus on Tahltan sounds, structure, vocabulary, grammar, phrases and sentences. The course will continue to examine how the Tahltan language is connected to land, culture, and spirituality. Throughout the course, songs, stories, traditional activities and games will be incorporated. This course will continue to focus on the ability to hear the language and the confidence to speak the language. The students will continue to develop an understanding of the structure of the language as they practice everyday conversation.

nwcc.ca 1.877.277.2288

For additional information, please contact
Bridie O'Brien, Associate Dean, Aboriginal Learning
Transformation.

T: 250.842.5291 ext. 5501
E: bobrien@nwcc.bc.ca

NORTHWEST
COMMUNITY COLLEGE