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Canada

LOOKING FORWARD. . .

**A National Perspective on
Aboriginal Student Services in Canadian Universities**

By

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**A Thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
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Abstract

Aboriginal student services provision in Canadian Universities first began in the early 1970's in the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. However, most of the 39 centers now across Canada have only been open since the 1990's under recruitment and retention directives for specific programs.

This study set out to gather a national perspective on Aboriginal student service centers in Canadian universities by gaining the opinions of student service professionals who provide the services and Aboriginal university students who have used these same services.

This particular study incorporated both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of Archibald, Selkirk Bowman, Pepper, Urion, Mirenhouse & Shortt (1995) study. The study was conducted in phases: Phase I, involved the pre-testing of two separate surveys: one for student service professionals working with Aboriginal support services in Canadian universities and the second survey was for Aboriginal university students who utilize these services. Phase II, entailed identifying those Canadian universities who provide Aboriginal Student Services, and the distribution of the surveys to those who agreed to participate in this study. The survey results were statistically analysed and recommendations were developed from the findings. Phase III, involved comparing the responses of the questions that were similar in both of the survey instruments to gather a sense of how the perspectives of the student service professional and the Aboriginal university students were similar or dissimilar on the topic of Aboriginal student services.

To foster and honor Aboriginal values of community and respect, this study was designed for the Internet; however, hard copies of the instrument were made available to those who requested it. Out of the 39 centers contacted, 30 agreed to participate in the study. Two separate survey instruments were developed. The return rate for the Aboriginal student service professional survey was 83% (N=25). The return rate for the Aboriginal university student survey was lower, 14% (N=21). A content analysis was also conducted of the participating center's web pages to further add to the perspective.

There was a discrepancy found between what was reported in the student service professionals' surveys and the Aboriginal student service centers' web pages. However, there were no significant differences found between regions on service delivery. Of those students who participated in this study, over 90% were content with their current level of services. However, significant differences were found between the student service professionals and the Aboriginal university students' perspectives.

It was found that there is a need for better communication systems between centers and their clientele. Differing consumer-producer viewpoints on service provision can have detrimental effects, both to the providers and users of Aboriginal student services. For example, inconsistent communication can lead

to a misunderstanding of the Aboriginal student centers purpose and goal. This can have implications on several levels, such as recruitment-retention, administration-financial, 'town and gown' issues, and more importantly, to the Aboriginal student community.

Less than 30% of the participating centers use student service theory in the development of their programs. Eighty-six percent of this group made reference to using a 'holistic indigenous-based' approach to their service delivery. Therefore, the major recommendation of the study is the development of a national model for the provision of Aboriginal student services in Canadian universities.

***“Of all the teachings we receive,
this one is most important:***

***Nothing belongs to you.
Of what there is, of what you take, you must share.”***

Chief Dan George

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My journey has not been one that has been done alone. With each step there was some one who provided encouragement and support in one way or another.

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*Of course, humble thanks to the creator for making it all possible.
May the circle continue.*

List of Tables

Table 1	<u>Regional distribution of Aboriginal student service centres in Canadian universities</u>	84
Table 2	<u>Percentage distribution of Aboriginal student, faculty and staff population in Canadian universities with Aboriginal student service centres</u>	86
Table 3	<u>Regional distribution of Aboriginal university students</u>	89
Table 4	<u>The number of courses completed by participating students by region</u>	91
Table 5	<u>Percentage distribution of Aboriginal university students who attended another post-secondary institution</u>	92
Table 6	<u>Percentage distribution of academic programs among Aboriginal university students by region</u>	93
Table 7	<u>Personal demographics of Aboriginal university students by region</u>	95
Table 8	<u>Percentage distribution of Aboriginal groups among Aboriginal university students by region</u>	97
Table 9	<u>Percentage distribution of programs and services offered by Aboriginal student services centres by region</u>	100
Table 10	<u>User population of Aboriginal student services by region</u>	105
Table 11	<u>Aboriginal groups using Aboriginal support services in Canadian universities, based on the percentage of participating Aboriginal student service centres reporting use by groups</u>	107
Table 12	<u>Percentage distribution of programs and services provided by Aboriginal student services by region</u>	109
Table 13	<u>Percentage distribution of the use of student service theory in Aboriginal student services</u>	110
Table 14	<u>Programs and services that should be offered as part of Aboriginal student services from the perspective of the professionals</u>	112

Table 15 <u>Other responsibilities and duties encountered by Aboriginal student service professionals</u>	114
Table 16 <u>Ranking of the top concerns of Aboriginal students from the perspective of Aboriginal student service professionals</u>	116
Table 17 <u>Regional comparison of professional's perception of Aboriginal university students top concerns</u>	118
Table 18 <u>Ranking of top services provided by Aboriginal student service centres by student service professionals</u>	119
Table 19 <u>Programs and services used by Aboriginal university students</u>	123
Table 20 <u>Rankings of the more important student services as indicated by Aboriginal university students</u>	124
Table 21 <u>Ranking of the top concerns of Aboriginal university students</u>	126
Table 22 <u>Regional breakdown of the ranking of the top concerns of Aboriginal university students</u>	128
Table 23 <u>The top services provided by Aboriginal student service centres as ranked by Aboriginal university students by age group</u>	131
Table 24 <u>Relationship between the top concerns of Aboriginal university students by age group</u>	132
Table 25 <u>Comparison of the top Aboriginal student services as ranked by student service professionals and Aboriginal university students</u> .	135
Table 26 <u>Comparison of the top concerns of Aboriginal students as ranked by student service professionals and Aboriginal university students</u>	136
Table 27 <u>Regional distribution of student service professionals' and Aboriginal university students' perspectives on the top concerns of Aboriginal university students</u>	138
Table 28 <u>Comparison by region of student service professionals' and Aboriginal university students' perspectives on the top Aboriginal student services</u>	140

Abstract.....	i.
Quote.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
List of Tables.....	v

Table of Contents

Chapter 1.....	Introduction
Introduction.....	1
Purpose of this study.....	3
Statement of the problem.....	4
Significance of the study.....	5
Design of the study.....	7
Delimitations of the study.....	11
Limitations of the study.....	13
Definition of terms.....	13
Researcher's role: respect and honor Aboriginal research.....	14
Chapter 2.....	Literature Review
Introduction.....	17
Historical overview.....	17
A brief history of Aboriginal education in Canada.....	17
Post-secondary education for Aboriginal peoples in Canada.....	19
History of Aboriginal student services.....	21

Post-secondary experiences of Aboriginal peoples	22
Transition experiences and preparation issues.....	23
Perspectives and perceptions	25
Withdrawal and achievement	26
Recruitment and retention	29
Making the case for Aboriginal student services	32
Mainstream students- similarities and differences.....	34
Learning styles.....	39
Need for Canadian content	44
Student affairs and services	45
Aboriginal student services.....	46
Theory and student service models.....	51
Methodology	59
Needs assessments.....	60
Surveys.....	64
Internet use in research.....	66
Chapter 3.....	Methodology
Introduction	69
Description of and rationale for the research design.....	69
Developing the survey questions.....	74
Description of sampling procedures and participants	76

Discussion of methodological issues	77
Ethics	77
Transferability	79
Chapter 4	Results
Introduction	81
Demographics	82
Regional demographics of providers of Aboriginal student services	83
Regional demographics of participating Aboriginal university students	87
Academic demographics	90
Personal demographics	94
Phase I	
Survey pretest	98
Phase II	
Content analysis	99
Aboriginal Student Services Survey	103
Aboriginal University Student Survey	122
Phase III	
Comparison of the Aboriginal university students and student service professionals	134
Summary	141
Chapter 5	Discussion & Recommendations
Discussion of the findings	142

Services being offered by Aboriginal student service centers and those being used by Aboriginal students	144
Aboriginal university students' needs and expectations: perceptions of the professionals and students	147
Experiences with Aboriginal student services	149
Expectations of Aboriginal student services	150
Theories and models best suited for Aboriginal student services.....	152
Conclusions.....	153
Recommendations	155
Aboriginal student services.....	155
Professional interest groups.....	155
Institutional mission	156
Evaluation	157
Theory-models	158
Communication	159
Financial resources	160
Recruitment and Retention.....	160
Regional specific recommendations	161
Recommendations for further research.....	164
Personal experiences of the researcher	166
References.....	169

Appendix

A	Opening prayer	189
B	Introduction letter to the Aboriginal student service professionals.....	190
C	Introduction letter to the Aboriginal university students.....	191
D	Aboriginal Student Service Survey	192
E	Aboriginal University Student Survey.....	193
F	Paper copy of research web page	194
G	Aboriginal student services in Canadian universities: A reference guide.....	195
H	A list of Aboriginal peoples in Canada	196

Chapter 1 Introduction

Initially, post-secondary education in Canada was established in an Euro-Western male-orientated tradition (Barman, Hébert, & McCaskill, 1986). During the formative years of many universities, the student population was male, middle class, caucasian and under 21 years of age, reflecting the social and economic conditions of the time (Jones, 1987).

Over the decades, universities have been influenced, both directly and indirectly, by social, political, and economic factors (Wright, 1987). For example, the women's movement led to an increase in the female student and faculty populations of many universities in Canada and the United States. Canada's ageing population, as well as, changing economic conditions have resulted in a shift in the age of the majority student population from under 21 to those who are older than average, that is over 21 (Barnes, Morton, & Austin, 1988; Kidwell, 1991).

The cultural diversity of this country has also been reflected in the growing presence of minority populations on many campuses (Jones, 1987; Pedersen, 1988). The opportunity to study abroad has enabled many Canadian students add an international perspective to their post-secondary education. Conversely, this has also lead to an increase in the numbers of international students to Canadian universities. The university student population has changed from generally an under 21, male group to a diverse group from different sub-

populations, such as: African Americans and other minority groups, students with disabilities, residence students, commuting students, full-time and part-time students, international students, student older than average, and single parents (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991).

To meet changing student populations and societal expectations, universities have developed services based on student need and demand, institutional resources, and student and professional interests (Smith, 1982). However, these earnest attempts have resulted in a lack of consistency in programming and services availability on a national level. As a consequence of responding to the rigorous demands of a diverse student population, universities may not be cognizant of the void or inadequacies of services for some diverse, specialized and cultural student groups. More specifically, Aboriginal university students have been neglected by many of the institutions in Canada (Westit LaCounte, 1987).

Of the over 80 universities in Canada, including affiliated institutions and university-colleges less than half or approximately 38 institutions offer some form of Aboriginal student services (CACUSS/ASEUCC, 2001; Redmond, 2001). The late 1980's and early 1990's saw a growth of the Aboriginal student population in post-secondary institutions, which was encouraged by Federal and provincial government initiatives. This growth led to the development of specific support services to Aboriginal students with the financial assistance of federal and provincial grants. Varied funding arrangements have led to a great diversity in

extent, level, depth and resources made available to Aboriginal students across this country.

The Aboriginal peoples of Canada are comprised of over 70 distinct groups (Malinowski, Sheets, Lehman, & Walsh Doig, 1998; McMillan, 1995). As diverse as this country's geography, Canada's Aboriginal peoples represent several different cultures, values, traditions, religions and languages. It is this diversity that needs to be understood, respected and honoured within Canadian universities, academically, socially, physically, and more specifically, within each institution's Aboriginal student service centre or office (See Appendix H for a list of groupings).

Purpose of this study

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the nature of Aboriginal student services in Canadian universities. It provided an avenue for Aboriginal university students in Canada to express their opinions on their expectations, experiences, needs and recommendations for Aboriginal support services. It was also an avenue for student service professionals working in the field to share their opinions and insights on such service provision. The need for such investigation has grown with the increase in the Aboriginal university student population across Canada.

To date, on a national level there is an absence of national resources for professionals working with Aboriginal student services. This study's process model was designed to encourage the fostering of a support network for

professionals working in this area. It was hoped a sense of camaraderie would be encouraged with the development of a national directory of Aboriginal student services in Canadian universities. This study will further enhance understanding and knowledge of the provision of Aboriginal student services.

Statement of the problem

The problem under investigation in this study is related to the lack of adequate information on, and consequently the lack of a useable framework for, Aboriginal student services in Canada. To date, aside from some research conducted primarily in the United States and in Western Canada, there has been little research conducted on the experiences of those who provide and those who receive Aboriginal student services. Therefore, this study was developed to further expand the knowledge of Aboriginal research in the field of university education and Canadian student affairs and services.

Additionally a further problem identified for the conduct of the study was the lack of research format that respected and honoured First Nations' beliefs and traditions. There was also little information available on Aboriginal student services professionals' experiences. This methodology is important with respect to conducting research to ascertain the opinions on Aboriginal student service provision that also respects their cultural expectations. Lastly, Aboriginal university students' opinions of their needs and their expectations for Aboriginal support services in Canadian universities were not readily available in research literature. To ensure the surveys and compiled results reflected the needs and

expectations of those for whom the study would directly influence, two key aspects of the research process included: 1.) respecting the opinions of Aboriginal university students and student service professionals and 2.) respecting Aboriginal research principles in the survey instrument development.

Significance of the study

The significance of this particular study was the description of the situation of Aboriginal student service in Canadian universities through the eyes of those student service professionals who provide such services and through the eyes of the Aboriginal university students who use these same services. LeCompte & Preissle (1993) outlined several aspects of developing a research purpose including: the researcher's intentions with the results; what gaps in existing knowledge will the study address; and how may the study's conclusion contribute to the integration of existing concepts and propositions.

The quality of student service provision to Aboriginal university students across Canada can be improved with the results of this study through: 1) the development of a national perspective on Aboriginal student service provision and 2) the gathering of a national resource list for Aboriginal student services in Canadian universities. This study's findings also contributed to the growing body of First Nation's research addressing First Nation's perspectives. It therefore provides a base upon which Aboriginal people become genuinely involved in the development, process and duration of the study.

This study assisted student service professionals in furthering the

understanding of the needs and experiences of Aboriginal students relative to effective program development and revision; provided insight into Aboriginal student recruitment and retention; and added to the student services literature in Canada.

Implications of this study for Aboriginal university student participants and their communities would include: understanding what services students want and need, and developing feasibility plans for the provision of these services. Communities and Aboriginal organizations could use this information for allocating financial resources in a more effective manner for students attending university, developing community-based support networks and learning how to more effectively support students, thereby increasing retention rates.

Potential learning benefits to Canadian universities, administrators, faculty, staff and students would include: increasing understanding of the needs of Aboriginal students; encouraging more effective partnerships between Aboriginal groups and the institutions, and providing an avenue for dealing with Aboriginal concerns more effectively. Examples of these include: culturally relevant programming, support services and student retention initiatives.

Research implications from this study include: increasing the growing field of First Nations research based on a student services perspective, and stimulating and encouraging additional research concerning Aboriginal peoples.

An important aspect of Aboriginal research is the respect of Aboriginal beliefs. One such belief is the strength and power of the sacred circle and

medicine wheel. These symbols are often used as learning models to teach others aspects of cultural, spirituality, or Aboriginal gestalt (Battiste & Barman, 1996; Reigner, 1995). This study attempted to create the same atmosphere through its research process enabling listening, communicating and establishing partnerships between all those involved. The responsibility of having the opportunity to provide an avenue for Aboriginal voices to be heard was not be taken lightly or without great consideration by the researcher. In advancing the service provision for Aboriginal students, the university experiences of Aboriginal students will hopefully improve and retention rates will increase. These symbols promote unity, holism, communication and community. Such information may be useful in the future development of national standards for the provision of Aboriginal student services.

Design of the study

Archibald, Selkirk Bowman, Pepper, Union, Mirenhouse & Shortt (1995) conducted a study that inquired into the experiences of Aboriginal post-secondary graduates in British Columbia. Their study employed mail questionnaires, telephone surveys and focus groups. This particular study incorporated both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of Archibald et al.'s (1995) study through the design of the survey instruments, while at the same time, incorporating a student service focus.

The study was designed to address the research questions in each of the three phases of its process model.

**Phase I
Survey pre-testing**

The developed surveys were pre-tested with the goal of addressing the following questions:

- 1) Did this survey adequately address issues of Aboriginal student service provision?
- 2) What recommendations would you make to the survey's format, questioning, and length?
- 3) Were there any issues, topics or questions that need to be included in this survey?

**Phase II
Surveying**

Through the distribution of two separate surveys (one to Aboriginal university students and the second to the student service professionals) the following questions were posed:

- 1) a) What services were being offered by Aboriginal student service providers?
b) What services were being used by Aboriginal university students?
- 2) a) What were the needs of Aboriginal students?
b) What were the perceptions of student service professionals regarding Aboriginal student's needs and expectations?
- 3) a) What were the experiences of student service professionals who provide Aboriginal support services?
b) What were the experiences of Aboriginal students who use Aboriginal s

support services?

- 4) a) What were the expectations of Aboriginal students regarding the provision of Aboriginal student services?
 - b) What were the expectations of professionals regarding the provision of Aboriginal student services?
- 5) What student development theories/models were best suited to the provision of Aboriginal student affairs and services?

***Phase III
Comparison of the Aboriginal student services survey and the
Aboriginal university student survey.***

Phase III saw the comparison of selected items from both survey instruments. The following survey questions were designed to gather a sense of how similar or dissimilar the perspectives of student service professionals and Aboriginal university students were about Aboriginal student services. Therefore, the Aboriginal student services survey asked the following questions:

- 1) What programs and services are provided by your office/centre to Aboriginal students?
- 2) From your perspective, what are the top five concerns of Aboriginal students?
- 3) What are the top three services used by students?

Conversely, the Aboriginal university student survey asked student participants:

- 1) What programs and services they had used in the past?
- 2) What were the top three services?

3) What were the top five concerns of Aboriginal students?

The study used quantitative and qualitative methodologies. These included procedures which were: 1) inductive in the collection of data and applying or evolving a theory; 2) generative in the developing of constructs and applying theory; 3) responsive to the voices of participants; and 4) reflective in providing the subjective views and experiences of the researcher throughout the entire process. The quantitative aspect was correlational in how the views of Aboriginal university students and student service professionals were related regarding Aboriginal support services and Aboriginal university student needs. To gather information for this comparison, the survey method of quantitative research was used incorporating the use of open-ended questions for qualitative analysis (Beiger & Gerlach, 1996).

Throughout the entire process, participants were able to contact the researcher via e-mail or regular mail if they had any questions or concerns regarding this investigation. The researcher was the lone monitor of the e-mail account to respect and honour confidentiality of the participants, operating within the guidelines of the Department of Computing and Communications (Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1999). Through the co-operation of student service professionals, Aboriginal university students, on-campus student organizations and by word of mouth, similar to the snowball technique utilized by LeCompte & Preissle (1993) the research process of this study evolved.

Delimitations of the study

The realization that open communication was required in the conduct of this study led the researcher to place delimitations upon this study. There are over 80 universities in Canada, of which, thirty-eight offer specific services to their Aboriginal student populations. Therefore, the study was delimited to those institutions that offer specific services, in terms of a centre or office, or a designated student service professional, to Aboriginal university students.

It was also recognized that this selection process had delimitations for selecting from the sub-population of Aboriginal post-secondary students. To gain insight into service provision, student experience and opinions, the study was delimited to Aboriginal students within these 38 institutions who have used their on-campus Aboriginal student services office. The opinions of this specific sub-population were sought to ensure those who use the services were part of developing the national perspective.

Choosing to conduct this study at the national level placed constraints on the data collection. Therefore, the fact that this study utilized the Internet, as the primary means of distributing the questionnaire and collecting data, may in fact further alienate some potential participants. Recognizing that not all participants would feel comfortable with using the Internet, the option of completing any survey through either on-line or paper version was provided to all participants. Phone interviews provided another means for collecting data from those participants who were unable to participate otherwise (Piper, 1988).

Limitations of the study

The delimitations of this study created a more controlled environment in which this study could be successfully completed. The researcher being cognisant of a number of limitations arising from the set delimitations designed the study accordingly. Some of the limitations of this study were :

- 1) That participants may not all be an accurate representation of Aboriginal university students; therefore caution was taken in guarding against any broad generalizations;
- 2) Ethno-politics (e.g., defining who is "Aboriginal"). The researcher was cognisant of the situation created in defining who is Aboriginal based on certain criteria (i.e., Federal government standards); it often leads to misunderstanding of what being Aboriginal means. Having a defining criteria of who is Aboriginal versus who is not, can lead to a situation in which students eligibility for support services is questioned based on a definition, and not their needs or rights as an Aboriginal person. In this study, an Aboriginal person shall be 'any individual with Aboriginal or Inuit ancestry and who self-identifies as an Aboriginal person';
- 3) The limited or, in some cases, lack of graduate research funding placed constraints on the potential scope of this study. For example, time and lack of funding places limits on gathering the perspective of Aboriginal students who do not use support services, or doing personal interviews with individuals from across the country;

4) A further limitation of this study was the void of research from which to build and compare the findings of this study.

This study was conducted in phases: Phase I, involved the development and pre-testing of two separate surveys: one for student service professionals working with Aboriginal support services in Canadian universities and the second survey was for Aboriginal university students who utilize these services. Phase II, entailed the identifying those Canadian universities who provide Aboriginal Student Services, and the distribution of the surveys to those who agreed to participate in this study. The survey results were statistically analysed and recommendations were developed from the findings. Phase III, involved a comparison of the responses of the questions that were similar in both of the survey instruments. The purpose of this comparison was to gather a sense of how the perspectives of the student service professional and the Aboriginal university students were similar or dissimilar on the topic of Aboriginal student services.

Definition of Terms

The terms of reference for this study reflected the researcher's intended research goal and to whom the study was directed. In determining the criteria of being "Aboriginal", a number of factors could have been taken into consideration, such as: status/non-status, band/non-band, or treaty/non-treaty (McMillan, 1995). However, for the purposes of this study, an Aboriginal person was defined as 'an individual with Aboriginal or Inuit ancestry and who also self-identifies as an

Aboriginal'. This definition also included any person who may have been adopted into an Aboriginal family, grew up within the culture and considers her/himself to be Aboriginal. Whereas the terms Aboriginal, Native American, and First Nations were used interchangeably throughout this study, they all refer to the stated definition unless otherwise indicated.

Aboriginal university students invited to participate in this study were those First Nations students who have used Aboriginal student services at their respective campus. The students' user status was defined as having used any service at any point during or prior to entry into their university career. This recognized the fact that students often contact student services prior to beginning their post-secondary education for information about careers, education options, residence, finances, and other transition issues.

The focus of this study took place in Canadian universities, their affiliates and university-colleges, which provided Aboriginal support services, either in the form of a specific office or designated student service professional who acts as a liaison for Aboriginal students. In the scope of this study, the term 'university' was used to refer to all those previously identified institutions. A student service professional was considered an individual who works within the institution's Aboriginal student service office as student affairs liaison officer, or under similar title.

Researcher's Role: Respect and honour Aboriginal research

The medicine wheel and sacred circle for many Aboriginal peoples has

significant meaning; representing togetherness, community, inclusion and harmony (Anderson, 1998; Battiste & Barman, 1996). For this study's success student service professionals, Aboriginal university students and the researcher created a circle of dialogue based on trust and faith. The methodology section will outline how each participant was invited to participate, respected and honoured while, at the same time, allowed all voices and opinions to be heard. The researcher reinforced Wilson's (1992) ideology of accessibility, approachability, and availability by clearly communicating where and how she could be contacted and more importantly, encouraged and welcomed any questions or suggestions.

Archibald et al. (1995) stated "as people concerned with First Nations education and research, we must consider whether our motives and our methods honour and respect First Nations ways"(p. 12). To ensure the methods and motives of this study respected Aboriginal ways and to ensure the integrity of this study was maintained, it was crucial that Aboriginal university students and student service professionals were involved from the beginning of this study process to its completion.

Many research efforts focus on Aboriginal experiences in a specific setting. For example, Te Hennepe (1993) described Aboriginal students' experiences in an anthropology class. From the literature review, it was evident that very little research has been conducted which actually permits Aboriginal voices to be heard without interpretation by Western thought and culture, with the

exception of Archibald et al. (1995), Danziger (1996) and Te Hennepe (1993).

Badwound & Tierney (1988) support the need for more research that reflects Aboriginal values. The research process used in the study was developed with the intention of making Aboriginal university students and student service professionals feel part of a community. By doing so, a sense of ownership in the study was achieved amongst the participants in the process of this investigation. For example, participants were encouraged to provide feedback throughout the process to ensure the surveys and the study's methodology reflected their opinions. In working toward the common goal of the gathering a national perspective on Aboriginal student services in Canadian universities, Aboriginal students, the researcher and the student service professionals became partners in enhancing the quality of the university experience for all.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Introduction

The literature review has been divided into three main areas. The first examined relevant research pertaining to Aboriginal post-secondary students. Some specific areas discussed were: transition experiences and preparation issues; perspectives and perceptions on post-secondary education; withdrawal and achievement; recruitment and retention; need for support services; mainstream students' similarities and differences; learning styles; and the need for Canadian content. The second area explored current research pertaining to student services; more specifically, Aboriginal student services and relevant student service theories and models. The third research area reviewed current research methodology to support this study's methodological choices pertaining to needs assessment, surveys, and the Internet.

Historical Overview

A Brief History of Aboriginal Education in Canada

A review of the history of formal education for Aboriginal peoples in Canada was a task that this study had not planned to undertake. However, as the research evolved the researcher believed it was important to give a brief overview of the history to establish where Aboriginal education is today. Formal Native education in Canada began in the early 1800's when the government of the day built schools outside the reserves (Friedman & Friedman, 1981). The

1900's saw the relinquishment and transfer of government power over these schools to the mission societies. At this time the ideology of education based on Anglo values, culture (i.e., assimilation) had been seen as the best way to prepare Natives for the real world. While the intentions of these groups initially were honourable and good, the methods, teaching practices and regimental discipline led to misuse of power, abuse and overall, the system failed to protect the children.

After World War II there was a movement away from segregation to integration into the mainstream education systems (Friedman & Friedman, 1981). The Euro-centric nature of these programs and the often racist and insensitive attitudes of the administrators lead to the failure of Aboriginal education (Friedman & Friedman, 1981). Native education has led to a juxtaposition of terms, which created the problem of this bicultural enterprise that had been directed with two sometimes competing and sometimes complementary goals: assimilation and self-determination (Barman, Hébert & McCaskill, 1986; Fiordo, 1985; Friederes, 1996; Havingshurst, 1981). Assimilation has had detrimental consequences to Aboriginal education, culture and peoples. Unfortunately, it is an ideology that is still present today.

In recent years, Aboriginal peoples have been fighting for Native-controlled schools with some success. However, the concept of self-determination creates a conundrum. While federally funded native programs increase self-confidence, Native groups are still accountable to the Federal government and Indian and

Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), formerly known as the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (DIAND) (Friedman & Friedman, 1981). Today it is advocated that the concept of learning must incorporate traditional principles that enhance cultural identity, a major shortfall of the European educational system for Native peoples (Yellow Bird, 1990).

Post-Secondary Education for Aboriginal Peoples

Historically higher education has been one of exclusion and forced assimilation (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1990; Wright & Tierney, 1991). The first Canadian government initiative to encourage Aboriginal people to pursue post-secondary education began in the 1950's; however, it was only extended to status Native and Inuit peoples pursuing vocational and skilled-trades training (Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, 1989).

In the USA, Aboriginal higher education began with the Civil Rights Movement in the mid to late 1960's, which raised issues of equal access and affirmative action (Kidwell, 1991). In Canada, equity programs and Affirmative Action saw the development of federally funded programs and academic programs, such as Native teacher training and Native Studies programs. Securing federal funding for continuation of these programs and others has been difficult. Before 1979 federal funding intended for education was used elsewhere depending on department need and resources, often not on education. This misuse ended in 1979 when the Federal government funding initiatives became

mandatory. This ensured allocated education funds were used for their specific purpose. However, there is a lack of certainty in the continuance of federal education initiatives, one such program whose funding is uncertain is the post-secondary student assistance program. This particular program still does not have a legislative base, which would provide guaranteed protection of the program's future (Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, 1989).

University and college training was not incorporated into the post-secondary initiative program until 1983 when the Treasury Board approved the University and College Entrance Preparation Program (UCEP). The goal of UCEP was to provide financial assistance to registered Aboriginal and Inuit peoples pursuing university and college entrance programs. This and other Federal programs did not extend to non-status Aboriginal peoples and sometimes limited funding to those status Aboriginal students who lived off-reserve (Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, 1989).

In responding to minority attrition, Native studies programs were seen as mechanisms for recruitment and retention for American Indian students (Kidwell, 1991). However, since the 1980's many of these programs have disappeared due to lack of resources and interest (Kidwell, 1991). In Canada, while some institutions continue to offer Native studies and Native teacher education programs, Aboriginal peoples were still underrepresented as faculty and staff of these programs (Frank, 1991). In fact, Aboriginal peoples were found to be twice

as likely to not complete high school as are members of the general population, and of the twenty-three percent of First Nations people who pursue a college education, only 24% earn degrees (Armstrong, Kennedy, Oberle, 1990). Over the past two decades the Canadian Federal government expenditures on Aboriginal post-secondary education and Aboriginal student enrolment has grown rapidly. In 1985-6, the government spent \$6,535.36 per student totalling \$73 million on an Aboriginal student population of 11,170 (Senate Report, 1997). In 1996 this rose to \$10,346.15 a student, based on a funding budget of \$269 million for 26,000 students (Senate Report, 1997). While individual funding increased over \$4,000 dollars in ten years, one must keep in mind that over this same period, tuition, books and living costs also increased.

Overall, Aboriginal peoples have been underrepresented and have a high attrition rate despite governmental, institutional, and community initiatives in many Canadian universities. In Canada and the USA, institutions have been seeking ways of encouraging Aboriginal peoples to pursue graduate studies to ensure the survival of Native studies programs. The hiring of more Aboriginal faculty and staff with the goal of creating a supportive atmosphere conducive to increasing retention rates of Aboriginal students is one such strategy (Frank, 1992; Kidwell, 1991; McAlpine & Taylor, 1993).

History of Aboriginal Student Services

Aboriginal student services first began in the late 1970's in universities in Alberta and Saskatchewan. The remaining provinces and territories did not begin

establishing university specific support services until the early 1990's. Aboriginal services were often initiated by provincial government reports (Provincial Advisory Committee, 1990; Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 1999). With a goal of academic support for Aboriginal students, the creation of Native programs, such as Native teacher education or Native studies, positions were designed to help students with their academic transition to university. This role of the advisor evolved to include personal and financial advising, and establishing a cultural identity within the mainstream culture of the campus.

Post-Secondary Experiences of Aboriginal Peoples

Many believe post-secondary education has the capacity to equip Native peoples with the knowledge and skills required to survive in today's world. More importantly, it provides Aboriginal peoples with the skills and knowledge that moves them closer to self-government, which includes their own holistic education system (Danziger, 1996).

You will not get an argument about the value post-secondary education has brought about to our communities . . . the real changes are happening because our people are going to university and taking their skills and using them, with the knowledge of our old people, to start to make meaningful changes in our community.
George Watts, President of the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council
(Danziger, 1996, p.30)

The growing value of a post-secondary education has resulted from a combination of factors: the growing First Nation population; higher graduate rates of Aboriginal high school students; the development of relevant post-secondary programs; an increase in accessibility and of course, political influence, whether

through federal funding or the cognizant awareness of many Aboriginal peoples of the importance of education in their goal for self-government (Danziger, 1996).

For many Native groups, empowerment through education is an aspiration of the people, not of a sole individual (Barnhardt, 1993).

Key to the future for any society lies in the transmission of its culture and worldview to succeeding generations... It is for this reason that Aboriginal peoples have placed such a high priority on regaining control over the education of their children (Barman, Hébert & McCaskill, 1986, p. 1).

Transition experiences and preparation issues

The current challenge of educating Aboriginal people through mainstream formal schooling has been largely a matter of imposing the Western worldview on the Aboriginal one (Christie, 1985; Friedman & Friedman, 1981; Yellowbird, 1990). For a large percentage of Aboriginal peoples this type of education system has failed them, not only academically, but also personally and psychologically.

An individual's world experiences are shaped by the sets of values and norms transmitted from the family during the socialization period (Lin, 1990). Attending a predominately Euro-Western education system influenced by Euro-Western values causes conflict with traditional Native values (Ryan, 1995). As a result of conflicting systems, Native students face substantial adjustments to the Euro-western tradition of schooling that may have a decisive impact on their ability to do well in their programs (Ryan, 1995).

How well Aboriginal students adjust to their new environment plays a

significant role in the way Native students deal with their schoolwork (Ryan, 1995). Some difficulties Aboriginal students experienced in their transition to post-secondary education were: finding and keeping suitable accommodation, handling family concerns, managing finances and dealing with racial discrimination (Ryan, 1995). Those Native students who move to a city to attend post-secondary education, experienced many stresses, two of which were: 1) increased anxiety about the transition and 2) decreased time spent on their school work due to family responsibilities (Ryan, 1995). Other issues faced by Aboriginal students were preparation for post-secondary education, followed by the application of knowledge, skills, and necessary attitudes for success along with the student's personal views toward attendance in college (Hoover & Jacobs, 1992). Winter (1999) identified health problems, alcohol abuse, financial stress, racism, academic preparation, time management, support, motivation, and certain aspects of the urban and academic environments as factors that influenced Aboriginal students' progress. These factors do not exist in isolation; often they interact compounding the stresses in students' lives (Winter, 1999).

The negative effect of conflicting value systems was further supported by Wilson's (1994) who pointed out that success or failure in school was more often a reflection of society's social and cultural structure than a result of any person's individual attributes. In this context, such conflicting value systems were believed to have detrimental implications for Aboriginal people.

Preparation for any post-secondary education should occur in high school.

However, many researchers were finding that even this preparation was not adequate (Brady, 1996; Johnson & Boehm, 1995; Moore-Eyman, 1981). A model of successful transition situated in a high school setting was the Teulon residence in Manitoba, where 90% of the students who lived at the residence enjoyed staying there because of the home style environment and the friendships formed in an orderly and secure setting (Knight, Hulburt, & Paydzierski, 1986).

Transition issues, such as finding suitable accommodations and adjusting to a new environment, could be addressed with similar programming modified to the post-secondary students needs. While 90% did enjoy their experiences at the Teulon residence, it is important to examine why 10% did not. Knight et al. (1986) reported staff conflict, lack of privacy, distance from home, discipline, boredom and loneliness as some reasons students did not enjoy their residence experience. Addressing these not-so-positive issues are important considerations in developing successful transition programming.

Perspectives and perceptions

Vaala's (1993) research on post-secondary experiences found students' experiences in college influenced students' self-perceptions and their academic environment. Both Native and non-Native participants viewed aspects of their relationship with their families differently after a year at college (Vaala, 1993). Vaala (1993) also found that the extent to which college programs had a specific career orientation strongly influenced Native student's perceptions of their experiences.

In their research of minority students, Madrazo-Peterson & Rodriguez (1978) found students perceived many of the university and community activities were directed toward majority members in the environment. This resulted in feelings of anger, frustration, and helplessness to which students responded by either mentally disassociating themselves or physically leaving the campus. Livingston & Stewart (1987) also looked at perceived experiences of minority students in a predominately white campus. Their results indicated there was a need for special programming for minority students that addressed their specific interests, especially programs or services that provided a practical and personal benefit.

Withdrawal and achievement

Aboriginal people are only one-third as likely to go to university and are only half as likely as other Canadians to earn a university degree (Armstrong, Kennedy, & Oberle, 1990). Students had several reasons for withdrawing from university, however, determining the likelihood of a student withdrawing from their education is a difficult task. Johnson & Boehm (1995) described the withdrawing student as one who was taking three to four courses in contrast to a full course load and was less likely to drop a course for they did not recognize their incompatibility with the course and therefore, did not withdraw. These students also had insufficient time management skills and tended to work more-than-average part time hours. Overall, the student was less likely to be fully integrated into campus life. Childcare problems were five times more likely among

Aboriginal students who withdrew in comparison to those who continued (Johnson & Boehm, 1995). Identifying high risk students and finding ways to encourage their use of learning assistance would increase participation in such services and increase student's success in the post-secondary environment (Suddick & Owens, 1982).

Success in university from the Euro-Western perspective is based on whether or not one graduates. This, in turn, reflected the monetary gains one will receive based on their level of educational attainment. As observed by Yellow Bird (1990):

One of the major differences between our traditional system of learning and the European methodology of teaching, is that among the European cultures, an acquired level of education will determine how much money you can make.
(Yellow Bird, 1990, p.297).

However, for many Aboriginal people success was based on actually having attended university. Completion of the degree or convocation is not a measure of success for them (Archibald et al., 1995). Finding ways to qualitatively measure a student's success relative to personal growth from attitude change, life experiences and different learning styles would be more effective measures of the "success" of an individual student. Astin (1984) goes further to define success based on student involvement, which he defines as: *student involvement refers to the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience*" (Astin, 1984, p.297). He further states that success is based on the degree to which a student is successfully involved in their academic

experience.

“The central challenge to education [was] to find ways to build bridges of understanding between the separate realities of Native peoples and mainstream society” (Douglas, 1986, p.181). In comparing academic achievement between Sioux and mainstream students, Huffman, Sill & Brokenleg (1986) found that cultural definition of success was different for the two groups. Mainstream students, linked educational achievement to GPA and parental encouragement to attend college. For the Sioux, success in college was more related to their cultural identity, for example, retention of their traditional cultural identity and heritage facilitated a strong sense of personal self-esteem and confidence.

Lin (1990) concluded that family values (e.g., traditional versus modern) influenced academic achievement, and that success required dedication and sacrifice. Students from traditional families: authoritarian, parent-centred and work-centred, have internalized these values so that they can overcome external limitations, such as, lack of support and encouragement (Lin, 1990). The out-performance of ‘traditional-value’ students over ‘modern-value’ students reinforces the importance of a value-orientation towards tasks and achievements (Lin, 1990).

Student achievement has been linked with campus integration (Johnson & Boehm, 1995; Bers & Smith, 1991). Campus integration was described as the extent to which students integrate into campus social life (Johnson & Boehm, 1995). Students who were more “integrated” in their environment tend to be

more successful in completion of their college programs (Bers & Smith, 1991). Another important influence on success is institutional variables that have been associated with differential student post-secondary persistence (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1983; Stampen & Cabrera, 1986). Increasing programming and recruiting more minority students, faculty and staff were identified as directions to be taken to increase achievement and decrease the stress experienced by minority students (Frank, 1991; Madrazo-Peterson & Rodriguez, 1978). Canadian examples of successful integration programs are the Red Lodge of the Native Student Services in Calgary and the Longhouse in British Columbia. Both have been able to provide an environment which fosters the legitimization of Aboriginal identity within mainstream institutions (Archibald et al., 1995; Moore-Eyman, 1981).

Recruitment and retention

The mandate of many student affairs offices includes a retention focus (Padilla et al., 1997). However, very little of the literature focuses on the retention of the Native American student (Henderson, 1991). To understand Aboriginal student retention, student service professionals need to be knowledgeable about the following issues: parental involvement, financial support, academic preparation, campus support, and value conflicts (Falk & Aitken, 1984). Klienfield, Cooper, & Kyle (1987) also mentioned pre-college orientation programs, special student services and career focused programs as issues to consider in relation to Aboriginal students. Westit Lacounte (1987) also identified

financial resources, bilingualism and career awareness as variables that influenced Aboriginal students' persistence with post-secondary education.

Milem & Berger (1997) found that various forms of involvement influenced students' perceptions of support and in turn, effected student's levels of institutional commitment. Balancing Aboriginal traditions amidst mainstream is a delicate balance. Milem & Berger (1997) revealed that an over involvement in the area of traditional social activities, academic engagement and non-engagement with the university might have detrimental effects on students. Therefore, through the establishment of an atmosphere and physical environment that was congenial and compatible with traditional forms, Aboriginal student service centres were able to create a sense of balance that was more likely to make students feel comfortable (Barnhardt, 1993; Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991; Strange, 1983, 1993).

Research in understanding why students' succeed provided insight into retention issues. Padilla, Treviño, Gonzalez, & Treviño (1997) found that discontinuity barriers such as, transition obstacles to university, were perceived by minority students in distinct ways. Successful minority students expected there would be challenges. These expectations prepared them to take action to overcome challenges such as: lack of nurturing barriers and lack of presence barriers. Students created a support base with other students with the same ethnic background; promoted individual independence; joined student groups, sought out other nurturing people, used available resources and acted as

informed consumers about their chosen academic path and careers to overcome these barriers (Padilla et al., 1997). Early financial planning, budgeting, and pursuit of academic excellence for scholarships helped students overcome resource barriers, such as finances (Padilla et al., 1997).

To enhance the use of Aboriginal support services effective alternatives have to be sought out in the research community. For example, the hiring of Aboriginal staff was viewed as increasing the likelihood of the services use by Aboriginal students (e.g., Aboriginal counsellors in the Counselling centre) (Haviland, Horsewill, O'Connell, & Dynneson, 1982; Suddick & Owens, 1982). Researchers Lin, LaCounte, & Eder (1988) found that improvements made to the campus environment were directly related to improvements in the academic performance of Native students.

While research has shown the importance of student services in retention, the impact of faculty in retaining students was also considered (Hornett, 1989). The balance between adjusting to the mainstream culture and maintaining one's own self-identity results in what Hornett (1989) called 'cultural counterpoise'. Faculty recognition and respect of differences between Anglo-mainstream and Aboriginal students, and recognition of the fact that Aboriginal students did not want to become part of the mainstream culture sent an important message of the Faculty's acceptance of individuality (Hornett, 1989).

Providing solid upgrading and support services, particularly to first year Aboriginal university students who lack traditional high school credentials, was

seen as a way to achieve personal and academic success and to improve retention rates (Johnson & Boehm, 1995). Transition programs that incorporated and were sensitive to First Nations principles of self-determination also encouraged success and retention (Widick & Simpson, 1978). Partnership initiatives in offering programs like university or college transition programs provided an improved educational environment for Aboriginal students. Taking the initiative to educate and lead staff and programs that are culturally aware and sensitive to Aboriginal students increased and fostered trusting relationships between student services and Aboriginal groups as well as increased recruitment and retention rates (Falk & Aitken, 1984; Klienfield et al., 1987; Meyers, 1997).

Making a case for Aboriginal student services

There is a growing consciousness among Aboriginal peoples of their need for post-secondary education and professional services. However, they are still under-represented in most post-secondary institutions (Henderson, 1991).

Therefore, pressure has been exerted by Aboriginal groups to secure special university programs or support services to recruit and support Native students, especially for those Aboriginal students for whom the high school system was inappropriate (Moore-Eyman, 1981). Support services are important because it has been demonstrated that they empower students to fully participate in higher education and enrich their institutions with their presence (Wright, 1998).

Brady's (1996) research on high school dropouts, found that Native and non-Native dropouts share many of the same feelings of alienation from the

educational system. These feelings have origins from the same source: the failure of the system to accommodate students who come from backgrounds other than that of the mainstream middle class cultures. Brady (1996) goes further to state students, Native or non-Native, are dis-empowered by an educational system that is geared towards meeting the needs and aspirations of a mainstream clientele. To increase achievement and success in mainstream society, these errors must not be repeated in universities. Institutions must realize the importance of diversity and reflect it in their programs, services, and physical surroundings.

Livingston & Stewart (1987) reported 71% of responding institutions in the USA indicated a special social, educational, and cultural programming for Aboriginal students. From an institutional perspective, resource reductions, external economic factors and more importantly, the overall changing demographics of student populations compound service provision to students. Student populations are diversifying, moving away from the traditional college-age, 18 to 21 years, mainstream student to an older-than-average, older than 21, ethnic minority population (Barnes, Morton, & Austin, 1983; Kidwell, 1991). As a result, student affairs and services must assume their vital role in supporting, facilitating, and enhancing the multicultural mission of higher education (Grieger, 1996).

The current problems, concerning the retention of minority students in institutions of higher learning, supports the notion for greater specificity in

addressing the needs of different minority populations (Livingston & Stewart, 1987). This provides further evidence of the need for services that cater to Aboriginal university student population.

Mainstream students - similarities and differences

To understand the perspective of Aboriginal students, it is important to understand what makes their educational experiences different from and similar to mainstream culture. In reviewing the literature on Aboriginal students, very few researchers had explored the differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students (Fogarty & White, 1994; Lin, LaCounte & Eder, 1988; Livingston & Stewart, 1987). These researchers sought to describe Aboriginal students' experiences as minority students attending a predominately white campus. However, they did not effectively address: 1) the difference between the two student bodies, and 2) the student services' role in enhancing Aboriginal support service delivery and development.

Padilla, Treviño, Gonzalez, & Treviño (1997) found barriers to success such as discontinuity, lack of nurturing, lack of presence and resources were often not an issue for non-Native students. This was due to the abundance of supports at the high school, university, and family levels and from the larger society that helped majority students successfully confront these challenges. However, Padilla et al. (1997) concluded that many minority students had little to no support. Therefore, to be successful, these students had to learn how to initiate getting support.

The use of the terms, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal or mainstream and minority brings to the forefront the debate of identity and the dichotomy of using 'us/them' terms in relation to social perceptions. Calliou (1998) examined the issues of belonging, entitlement, representation and autonomy within the context of this debate. She found that using these 'binary' terms often conflicted with some traditional Aboriginal teachings which state that all humans are beings and therefore should be members of the same family (Calliou, 1998). The view that all students are not alike was supported by Heath's (1978) work on personality development of higher education students. Heath (1978) found that among the predominately white, upper-middle class males variations of temperament and maturity influenced the development of personality. The role of student affairs and service professionals in this dichotomy has been to help those involved find a balance between the two cultures (Westit LaCounte, 1987). It was recognized that the Aboriginal students who do not want assimilation and the Insititutions should realize the growing diversity on their campuses and its importance (Westit LaCounte, 1987).

The social perceptions of who is and who is not Aboriginal creates criteria to self-ascribe to one group or another. To belong to both leaves one in limbo while ascribing to the non-mainstream group leaves one trying to maintain their own self-identity and all that entails within a mainstream culture. In addressing the different value systems of Aboriginal and mainstream culture, Fogarty & White (1994) described Aboriginal students as having collectivist values where non-

Aboriginal students had individualistic values. Also, for many Native Americans the value of unity with nature is incompatible with the Western Industrial culture view of reshaping nature to fit humans (Osipow & Littlejohn, 1995). Fiordo (1985) identified different communication styles between Aboriginal and mainstream students; while Aboriginal students communicated in a soft-spoken nature others were outspoken. For instance, in a communication training class, the challenge was to teach Aboriginal students how to succeed in this setting. Firstly as future educators, they had to realize the importance of and need for 'outspoken' communication in a classroom setting (Fiordo, 1985). Secondly, these students also had to realize that this outspokenness need not be construed as diminishing their identity as Native peoples. They just had to adapt their communication style depending on the situation (Fiordo, 1985).

In discussing self-concept of Navajo and non-Aboriginal students, Heaps & Morrill (1979) found that Navajo students demonstrated less satisfaction with their personal identities than non-Aboriginal students on matters concerning moral ethnic self and relations with other people and more social defensiveness. The two groups were comparable on their intra-personal evaluation. However, in respect to their social and moral values, the two cultures differed. To ensure success in a mainstream institution, Navajo students needed to be aware of, and have acquired commensurate values and skills needed to adjust to a new culture, and maintain their cultural identity (Heaps & Morrill, 1979).

Hoover & Jacob's (1992) developed a survey to identify self-perceptions

toward college instruction, personal feelings about attendance at college, and study skills. When Hoover & Jacobs (1992) surveyed American Indian college students attending the annual American Indian Science and Engineering Society, they found adequate preparation in academic areas was least important to the students. Students expressed more concern over the need for career guidance and counselling (Hoover & Jacob, 1992). Vaala (1993) found that Native students, as a group, developed similar perceptions about aspects of their college experiences that transcended program boundaries, which set these students' perceptions apart from those of non-Native students.

Oppelt (1989) provided a description of "common" characteristics of traditional-reservation American Indians. He described the traditional reservation Indian as one who had: 1) a no rush attitude in respect to time; 2) strong values such as sharing "a rich man is one who gives everything he owns away", co-operation and group membership; 3) beliefs in spiritual causes of illnesses and problems; 4) high regard and concern for family (which includes the entire community); and 5) one who placed a high respect and value on group dynamics. While his presentations provided some insight into Native ideology and worldviews, Oppelt's (1989) work brings attention to an important issue, the issue of racial stereotypes.

Generalizations of characteristics can be mistaken as an encompassing description of "all" Aboriginal peoples, which leads to misinformed stereotypes. For example, not all Aboriginal peoples live on reserves, for those that do their

experiences and unique cultural background, even the socio-economic status of the reserve influences who they are. Therefore, Oppelt's (1989) description of a typical Native person from the USA would not necessarily fit an Aboriginal person who lives on a Canadian reserve. It is crucial for any individual to educate themselves with respect to the diversity and uniqueness of the Aboriginal peoples in Canada

Aboriginal people do not represent one monolithic cultural system. Each group has their own unique culture, language and different kinship systems. They are a heterogeneous group, not homogenous (Henderson, 1991; Johnson, Swartz, & Martin, 1995; Martin, 1995; McAlpine & Taylor, 1993). Being aware of this diversity is especially important for student service professionals. For example, Native American students' preference for a male or female counsellor will vary with their cultural values (Haviland et al., 1982). McAlpine & Taylor's (1993) study found that Aboriginal teachers instructional preferences may be of benefit to their students. They also found that there was a difference between the teaching preferences between different Aboriginal groups. This provides supporting evidence of the diversity of Aboriginal peoples.

Danziger (1996) summarized Aboriginal students as having these general needs: 1) better preparation for post-secondary education; 2) improved campus support (e.g., First Nations orientation, on-campus counselling, student groups and drop-in centres); and 3) increased community understanding of the importance of higher education.

Counsellors and student service professionals must understand the cultural environmental factors and individual characteristics, such as: language use, cultural orientation, home community, family system and communication style of their Aboriginal clients (Martin, 1995). Student services and the university community, in educating themselves and increasing their awareness of the cultural differences between groups, would help them understand their students and educate staff on the meeting the expectations of different Aboriginal students.

Learning styles

A growing body of research on Aboriginal learning styles supports the need for support services for Aboriginal student services, outside of the services present for mainstream students (Chrisjohn & Peters, 1986; Kaulback, 1984; Macias, 1989; More, 1987; Pepper & Henry, 1986; Rhodes, 1990; Sawyer, 1991; Stellem, Collins, Gutierrez & Patterson, 1986; Tafoya, 1989; Wauters, Merrill-Bruce, Black & Hoher, 1989). Of the aforementioned research, only Kaulback's (1984) and Sawyer's (1991) research were conducted in Canada, reinforcing the need for Canadian content.

While this study was not focusing on Aboriginal learning styles, it was deemed relevant to discuss this important issue in relation to the need for and understanding of Aboriginal support services. The Western definition of learning has lead to the misguided belief that all people learn the same way. However, both Wauters et al. (1989) and Wilson (1994) found there were differences

between mainstream and minority learning styles. Wilson (1994) found Native students tested high in categories of "active experimentation" or "concrete experience", meaning they learn best in small groups with projects and specific examples. On the other hand, she found mainstream students to be more "abstract conceptual", that is, logical and analytical. Native students were found to require more personal interaction than mainstream students, therefore, accessibility, approachability, and availability would contribute to First Nations student's overall performance and success on academic and student services dimensions (Wilson, 1994).

"Learning preferences are distinctive ways in which individuals learn from their environment" (Walker, Dodd, & Bigelow, 1989, p.63). In a study by Walker, Dodd & Bigelow (1989) learning preferences were based on the interaction of two continua. One was organization of information either sequentially or simultaneously, and the other continua were based on the kind of information used. The combinations of these learning preferences resulted in four categories of learner: the outlined-symbols, patterned-symbols, patterned-events, or outlined-events. Current demands on the public school curriculum best suits the learning style of an outlined-events learner, that is, someone who prefers to learn the discrete parts and facts of the subject. Walker, Dodd & Bigelow (1989) found that American Indian students' learning preferences were evenly distributed among the females, while males seemed to prefer pattern-symbol learning. Males preferred learning in small group discussions held in a non-competitive

atmosphere, which encourage personal interpretations. Interest is a key factor in their learning. Therefore, structured presentations and assigned seatwork, common in public schools was counter-productive to these learners. Being aware of early learner preference is important to ensure that conflicting teaching environments are not continued at the post-secondary level and do not have drastic affects on the retention rates of Native Americans.

Some believe in order to facilitate academic success for minority groups, it is appropriate to concentrate on areas which will enhance their cognitive development, rather than focusing on problems which may appear to be unique to their particular group (Fleming, 1982). While this idea attempts to put all people in the same "cognitive development scale", it does not consider the other factors that influence one's cognitive development, especially different cultural child rearing practices and cultural values. For example, Walker, Dodd & Bigelow (1989) found that learning style preferences might provide cognitive strength for simultaneous processing.

Darou's (1992) findings also support this notion of cultural impact on cognitive development. In his examination of IQ testing, Darou (1992) found that while all tests bias Native peoples, there are a few, such as Kohs blocks, which are biased for those Native people who grew up in the bush. Bush survival was dependant on their ability to recognize patterns which were the key test measure in Kohs blocks. Therefore, their culture of living in the bush strongly influenced their cognitive development in pattern recognition.

Yellow Bird (1990) also made mention of the differences between European and First Nation students in their approach in problem solving; while European's approached a problem linearly, Aboriginal learners took a holistic and circular process. The fact that many Aboriginal students were taught in a culturally discontinuous environment at school and post-secondary levels may have hindered their own development of culturally-biased pedagogues (McAlpine & Taylor, 1993).

In terms of intelligence testing, an important measure of success for American Indians were the three simultaneous processing tests (localization, orientation, and form completion) (Dingman, Mroczka, & Brady, 1995). Unfortunately, these three components are not normally included in standardized testing. However, the Gestalt Closure and Spatial Memory Test of the K-ABC assess the same cognitive functions as the three of CLB (Dingman, Mroczka, & Brady, 1985).

Even brain dominance has been associated with traditions and cultures, Ross (1982) described the development of the right hemisphere dominance in Native Americans as a result of children's informal education occurring through observation, perception, examples, and story telling. However, his argument is weakened by the broad generalizations about traditional Native Americans. As in Oppelt's (1989) work, Ross's (1982) generalizations pigeonhole Native Americans as one type, Native Americans are diverse, not homogeneous, the concept of traditional varies amongst groups. Therefore, while right hemisphere

dominance does have some validation within Native learning, more concrete research should be undertaken. Broad generalizations often lead to misunderstandings, which can have detrimental effects on the education of Native peoples and the delivery of Aboriginal support services, and therefore should be avoided.

Focusing on learning styles is important for it reflects the socio-cultural implications and suggestions for improving education teaching methods and service delivery. These differences in learning styles means that professors and student service professionals need to change strategies to make their programs or courses more personal and interactive, while at the same time ensuring the programs are both culturally and academically sensitive to the needs of Aboriginal students. Equipping educators, counsellors and student service professionals with the means of identifying potential for academic success would provide them with the means to help Aboriginal students and increase retention rates (Dingman, Mroczka, & Brady, 1995).

Collier (1993) provided some helpful hints for college educators of Aboriginal students: students feel uncomfortable when they are put on the spot by teachers calling on them; students find small group work most effective; humour always has a place in the classroom; and student-professional personnel relations are important. Student service professionals could use these hints in the day-to-day interactions with Aboriginal students, especially in developing programs. For example, a leadership program which was group-oriented, had

enjoyable tasks and involved a lot of interaction between the students and the student service professional would be more successful with Aboriginal students, than a program which was individualistic, independent task oriented and had minimal contact with a student service professional.

In attempting to gain insight about Aboriginal student's needs from their perspective, programs can be developed which directly meet their needs. The aforementioned studies emphasized the need for increased understanding of Aboriginal students' needs.

The Need for Canadian Content

The majority of the research conducted on Aboriginal students' post-secondary experiences has been conducted in the United States (Fleming, 1982) or in the Central and Western provinces of Canada (e.g., Danziger, 1996; Moore-Eyman, 1981; Ryan, 1995; Vaala, 1993). This study was an attempt to broaden the circle of research to include the experiences of Aboriginal peoples from the setting of Canadian universities and their affiliated institutions.

Fleming (1982) addressed the effect of social acculturation between Navajo and mainstream culture. Vaala (1993) explored Aboriginal perceptions on two educational programs while Ryan (1995) described the transition experiences of Aboriginal students from rural to urban life. Both Brady (1996) and Johnson & Boehm (1995) explored the issue of withdrawal from post-secondary education, while Hoover & Jacobs (1992) examined American Indians perception towards successful completion of college.

The lack of a theory of Native education hampers research but more importantly it impedes the practice and development of Native education (Hampton, 1996). Badwound & Tierney (1988) also supported the need for more research that reflected Aboriginal values. While this study was not attempting to develop a theory, it does provide the beginning stages of research required in developing such a theory. This study hoped to expand on these issues and to explore and describe the expectations, experiences and needs of Aboriginal university students in Canada.

Student Affairs and Services

Programming in student affairs and services was traditionally a non-systematic process influenced by the interest of staff, responding to student requests and political considerations and expectancy (Hurst, 1978). During the 1970's, institutions of higher learning for the most part, were relying upon traditional student service programs to assist all students, including minority students (Madrado-Peterson & Rodriguez, 1978). In fact in their literature review, Madrado-Peterson & Rodriguez (1978) made note of the fact that no investigations of Native American students had been reported up to the late 1970's. Only since the early 1980's has student affairs and services and higher learning institutions begun to focus on Aboriginal students. This study was another move to continue this change, moving toward a national perspective on Aboriginal student services in Canadian universities.

The provision of student services to Aboriginal students is important for

several reasons: 1) potential partnerships between Aboriginal organizations and Canadian Universities (Degen, 1985; Ignace, Boelscher Ignace, Layton, Sharman & Yerbury, 1996); 2) achievement and retention issues (Falk & Aitken, 1984; Henderson, 1991; Meyers, 1997; Wright, 1985); 3) university preparation issues (Beaty & Beaty Chiste, 1986); 4) institutional and community cultural relevance and sensitivity (Arvizu, 1995); and 5) post-secondary provision of Aboriginal support services (Collier, 1993; Moore-Eyman, 1981; Oppelt, 1981).

Aboriginal Student Services

The need for Aboriginal support services is validated by the research of Dodd, Garcia, Meccage, & Nelson (1995) who found 75% of surveyed American Indian students in Montana would go to support services first for academic help. Arizu (1995), Falk & Aitken (1984) and Henderson (1981) made several recommendations for the need and benefits of specific student support services for Aboriginal students.

"Gatekeeping encounters" (Erickson, 1976) are face-to-face encounters in which one can affect the social mobility of another in an institution. As Calliou (1998) pointed out the social labels used to 'categorize' individuals into one group or another could also create a hyperconsciousness among those trying to maintain political correctness and their own self-identity. Aboriginal student services professionals are constantly being faced with the challenge of social stereotypes and gatekeeping encounters that have implications on their work and personal lives. Being aware of differing communication style (Scollon & Scollon,

1981) and differing philosophy from Western world (Beaty & Beaty Chiste, 1986) assists the student service professional mediate between Aboriginal communities, groups or students and the institution and its faculty.

The most salient and significant characteristic of Indigenous higher education institutions was their strong sense of commitment to the collective interests of the indigenous community with which they were associated (Barnhardt, 1993). This same belief could be transcended to Aboriginal student services across Canada, broadening their commitment to the interests of the diverse Aboriginal population on campus and in their communities. This brings to the forefront the term 'town & gown' issues, the extent to which Aboriginal student service centres are able to transcend conventional institutional concerns and demonstrate a culturally relevant commitment to the community will determine its success and acceptance.

In order to assist Native peoples, student services professionals need to work with students and their home communities in a caring fashion to ensure the university experiences students have are both, personal and meaningful. Students require programs that promote individual and cultural needs; programs that are holistic, reflect students' personal, spiritual, physical and emotional well being. These programs are the keys to the university success of First Nations students.

The sacred circle or medicine wheel of many First Nations teachings promote unity, continuity, and interconnectedness in all aspects of one's life,

personal, physical, spiritual and social (Anderson, 1998; Battiste & Barman, 1996). Coyhis (1997) made the connection between the use of the sacred circle in teaching about the life cycle and in Erickson's work on the eight stages of development. Yellow Bird (1990) used the medicine wheel as an analogy to the problem solving process. Pepper & Henry (1991) used the medicine wheel to explain the inter-relatedness and the development of a child's self-esteem as part of the life cycle.

Calliou (1998) used the four directions of the Wheel to illustrate the development of being and the similarities and differences between two human groups: First Nations and non-First Nations. The North represents cognitive realm, representation while the South is the emotional realm, belonging/not belonging. The East encompasses the spiritual realm, autonomy with out arrogance and the Western direction is the physical realm, entitlement/no entitlement. While the sacred circle has been promoted as a holistic teaching model (Anderson, 1998), it has yet to be applied to student services, and more specifically, Aboriginal student services in a formalized manner.

Martin (1994) found student services for minority students (i.e., library services) were not met until librarian's perceptions of their needs were the same. Therefore, the student service professional's perceptions of need are a critical factor in shaping student affairs and services' response to Aboriginal students, hence their inclusion in this study.

Similar to Sandeen's (1991) description of a good chief student affairs

officer, Klienfield et al. (1987) described the qualities of a good counsellor: knowing the student's background; knowing students' expectations; establishing programs that are student based; being a bureaucratic worker; knowing your satellite workers; and maintaining personal nurturance. These characteristics would enable any student service professionals to appropriately and successfully work with Aboriginal students and organizations.

Aboriginal support services should also be aware of the local Aboriginal groups present on their campus (including languages, customs, and ways of life) and any local Aboriginal resources and events (Arvizu, 1995; Meyers, 1997). Through cultivating personal contacts on the campus and in the community, student service professionals establish trust and the personal contact with students (Arizu, 1995; Meyers, 1997). Establishing trust and faith in Aboriginal community is crucial for any initiative undertaken to support Aboriginal student success, and to establish networks in which parents and Native communities encourage and support students' efforts (Falk & Aitken, 1984; Meyers, 1997 and Sandeen, 1991). Another area where Aboriginal student services could expand in is in building bridges to public schools (e.g., transfer credits) (Henderson, 1981).

Student service professionals could also do several things on a personal level to assist Aboriginal post-secondary students. For example, professionals could keep unscheduled drop-in hours (Arizu, 1995); be flexible in advising (Arizu, 1995); supplement college preparation for students, especially in math, budgetary

skills and career development (Falk & Aitken, 1984); establish a "renewal centre" on campus staffed by Aboriginal people (Henderson, 1981); and more importantly, encourage personal motivation (Falk & Aitken, 1984). Another piece of advice provided by Arizu (1995) was do not ask general questions about Aboriginal peoples. Aboriginal students are quite diverse and can only speak on their own behalf. Professionals should also feel free to ask honest questions but be prepared to listen to and consider the answer (Arizu, 1995).

Within the institution, Aboriginal support services and the institution's administration can encourage and support institutional commitment to Aboriginal post-secondary education. To have Aboriginal students feel comfortable in their environment, their physical surroundings should contain cultural relevance for them (Astin, 1968; Astin, 1982; Lin, LaCounte, & Eder, 1988; Strange, 1983, 1993). Creating the feeling one belongs or has a place on campus, that is creating sense of ownership of the campus has been identified as a key to retention (Tinto, 1987).

Many initiatives for support and funding must begin with an idea and a leader. Therefore, the student service professional working with Aboriginal support services should be someone who can lead program development (Meyers, 1997) such as: social adjustment programs, academic support services, cultural awareness, pre-college preparation programs, financial aid services, and on-campus student groups.

Smith (1982) found that institutions and their environments have an impact

on individuals and group through: 1) organizational structure (e.g., size student-faculty ratio and lines of authority); 2) physical setting; 3) human aggregate; and 4) psychosocial climate. All four dimensions assist in the identification of the positive and not-so-positive aspects of institutions and help develop goals for change and improvement. Hornett (1989) provided the following guidelines in working with Aboriginal students: understand and deal with racism; recognize non-traditional leadership skills; recognize the need for strong support person; recognize need for long range and short-term goals and objectives, and more importantly, recognize the need for understanding self and a positive self-image. The work of Hornett (1992), Meyers (1997) and Smith (1982) provide the beginnings of a framework which would be used to identify Aboriginal needs within the institution and within student services.

Theory and student services models

Historically, student services were often pragmatic, using a reactive approach (Smith, 1982). There is growing pressure for accountability within student services for what is done, why it is done and how well it is done (Harpel, 1975). This move for accountability comes from many stakeholders, the general public, alumni, governments (federal, provincial, student), faculties and students themselves. "Accountability is really a struggle for educational definition in terms of goals, objectives, program design, performance and outcomes" (p. 11) (Barnes, Morton, & Austin, 1983).

While many public institutions have been losing financial ground, many

student service departments remain relatively stable in both private and public institutions. One must question how this demand for accountability affects the provision of Aboriginal student services. Accountability systems allow student service professionals to make decisions concerning program status and maintain acceptable levels of performance through the setting of goals and measurable performance outcomes for all involved (staff and programs) (Barnes, Morton, & Austin, 1983; Harpel, 1975). This process enables student services to become more efficient in managing, implementing, evaluating support programs and staff.

Theories provide the framework in which to develop programs or the hypothesis to understand and predict (Hurst, 1978). A theory should: make predictions that account for a wide range of behaviour; allow inclusion of findings within a logical framework; and generate testable hypothesis (Evans, Fornez, Guido-DiBrito, 1998). Models take a theoretical base to create a practical use. Process models use recommendations for connecting theory to practice, while procedural models present a particular way of accomplishing some aspect of student affairs practice (Evans et al., 1998).

Demographic projections of changing diversity within student populations has led some practitioners to reconsider the current practice of student affairs. Formal student development models declare that the purpose of higher education is the development and growth of the whole person (Smith, 1982). The cognitive, affective, social, psychomotor skills for the development of the individual are seen as legitimate and important for higher education. However, in focusing on the

student services model, institutions have been for the most part isolated, for the model has not incorporated the institutional mission, academic, and intellectual development. Student affairs to be successful must be seen by the institutions and itself as part of the institution, both supporting the institutional mission (Grieger, 1996).

Evans, Fomez, & Guido-DiBrits (1998) for their discussion of college student development reviewed several pertinent student services models such as, practise to theory to practise model, grounded formal theory model (Roger & Widicks, 1980), the cube (Morrill, Oetting, & Hurst, 1974) and the developmental intervention model (Evans, 1987). Kurt Lewin's (1936) formula $B = f(PXE)$ has also become an important cornerstone of student development theory. This formula states that behaviour is a function of the person interacting with their environment, it has been used to develop several theories/models such as: Challenge and support (Sanford, 1966), Involvement (Astin, 1984) and Marginality and Mattering (Schlossberg, 1984, 1989). In her review of some multicultural theories, such as Friere's Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Minority Identity Development Model, and Student Development Theory, Manning (1994) provided some examples of the use of theory to practice. Student and moral development are influenced by the challenges and experiences students face in their psychosocial development (Chickering, 1968, 1993). Benjamin & Hollings (1997) found that social relationships and self-evaluations played an important role in student satisfaction and noted that student satisfaction is a multifaceted

complex issue.

In a time of change in campus diversity, focus has shifted from providing services based on mainstream needs and an expectation to providing services for and to minority populations on campus. Whether the population is students older than average, students with disabilities, international students, part-time or distance students, or ethnic minority groups, such as Aboriginal peoples, institutions, student affairs and services offices, and researchers have been attempting to meet the changing demands of students. All have recognized that students are not all the same but unique and so are their needs and expectations (Cross, 1971; Heath, 1978; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). While multicultural sensitive services enhance the quantity of service provision to minority groups, Betz & Fitzgerald (1995) also suggested that the entire field would gain from the integration of values from other cultures.

There are many student services theories that attempt to "explain" the university student, their experiences and issues, such as: transition, finances, recruitment, retention, ownership, campus environment and withdrawal. Several student service theories dealing with minority students have been developed by Astin (1982; 1984)- student involvement theory, college environment; Cross (1971)- new students; Gilligan (1982)- feminism; Pedersen (1988)- multicultural awareness; Strange (1983,1993)- campus ecology and Tinto (1991)- ownership and retention.

Chickering's seven vectors (1969): achieving competence, managing

emotions, becoming autonomous, establishing identity, freeing interpersonal relationship, clarifying purpose and developing integrity are a widely used model in understanding the post-secondary students' development. Included are three overlapping stages: humanizing values, personalizing values and congruence of values and behaviours. While Chickering's (1969) earlier work identified the stages of development and describe basic characteristics students need to fully utilize their environment, minority student development was not related to Chickering's vectors. However, Chickering's more recent works (1993, 1999) have reviewed the minority student development issue. The 1993 work entitled '*Education and Identity, second edition*' was co-authored by Chickering and Reisser; the new edition cited more recent research on the seven vectors and minority populations, such as African Americans, however, no specific mention of any studies involving Native American students were discussed. Milem & Berger's (1997) study reviewed Astin's theory of involvement (Astin, 1984) and Tinto's theory of departure (1975; 1987). They supported using an integrated model in which student behaviours and perceptions interact to influence the development of academic and social integration (Milem & Berger, 1997). However, their development model of student persistence was created within the limitation of their study sample, a highly selective, private, residential, research university (Milem & Berger, 1997). This places limits on the generalizability of their findings to other student populations.

Widick & Simpson's (1978) article acknowledged that the perception of the

purpose of college was varied, such as, knowledge acquisition, personality development, and career preparation. However, acquiring knowledge is no longer enough, the integration of all three perspectives should be the goal. They proposed the use of several different developmental models, e.g., ego identity development and Perry's cognitive development models, to attain a classroom setting that fosters subject mastery and student development (Widick & Simpson, 1978). This holistic approach to individual development concurs with the basic ideology behind the Medicine wheel teachings of Coyhis (1997), Douglas (1986), Meadows (1996), Pepper & Henry (1991) and Reginer (1995a, 1995b).

"Confluent education" was based on a holistic philosophy that emphasizes personal and societal relevance, self determination, creative learning processes and the integration of cognition, affect, and responsible action (Hurlburt, Kroeker, & Gade, 1991; Shapiro, 1983). Confluent education was another possible model identified, which could be used in the development of the Aboriginal support services since it followed many of the same desired principles.

Perry's (1968) stages of development were applied and adapted to the processes a post-secondary student would go through in their career development (Knefelkamp & Slepitzka, 1978). Knefelkamp & Slepitzka (1978) developed a nine-position career model that described a student's progression from a more pluralistic view of career development. In providing supporting evidence from an Ohio state report, the sole descriptor they used to describe students was the level of education, for example, freshman, sophomore, senior,

first year MA or senior MA (Knefelkamp & Slepitz, 1978). This sole descriptor did not address the issues of life experience, gender or ethnicity. Research has shown that cognitive development does not occur on a linear path. For Native Americans, cognitive development takes a circular-holistic approach focused on how the individual fits into the larger picture while Western-European examines how the larger picture can benefit the individual (Coyhis, 1997; Knefelkamp & Slepitz, 1978). Being cognisant of the multi-faceted aspects of students' development, especially for Native American students, has implications on the successful service delivery for student service professionals.

Johnson, Swartz, & Martin (1995) identified several factors that influence the career development for Native Americans such as: socio-economic status, education, health issues and adherence to one's culture and language. Understanding these influences was seen as a crucial component of a counselling perspective. They also stated that career decisions were often made with little to no information, as a result of those Native Americans living on reserves being limited in career information due to environmental constraints, unemployment and limited job opportunities. It was found that the use of unfair culturally biased assessment techniques compounded their lack of options (Johnson, Swartz, & Martin, 1995).

To date there is no single career development theory that solely addresses the needs of ethnic groups; more specifically, no theory exists which incorporates the minority identity development model within the content and impact of career

development for minority groups (Osipow & Littlejohn, 1995). Therefore, those applying career development theories or assessment to Native Americans might want to consider family and cultural ties within their evaluation. This would dictate which theory, either person-environment, social learning, or ecological psychological, would be more appropriate for the individual (Johnson, Swartz, & Martin, 1995). Osipow & Littlejohn (1995) stated there were three basic assumptions to a career development theory: 1) self-conscious search for one's goodness of fit for a job; 2) the encouragement, ability and resources to identify salient work attributes and 3) career aspirations. These assumptions were further affected by individual's self-perception of personal attributes and opportunities. Many of these assumptions were often violated in the lives of minority groups (Osipow & Littlejohn, 1995). Career counselling for example, must take place within a cultural context recognizing the diversity not only between groups but also within. Racial identity development and other new variables must be considered, more importantly, the inadequacy of current knowledge must be considered in career counselling different cultural groups (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1995).

Theories should be used with caution, since theories are descriptive. They attempt to be universal, that is apply to everyone. However, students are unique individuals that do not conform to set models just because these models exist. Practitioners must caution in attempting to "fix" students with theory (Evans, Fomez, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998).

Wright (1987) noted two limitations in student development models: the emphasis of male-Euro-Western values and the assumption of a monolingual, supportive, living/learning environment. Few of these models recognize the role of assimilation and acculturation in the overall development process. By addressing these issues at the theoretical levels, student service professionals and Aboriginal communities can ensure that Aboriginal students are having a positive experience, enriching their Aboriginal identity without having to sacrifice their individuality to fit institutional norms.

Methodology

"Students speak with authority about their reactions and speak with authority as well about First Nations issues" (Sedlack, 1987, p.193). Institutions need to review and revise programs based on students expressed needs (Kuh, 1982; Mayes & McConatha, 1982). Through the voices of Aboriginal post-secondary students and student service professionals, this study will develop a national perspective on Aboriginal student services in Canadian universities.

Archibald et al.'s (1995) process research model was aimed to be consistent with First Nation ways through respect for respondents, growth-oriented dialogue between all participants, and centrality of such fundamental First Nation principles as spirituality and sense of community. A sense of community was established in this study by having the participants feel that this study was their own through involving them in the entire process. The participants were encouraged to contact the researcher with any questions or

concerns via e-mail, telephone, or regular mail. Spirituality was respected and honoured in having an opening prayer on the web site for all those participating to create a sense of togetherness and respect.

This particular study has a similar groundbreaking status as Bers & Smith (1987), who illustrated a need for more information about non-traditional students. Bers & Smith (1987) research was still in exploratory phases and neither a theoretical base or previous students were available to guide the development of a quantitative study (Bers & Smith, 1987, p.53). So like their ground breaking research on the need for more information on minority students this study opened up the area of research on Aboriginal student services on a national level.

The following the recommendations were made by Kowalsky, Thurston, Verhoef, & Rutherford (1996) regarding research with Aboriginal peoples: 1) be prepared for uncertainty; 2) recognize that Aboriginal people are in charge; 3) be honest about the researcher motives; 4) be ones' self; be prepared for the unexpected; 5) allow for time; 6) show sensitivity; respect confidence and guard against taking sides; and 7) maintain on-going consultation. These recommendations were considered and incorporated throughout the design and process of this research. Issues of respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility to the Aboriginal peoples of this country and to the researcher were heavily considered in the development and implementation of this study.

Needs assessments

Higher education institutions must play some role in the continual

evaluation of their existing means of addressing the problems of incoming students and if necessary revise programs to meet these changing needs (Mayes & McConatha, 1982). Through needs assessments institutions learn how to best serve the clientele (Kuh, 1982). Needs assessments are tools for positive and constructive change; it represents a formal set of tools that have established means and end (Hobbs, 1987; Kaufmen & English, 1979). The means can be considered the tools or instruments of the needs assessment. For the purposes of this study, the means are the surveys. The end was the revised and drafted national perspective on Aboriginal student services in Canadian universities.

Needs assessments are often conducted with political motivations, therefore it is important to consider who is going to be informed or influenced, from whom and how information is to be collected is crucial in developing and designing needs assessments (Hobbs, 1987). The consumer-producer and accountability ideologies influenced the use of needs assessments. In this study, the consumers were the Aboriginal students who used support services while the producers were the student service professionals. The intended audience of the needs assessment should see it as a credible and valid process, something that they will be willing to listen to (Hobbs, 1987). The interest of the student service professionals to participate in this study could be used as an indicator of the process being seen by the audience as credible and valid.

It is important to understand the purpose of the needs assessment. For example, it may have an administrative purpose for rationalizing services,

allocation of resources, program evaluation or programming planning and development (Berkowitz, 1996a; Hobbs, 1987; Sedlack, 1987). Inciting socio-political change is another purpose of a needs assessment. The purpose behind this study's was to increase awareness of aboriginal student needs, describe current Aboriginal support services across the country and provide the perspectives of the student and professionals as to what can be done in student services across the nation for Aboriginal peoples.

A needs assessment has the following guiding principles: it is continuous; guides planning; is a multi-faceted data gatherer; a public and conscious activity; educational and is value laden (Kuh, 1982). Each needs assessment begins with developing research questions which the needs assessment is to answer and identifying the target population (Berkowitz, 1996a). Surveys are a form of primary data, which are used to gather information on the target population. The size of the population (e.g., a whole community or a sub-population in the community) and the scope of the research questions are influenced by practical factors such as financial and time resources (Berkowitz, 1996b). The results of survey research are useful only to the extent that they are made available and can be readily understood by others (Davis Placic, Gorden, & Persky, 1982). All of these components had been considered in the design and implementation of this study.

While needs assessments reflect the needs of students, needs assessments can not be used as predictors of student use of these same

services (Barrow, Cox, Sepich & Spivak, 1989). They found that needs surveys may be more helpful in identifying services the students are unlikely to use than in predicting ones that they are likely to use. This study supports the contention that multiple sources of information should be used in assessing students' need (Kuh, 1982).

Although student self-report information can be helpful, it is likely to provide only one piece of the puzzle and may differ from other perceptions. Therefore, this piece of research not only surveyed Aboriginal university students but also, student service professionals working with Aboriginal students, for two reasons: 1) to provide another perspective and 2) to compare the student service professionals' perceptions of Aboriginal student services with the views of Aboriginal post-secondary students. Since Kuh (1982) questioned whether or not student are always aware of their needs, by incorporating the points of views of the student service professionals, the national perspective was based on those who the services are designed for, Aboriginal students and those who provide the services, the professionals.

For the most part, Aboriginal students are a minority population on most Canadian post-secondary campuses. Survey data would be more valuable since they are a small group with special needs in the general student population (Barrow et al., 1989). The predictability of the needs survey can be increased by sampling known users of a service rather than students in general (Barrow et al., 1989). Therefore, for the purposes of this research, Aboriginal students who

were users of Aboriginal support services on their campus were invited to participate.

Surveys

In gathering information, either the interview or questionnaire (if designed properly) would show basically the same results. However, a survey is quicker and cheaper while an interview provides richer and deeper information (Evans, 1985). For this reason, this study utilized the survey to ensure sound and descriptive results. Also the sample survey has been the most frequently used method in needs assessment research (Berkowitz, 1996b).

The surveys were developed with the guidance and recommendations made by Cox (1996) and Salant & Dillman (1994). Each survey consisted of questions which were open-ended, providing the participants the opportunity to express their opinions and concerns in a non-restrictive environment (Salant & Dillman, 1994); and forced choice items, in which participants responded to by selecting their response from a set of fixed alternatives (Johnson & Boehm, 1995). Particular questions were asked to both groups since the same questions asked to two or more different groups of respondents could reveal similarities as well as telling differences in perceptions of needed services (Berkowitz, 1996b).

In the "category order effect", respondents were likely to choose based on the long list of choices. For example mail surveys respondents choose first selections while in telephone and face-to-face surveys they choose last (Salant & Dillman, 1994). The survey instruments used in this study were designed to

minimize this effect. Also the wording of the questions was intended to be specific, simple, not vague and short (Salant & Dillman, 1994). The questions were also designed to ensure the respondents would be able to see the relationship between a given item and the purpose of the study (Davis Placic, et al., 1982).

To reduce or minimize response distribution the surveys followed three general steps: 1) assured confidentiality; 2) communicated the importance and priority of response accuracy and 3) reduced the role of surveyors (Fowler, 1995).

To increase response rate, the survey questions were designed to be precise in identifying what pieces of information were being requested (Salant & Dillman, 1994). By providing respondents answers with choice through estimates (e.g., 50%) or ranges (e.g., 100-300) responder burden was reduced and it enlisted the co-operation of the participants to ensure the survey was completed (Berkowitz, 1996b; Salant & Dillman, 1994).

Qualitative research can produce a holistic analysis of policy and practise in early intervention and increase understanding of diverse issues facing families and agencies serving them, in this case Aboriginal university students and student service professionals (Brotherson, 1994). By incorporating aspects of quantitative and qualitative research in the design of the surveys and the content analysis dual data output was provided which helped achieve the ultimate purpose of this study, to gain as much useful, valid and reliable data as possible (Lifvendahl, 1994).

Credibility addresses the issue of congruence between the constructed realities of the participants and those realities represented by the researchers and attributed to the participants (Brotherson, 1994). The credibility of this study was established by using triangulation (LeCompte & Pressile, 1994), the two different surveys and document analysis.

Dependability addresses the issue of maintaining research stability and consistency while allowing for an emergent design (Brotherson, 1994). Hence, the use of two different populations to gather information on Aboriginal student services was useful in providing further information about survey results (Berkowitz, 1996b). Transferability relates to how the survey provides information about the general phenomenon (Brotherson, 1994). While the information could not be generalized to the entire Aboriginal population, it was hoped that it will shed light on Aboriginal support services in Canadian universities.

Internet use in research

Research conducted over the Internet, especially interviewing, has proven to be of great benefit for several reasons. It is cost effective and convenient, often occurring in a single step while the lack of geographic boundaries increases sample diversity. A large amount of data can be tabulated quickly which allows time for follow up and at the same time, this form of data gathering allows for more thoughtful and through process. There is no danger or discomfort for the researcher and it has non-interfering recording and transcription (Persichitte, Young, & Tharp, 1987; Sudmalis, 1992).

Telephone and mail surveys have several advantages and disadvantages. It is hoped that by using the Internet to distribute the surveys the limitations are minimized and benefits maximized. For example, while telephone surveying can be costly (Piper, 1988), surveying via e-mail/Internet does not have long-distance charges and is quicker than regular mail. Telephone surveying and mail surveying can be lengthy and constrictive on one's time (Berkowitz, 1996b; Piper, 1988). However, e-mail/Internet can be responded to quickly and postponed at the participant's leisure. While any survey (telephone or mail) has the opportunity for bias and social desirability, it is hoped through control and survey design, these risks are minimized (Berkowitz, 1996b; Piper, 1988). Saphore's (1999) dissertation compared paper versus on-line surveys. No significant differences were found in responses. This study confirmed that administering a survey only is as viable as administering it in paper-pencil format.

Using an on-line survey technique increased access to more participants from a greater geographic area, it was less expensive to administer, participants seemed to prefer the luxury of participating in an asynchronous manner from the privacy of their own home or office. While telephone surveys have a higher return rate over mail surveys, it is hoped that participation rates will be comparable to or higher than telephone surveys (Piper, 1988). Sending a web survey as a URL link within an e-mail had a response rate of about 80% (J. Parker, personal communication, March 30, 2000) while mail surveys have a response rate of 60% (Salant & Dillman, 1994).

Students and professionals become involved in use of the Internet for several reasons such as: 1) there being some reward for learning the new technology; 2) overcoming one's fear of technology; 3) a personal/cultural compatibility, proper support structure (technical support) and 4) finding a voice and having something to share via the Internet (Wilson et al., 1996). It is this last point that this researcher hoped to have the most impact. In providing Aboriginal students and student service professionals a channel of communication to express their views and concerns regarding Aboriginal support services in Canadian universities, this study created the atmosphere where voices were found and information was shared.

Chapter 3 Methodology

Introduction

Archibald et al. (1995) used mail-out surveys, telephone interviews and focus groups. This study focused on using the survey method and incorporating the use of "content analysis" which "entails the systematic examination of forms of communication to document patterns objectively" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p.85).

The following chapter describes in detail the research process used in this study. The participant selection criteria are also provided in this chapter. This study was conducted in phases:

- Phase I** **Pre-test of the survey instruments**
- Phase II** **Content analysis and the distribution of the surveys to the student service professionals and the Aboriginal university students**
- Phase III** **Comparison of the Aboriginal student services survey results and the Aboriginal university student survey results**

Description of and rationale for the research design

"When contemplating First Nations research, First Nations cultural principles and ways of expression should be predominant" (Archibald et al., 1995, p.11). Archibald et al. (1995) coined the term "process model" rather than "research method" to describe their study. This term "process model" created an

atmosphere whereby their study became "a flexible procedure rather than fixed rigidity, organic entity, adaptable and consistent with Aboriginal principles of respect and honour that are basics to the traditional teaching of First Nations people (Archibald et al., 1995, p.15). Therefore, their research process became "a dialogue that was growth oriented and allowed the incorporation of other Aboriginal values such as spirituality and sense of community" (Archibald et al., 1995, p.15).

The process model adopted in this study was a continuation of Archibald et al's (1995) belief that "any First Nations educational research must involve the stakeholders in the design and implementation phase and that ultimately they must benefit from research experience" (p.13). The key stakeholders in this study were identified as: 1) Aboriginal students in Canadian universities; 2) student service professionals who serve Aboriginal students (e.g., native liaison officers, chief student affairs officers (CSAO), and directors) and student affairs and services national organization; 3) Canadian universities and 4) Aboriginal peoples across Canada.

The process model for this study was developed in phases:

Phase I
Pre-testing of surveys

Phase I began with the pre-testing of the surveys. The surveys were designed for this study specifically. Therefore, it was important to have them reviewed by those in the field for: question relevancy, survey format and further insight into possible topic areas or questions. The Aboriginal university student

survey was pre-tested with Aboriginal post-secondary students who graduated from university. Therefore, they would not be eligible participants in this study. The Aboriginal student service survey was pre-tested by student service professionals not working directly with Aboriginal students but who were familiar with the issues. The Aboriginal student service survey was also pre-tested with Aboriginal educators who subscribe to the Aboriginal educators list-serve, VOICES, <http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/~jib-project/voices.html> to provide an additional Aboriginal perspective to the survey.

Phase II Surveying

A letter of introduction was sent directly to student service professionals, which invited them to participate in this study. The letter clearly outlined the student service professional's role and responsibilities during this endeavour. Several informal e-mail and telephone conversations followed the letter to strengthen the relationship between the researcher and those professionals who chose to participate. This was done to ensure a clear line of communication was established and to develop a sense of community and partnership. See Appendix B- Letter of introduction to the student service professionals.

A further letter of introduction was attached to the Aboriginal university student survey. This letter explained the student's role in the research process and invited them to participate in the study as partners working toward enhancing Aboriginal university student experiences. See Appendix C- Letter of introduction to the Aboriginal students.

The purpose of these letters was to inform participants of the opportunities for involvement in the different stages of the study and to alert them that further information was to be sought from them upon the completion of Phase II. This ensured that participants were aware of the research process, what was being asked of them, and provided them the opportunity to further participate or withdraw from the study.

In keeping with the process model for Aboriginal research, participants were invited to further discuss any relevant issue pertaining to the research by contacting the researcher personally using e-mail. The researcher's e-mail address was secured with a password to ensure only the researcher could access mail, within the limits and regulations of Memorial University of Newfoundland and Computing and Communications (Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1999).

To respect Aboriginal customs and to create an environment that fostered harmony, trust and companionship, participants were asked to read the Opening prayer. This was done to foster a sense of community over the Internet among participants and the researcher. See Appendix A for Opening prayer and Appendix G for a printed copy of the web page.

Two separate surveys were conducted through the use of the Internet, e-mail and airmail. The first survey was sent to student service professionals in Canadian universities who have programs in place for Aboriginal students. This survey addressed the following important research questions:

- 1) **What support services are currently in place across Canada?**
- 2) **What do the service providers see as the key issues for an Aboriginal university student?**

The second survey was sent to Aboriginal post-secondary students currently enrolled in a Canadian university. Participants were given the choice of completing the survey either on-line or through a paper-version of the survey available from their on-campus student service office. A self-addressed stamped envelope was provided in this instance to ensure the return of the instrument. See Appendix D for a copy of the Aboriginal student service survey and Appendix E for a copy of the Aboriginal university student survey.

The web-designed survey had an "access code" to ensure only invited participants replied. The purpose of the "access code", designed in the form of a hidden URL, was to protect the identity and safety of participants. Participants were made aware of this code through contacting their on-campus student service professional or the researcher. Since the professionals were in direct contact with the Aboriginal student population, their discretion was trusted in deciding who was permitted to access the site. This discretion was guided by the set criteria of who was eligible to participate in this study the researcher provided them.

To gain further information on service provision from a national perspective, a checklist tabulation was conducted to compile information on the types of programs and services offered in Canadian universities for Aboriginal

students through the eligible institutions' web pages. This procedure was similar to "document analysis" Marshall & Rossman, 1995 discussed. The surveys and the document analysis results were analysed using cross-tabulation and chi-square analysis with the statistical package, SPSS, version 10.0.

Phase III

Comparison of the Aboriginal student service survey and Aboriginal university student survey.

Elements of the surveys were designed to gather the perspectives from both participant groups, the student service professionals and the Aboriginal university students, on several of the same issues.

Based on the survey results, document analysis and the review of student development theory, a national perspective was gathered. This perspective provided insight and recommendations on the provision of Aboriginal student services in Canadian universities.

Developing the survey questions.

The surveys were designed to discover or elaborate information about the following research questions (Cox, 1996):

- 1) What support services are currently available to Aboriginal university students?
- 2) What are the post-secondary experiences of Aboriginal university students?
- 3) How do their experiences influence their views on their education?

- 4) **What is the role of Aboriginal people at Canadian universities (e.g., student, faculty and staff presence)?**
- 5) **How do students and student service professionals view student needs and services?**
- 6) **What does each group believe should constitute Native support services?**

The surveys were developed using techniques and recommendations made by Fowler (1995) and Salant & Dillman (1996). In addition the extensive literature review undertaken in Chapter 2 informed this process.

Using open-ended questions in the survey ensured specificity, clarity, and breadth of knowledge to gain insight into the perceptions of Aboriginal student service professionals and Aboriginal university students on Aboriginal student services in Canadian universities (Evans, 1985). Conducting telephone interviews was an alternative method (Piper, 1988) of data collection if the response rate to the on-line survey was low or some individuals were unable to participate otherwise. It was considered important to have two different surveys for students and student service professionals since each group offered a different perspective on Aboriginal student services. For example, Aboriginal university students had the perspective of users of such services and student service professionals presented the perspective of providers/developers, and in some cases, were once consumers of the same services. See Appendix D for

Aboriginal student service survey and Appendix E for Aboriginal university student survey.

Description of Sampling Procedures and Participants

Inclusion of all Aboriginal groups in this study was crucial for understanding the unique needs of each Aboriginal group attending post-secondary education, more specifically Canadian universities. To respect Aboriginal values of completeness, family and community, it was important to have a complete circle of involvement. Therefore, the involvement of Aboriginal university students and student service professionals in this study ensured the perspective and recommendations reflecting the diversity of Aboriginal student services.

The universities invited to participate in this study were those offering specific Aboriginal support services to their students. This could have been in the form of an Aboriginal support service worker or specific office/centre, which dealt with Aboriginal student services. These institutions were identified through campus service directories, Internet searches on the institutions' home pages, word-of-mouth and through contacting the national professional organization for student service professionals, CACUSS, the Canadian Association of College and University Student Services.

Aboriginal post-secondary students currently enrolled in a Canadian university were asked to participate in this study. This was done through three different sampling strategies: 1) "criterion-based selection," which was used to

identify the sub-population (LeCompte & Preissle, 1994); 2) "probability sampling," where each member of the population had a known probability of being selected (Beiger & Gerlach, 1996); and 3) "network or snowball technique," in which each successive participant or group was named by a preceding group or individual (LeCompte & Preissle, 1994).

Discussion of Methodological Issues

Ethics

Ethically, the rights of participants were foremost over any aspect of the study (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Four elements of informed consent: disclosure of information, comprehension, competency to consent and voluntarism of consent were upheld to provide anonymity to the participants (Faculty of Education, 1999). Following these elements, participants were made fully aware of the study's goals and methodology and of their participation role in the study. Involvement of participants in this study was entirely voluntary.

Following the definition provided by Salant & Dillman (1994) ethical surveying means "encourage[ing] people to respond but not pressur[ing] them in an offensive way" (p.9). To respect the voluntary nature of participation in the survey, participating professionals were sent four friendly reminders to return the completed surveys via e-mail, fax or airmail (Fowler, 1995). This was done to remind participants of the study, the importance of their opinions and to increase return rates. The student participants were not directly contacted by the researcher due to the nature of the study and accessibility delimitations imposed

by the study's research process. The participating professionals were given the responsibility of encouraging and reminding students to partake in this study.

Ethical concerns for conducting research in electronic collaborative environments follow similar guidelines as other codes of ethics: to ensure professional competence, protect the client, and protect the profession. Each of these considerations relates to electronic communication: 1) protect privacy and personal integrity; 2) distinguish between personal and organizational views; and 3) give credit where credit is due. Researchers often find that conflict arises between giving credit and protecting privacy (Ravtiz, 1997; Sudamalis, 1992). This issue did not arise in this study due to the anonymous nature of the design of the process model.

"[The] key threat to confidentiality is the ability to link an individual to the answers"(Fowler, 1995, p. 30). Surveys used in this study were designed to avoid this conflict. The only two identifiers asked of participants were the geographic location of the participant and the size of their institution. Although the researcher could identify the institution based on this information, this information was used only for the purposes of tracking the survey return rate and re-contacting the non-responders with friendly reminders. The confidentiality of each institution was respected throughout the process of this study. Identities of the institutions or their students were not revealed in any part of this study.

All participants were asked to read an introductory statement, which served as the consent form. This letter of introduction was designed with the

fifteen elements of a consent form outlined by the Faculty of Education (1999). It was posted on the web and attached to any survey sent through the mail.

Transferability

This study was not an attempt to speak for or represent all Aboriginal peoples. The diversity within Aboriginal groups in Canada cannot be portrayed by a subgroup of its population (e.g., university students). However, it was hoped that by incorporating the selected sampling techniques participants represented the concerns and experiences of those student service professionals who work with Aboriginal student services and those who use such services, the Canadian Aboriginal university student. The study's intention was to provide a framework on which local Aboriginal groups and their respective post-secondary institutions could incorporate aspects of the findings and proposed recommendations into their present service provision to enhance the quality of Aboriginal student life.

This study was designed for comparability and translatability.

Translatability assumes that the study's methods, analytic categories and characteristics of phenomena and groups were identified so explicitly that comparisons can be confidently conducted (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Since the survey results were a form of quantitative method of data collection, it is hoped that the surveys provided a reliable instrument for assessing Aboriginal student services on a national scale. The surveys could be used at a later time to gather information on Aboriginal students needs and expectations of

Aboriginal support services, and incorporate findings into the developed recommendations of this study furthering the development of Aboriginal research in Canada (Beiger & Gerlach, 1996).

The qualitative aspect of the research ensured that opinions and concerns of participants were clearly expressed within the results and throughout the study. Any recommendations made were based on the expressed viewpoints of the key stakeholders: Aboriginal university students and student service professionals.

Chapter 4 Results

Introduction

The results of this study are presented according to the phases in which it was conducted to provide a chronological and sequenced presentation of the findings. The results have also been organized to respond to the questions posed at the beginning of this research process. During Phase I, both survey instruments were pre-tested. Therefore, the first section of this chapter will review the pre-test findings of both of the survey instruments. Phase II saw the data collection from two separate populations, Aboriginal student services professionals and Aboriginal university students who have used Aboriginal student services. The results from each group of surveys were presented separately to portray the perspectives of the professionals and then the students. Phase III compared the common questions of both instruments in Phase II to reflect how the perspectives of the student service professionals and the Aboriginal university students were similar or dissimilar.

The demographics of the participating Aboriginal student centres and its user population were provided from information gathered by the Aboriginal Student Services Survey. The remaining information gathered from this survey was compiled in response to the posed research questions:

- 1) What services were being offered by Aboriginal student service providers?

- 2) What were the perceptions of the student service professional regarding Aboriginal students' needs and expectations?
- 3) What were the experiences of student service professionals who provided Aboriginal support services?
- 4) What were the expectations of professionals regarding the provision of Aboriginal student services?

The demographics of the participating Aboriginal university students were presented to reflect the group who took part in this study. Again, following the same outline, the participating students' responses were compiled to respond to the following research questions based on the Aboriginal Student Services Survey.

- 1) What services were being used by Aboriginal university students?
- 2) What were the needs of Aboriginal university students?
- 3) What were the experiences of Aboriginal students who used Aboriginal support services?
- 4) What were the expectations of Aboriginal students regarding the provision of Aboriginal student services?

Demographics

There are thirty-nine universities across Canada, which provide some form of Aboriginal student services. These centres were identified through contacting the institution in writing or by e-mail, reviewing institutions' web-sites, consulting the Canadian Association of College and University Student Services (CACUSS)

national directory and through peer referrals. A letter of introduction was sent to the student service professional directly inviting them to be part of this research study. After follow-up contact through e-mail, phone and fax, 77% of the sample (N=30) agreed to participate, three declined participation and there were six institutions who did not respond to either the initial letter, fax, e-mail or phone calls. From the thirty institutions who agreed to participate, the survey instrument return rate was 83% (N=25). These twenty-five participating centres represented over 60% of all Aboriginal student service centres in Canadian universities.

Regional demographics of providers of Aboriginal student services

To protect the anonymity of participating Aboriginal student centres and students, the responders were grouped according to regional location. The Eastern region included the provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Prince Edward Island. The Central region was comprised of the provinces of Ontario and Quebec. British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba were grouped to represent the Western region. The Territory region, comprising of the Northwest Territories, Yukon, and Nunavut was also included in this study.

From Table 1, Regional distribution of participating Aboriginal student service centres, it can be seen that the majority of the institutions came from the Central and Western regions, forty-eight and forty-four percent respectively. These numbers adequately reflect the distribution of universities across Canada,

since the majority of institutions are included in these two areas, with the highest concentration being in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, the Central region.

Table 1

Regional distribution of Aboriginal student service centres in Canadian universities

Region	Frequency Distribution	Percentage Distribution
	(#)	(%)
Eastern	2	8
Central	12	48
Western	11	44
Territory	0	0
<i>Total</i>	25	100

Eighty-three percent of the eligible Centres (N=25) completed the on-line or hard copy of the survey. Their responses provided information describing the institutions and the Aboriginal student services each provided.

There were no significant differences in total student populations between regions. The majority of the institutions (48%) had a student population of 1,000-15,000, while 16% had total student populations of 20,000-25,000. The remaining institutions (8%) had a total student population of less than 1000. There were no significant differences found between regions when their total faculty and staff populations were compared. Approximately 26% of the Centres

had faculty-staff population of 1000-1500 at their institutions. Seventeen percent had smaller population between 500-1000. Regionally, the larger faculty and staff populations were found in the Central and Western regions. This is similar to the larger student populations also found in these areas. While the Eastern region had as student population of 1000-15000, its faculty and staff population was between 100-500.

It was considered important to know what percentage of Aboriginal students, faculty and staff comprised the total university population to establish a sense of the proportion of Aboriginal peoples either attending or working in Canadian universities.

Table 2 reveals that sixty-eight percent of the institutions have an Aboriginal student population of less than 5%. There were no significant differences in regions reporting of the percentage of Aboriginal student population.

There were also no significant differences between the regions in their reporting of the percentage of Aboriginal faculty and staff on their campuses. Eighty-seven and a half percent of the professionals reported that less than five percent of their faculty and staff was Aboriginal. There were no reported cases of the Aboriginal population being greater than 15% in any region.

Table 2

Percentage distribution of Aboriginal students, faculty and staff populations in Canadian universities by Aboriginal student service centres

		Aboriginal student service centres by region (percentage)			
% total student population		Western	Central	Eastern	Total
< 5	Student ¹	63.6	75	50	68
	Faculty & staff ²	80.0	91.7	100	87.5
< 10	Student	18.2	8.3	50	16
	Faculty & staff	-	8.3	-	4.2
<15	Student	-	-	-	-
	Faculty & staff	20.0	-	-	8.3
<20	Student	9.1	16.7	-	12
	Faculty & staff	-	-	-	-
<25	Student	9.1	-	-	4
	Faculty & staff	-	-	-	-
Total		100	100	100	100

1 Student population: $\chi^2=3.939$, $p = .685$, $df =6$

2 Faculty and staff population: $\chi^2= 3.924$, $p = .416$, $df =4$

Table 1 and Table 2 provide an overview of the setting in which this study was conducted. Forty-eight percent of the institutions 48% (N=12) had a total student population of 1000-15,000 while 68% of the institutions (N=17) had less

than five percent of their total student population representing Aboriginal students. Of the twenty-three institutions that responded to the question of faculty and staff population size, 26% (N=6) indicated that they had a faculty and staff population between 1000-1500 people. The majority of the institutions (N=21) also had less than 5% of their faculty and staff comprised of Aboriginal peoples. In the Western region, two institutions indicated that their Aboriginal faculty and staff population represented less than 25% of the total number faculty and staff.

Regional demographics of participating Aboriginal university students

In light of the delimitations and limitations imposed on this study and the utilization of the hierarchical structure within institutions to reach students, the number of participating Aboriginal university students did not provide an equally representative sample size from each institution. In some instances, in order for the survey to reach the students it had to first meet the approval of the institution's ethical committee. Then the student service professional had to agree to help distribute surveys and inform students about the study. In other situations, the survey was passed on to the student organization (if one existed) and then on to the students. Therefore, this study did not attempt to make any generalizations or broad assumptions about the Aboriginal university student population.

Participating students had the option of participating with the on-line version of the instrument. Also, a total of 160 paper copies of the Aboriginal

University Student Survey were sent to participating centres across the country to distribute to eligible students. In total twenty-two surveys were returned. Although a return rate of 14% was low, one must consider the very small population this study was dealing with. As stated earlier less than 5% of the student population was Aboriginal. However, a report from the British Columbia Provincial Advisory Committee on post-secondary education for Native learners (1990) indicated that this percentage may even be lower, 3%. Therefore, the percentage of the 5% of Aboriginal students who used Aboriginal support services would be even smaller.

One could reflect on the process of gathering data from the students as being similar to a council meeting, where everyone had been invited but only a lesser number of individuals take the opportunity to speak. Their voices soar above the crowd and their message takes on an air of importance. Although the response rate was low, it was considered important that the opinions and thoughts of those Aboriginal university students who did participate have their voices heard in this study.

Participating professionals described the users who used Aboriginal student services as students who were slightly more likely to be female than male, older than average (e.g., older than 21), had status and were just as likely to have children than not have children. The students who participated in this study were predominately older than average, there was even distribution of female and males, and they were just as likely to have or not have children. This

provided support for the use of the students' survey responses in this study, since the student participants were representative of the typical user of Aboriginal student services as defined by participating professionals.

Table 3

Regional distribution of Aboriginal university students (N= 22)

Region	Frequency Distribution	Percentage Distribution
Eastern	11	50
Central	4	18
Western	7	32
<i>Total</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>100</i>

Table 3 provides evidence about the regional distribution of Aboriginal university students who responded to the survey. Fifty percent of the respondents were from Eastern Canada. The Central and Western region represented eighteen and thirty-two percent of the student responders respectively. While 50% (N=11) of the participating students were from the Eastern region, one must remember that only 8% (N=2) of the participating institutions were from this same region.

The Aboriginal University Student Survey differed from the Aboriginal Student Service Survey, in that it asked questions about the student and not the Centre. To gain some perspective on the type of student using Aboriginal student services, student participants were asked to share personal and academic information about themselves, such as: gender, age, Aboriginal group

to which they identified, marital status, if they had any children, the number of courses, semesters they had completed and their current academic program.

Academic Demographics

The data indicated the mean number of semesters the participating Aboriginal students had completed was five. However, the range of semesters completed varied from the low range of zero to 5 to a high of 28 semesters. Seventy-seven percent of the student participants had completed 0-5 semesters of university. Those student participants who chose zero semesters indicated that they were in their first semester. Four percent of the respondents completed 6-11 semesters, while 18% had complete 12 or more greater semesters.

Aboriginal university students were also asked to indicate how many courses they had completed. Table 4 shows that 64% (N=14) of the students had completed ten or less courses. Nine percent had completed less than 20 courses (i.e., 10 to 19), while 14% completed 21-30 courses and another 14% of the students completed greater than 30 courses (31- 50). Since 50% of the students were from the Eastern region, there was more range in the number of courses students had completed in this area. Table 4 illustrates that there were no significant differences in the number of completed courses amongst the participating Aboriginal students by region. Students were also asked to share if they had attended another post-secondary institution.

Table 4

The number of courses completed by Aboriginal university students by region

Aboriginal university students by region				
(percentage)				
# of courses	Western^a	Central^b	Eastern^c	Total
0 – 10	42.9	50.0	81.8	63.6
11 – 20	28.5	-	-	9.1
21 – 30	14.3	25.0	9.1	13.6
30 or more	14.3	25.0	9.1	13.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>

$\chi^2=31.280$, $p = .402$, $df 30$

a N = 7

b N = 4

c N = 11

Data in Table 5 provides evidence to illustrate that 55% of the Aboriginal university students who participated in this study had not attended another institution while 45.5% indicated that they had attended another institution. There were significant differences between regions in terms of students having prior experience with another post-secondary institution. While the Western and Central region students were likely to have had some experience with another post-secondary institution, 71.4% and 75% respectively, those participating students from the Eastern region were more likely to not have prior experience with another post-secondary institution (81.8%).

Table 5

Percentage distribution of Aboriginal university students who attended another post-secondary institution

Aboriginal university students by region				
(percentage)				
Attended another institution	Western^a	Central^b	Eastern^c	Total
YES	71.4	75	18.2	45.5
NO	28.6	25	81.8	54.5
Total	100	100	100	100

$\chi^2 = 6.613, p = .037, df 2$

a N = 7

b N = 4

c N = 11

Participating students were also asked to share what program they were currently enrolled in. Table 6 provides evidence that illustrates that there were no significant differences found between the regions in the types of academic programs participants were pursuing. Thirty-six percent of the participants were working towards a Bachelor of Arts.

Table 6

Percentage distribution of academic programs among Aboriginal university students by region

Aboriginal university students by region				
(percentage)				
Academic Program	Western	Central	Eastern	Total %
Undecided	-	-	27.3	13.6
General Studies	-	-	9.1	4.5
BA	85.7	25	9.1	36.4
BSc	-	-	9.1	4.5
Bphys.Ed	-	-	18.2	9.1
B.Social Science	-	25	-	4.5
B.Engineering	-	-	9.1	4.5
B.Social Work	14.3	-	9.1	9.1
MA	-	25	-	4.5
Human Relations Diploma	-	25	-	4.5
Heritage Resource Diploma	-	-	9.1	4.5
Total	100	100	100	100

$\chi^2 = 30.152, p = .067, df 20$

Personal Demographics

Participating students were asked to share some personal information to further develop a sense of the student who uses Aboriginal student services. The average age of the participating Aboriginal students was 27. Therefore, there was a higher frequency of older-than-average students (i.e., students older than 21) using Aboriginal student services who participated in this study. The range of ages can be seen in Table 7.

Table 7

Personal demographics of Aboriginal university students by region

Aboriginal university student				
Participants by region (percentage)				
	Western	Central	Eastern	Total
Gender¹				
Female	28.6	50	63.6	50
Male	71.4	50	36.4	50
Age group²				
21 or younger	14.3	–	72.7	40.9
22-30	28.6	50	–	18.2
31-40	14.3	50	18.2	22.7
41 or older	42.9	–	9.1	18.2

Table 7**Continued**

Marital status³				
Divorced	-	25	9.1	9.1
Married	57.1	25	27.3	36.4
Single	42.9	25	63.6	50.0
Other	-	25	-	4.5
Children⁴				
Yes	27.3	75	66.7	50
No	72.7	25	33.3	50

1 $\chi^2=2.104, p = .349, df = 2$
2 $\chi^2=15.414, p = .017, df = 6$
3 $\chi^2 = 8.454, p = .207, df = 6$
4 $\chi^2 = 4.558, p = .102, df = 2$

Table 7 provides evidence to indicate that there were no significant differences found between regions in terms of student's gender. In the Western region 71% of the participants were male, while for the Eastern region, 64% of the participants were female. Overall, there was a balanced distribution of gender amongst the Aboriginal university student participants.

However, there were significant differences in age groups of Aboriginal university students between regions. While Eastern students were predominantly younger than 21, over 42.3% of students from the Western region

were older than 41. Those Aboriginal students from the Central region ranged from 22-40 years of age.

In grouping students based on those who were older than average (older than 21) and those who were traditional age (21 or younger), it could be seen that 59.1% of the participants were older than average students (older than 21). Of the 40.9% who were 21 or younger, 89% of the students were from the Eastern region of Canada.

The data in Table 7 provides evidence that there were no significant differences found in the marital status of students between regions. The majority of student participants were single (50%). Regionally, the Western students were more likely to be married (57.1%) than single (42.9%). However, the students from the Eastern region were more likely to be single (67.3%) than married (27.3%). Central region participants represented each of the categories, married, single, divorced, and other.

There were no significant differences found between regions in comparing students with or without children. One half of the participating students had children. Aboriginal university students from the Western region were more likely not to have children (72.7%) while students from the Central and Eastern regions were more likely to have children (75% and 66.7% respectively).

One participant chose not to disclose an Aboriginal identity. Table 8 shows significant differences between regions in the represented Aboriginal groups among the participating students. This was due to the Eastern region

representing 52% of the participants and of that 52%, approximately 81% of the Eastern participants identified themselves as Inuit.

Table 8

Percentage distribution of Aboriginal groups among Aboriginal university students by region

Aboriginal Nation	Aboriginal university students by region (percentage)			Total
	Western ^a	Central ^b	Eastern ^c	
Anishinabek	–	25	–	4.8
Cree	16.7	–	–	4.8
Inuit	–	–	81.8	42.9
Kutanaxa	–	50	9.1	14.3
Kootchin	–	–	9.1	4.8
Nuu-chah-nulth	16.7	–	–	4.8
Sexwepemc/Shuswap	33.3	–	–	9.5
Squamish	16.7	–	–	4.8
Straights	16.7	–	–	4.8
Other(s)	–	25	–	4.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>

$\chi^2 = 37.227$, $p = .005$, $df = 18$

a N = 6

b N = 4

c N = 11

Phase I Survey Pre-Test

Pre-testers were chosen based on the outlined criteria provided in the Description of and rationale for the research design section. The pre-testers for the Aboriginal University Student Survey were First Nations university students who either had graduated from a university or had not used Aboriginal support services. The pre-testers for the Student Service Professional Survey were student service professionals who did not work with Aboriginal students but were still familiar with the issues or Aboriginal educators, not associated directly with an Aboriginal student service office. Another group asked to pre-test this survey were Aboriginal people who participate on a national list-serv for Aboriginal educators, VOICES.

The individuals used for the pre-test received an e-mailed or airmailed copy of the survey and the evaluation questions. The pre-test was conducted over a period of three weeks. There was a return rate of 100% of the professional survey pre-testers. The seven professionals who evaluated the Aboriginal Student Services survey provided comments on the instrument, its questions, overall content and presentation from a good to very good.

The pre-test of the Aboriginal University Student Survey had a return rate of 67%. Of the six people asked to pre-test the survey, five were contacted via e-mail, of those five, two did not respond; the remaining pre-testers evaluated a hard-copy of the survey. It was later discovered that the two non-responders' e-mail accounts were not active and they did not know about the study. The

remaining four individual's ranked the student survey from a good to very good in all aspects.

Phase II Content Analysis

The web pages of the institutions were analysed to examine the programs and services offered to students. Of the 25 participating centres, 100% had web pages, however, one site was not available due to it being reconstructed.

While Table 9 is extensive, it provides a detailed overview of the services and programs promoted by the various centres through their web pages. The data gathered indicated 62.5% of Aboriginal student centres promoted some form of academic advising, referral or planning services. Fifty percent offered Aboriginal cultural activities. Being a liaison/advocate for students and between the institution and community, having a native student association, and organizing peer helpers/student ambassador programs were services identified on 41.7% of the reviewed web-sites.

Fifty percent of the web-sites indicated the centre had an allocated study room or student centre/lounge and 28% indicated that they had computer access for students. Thirty-three percent of the web-sites promoted services such as: academic workshops, elders (visiting or in-residence) programs, financial advising/resources, and personal counselling. Roughly 29% indicated they provided pre-admission advocacy.

Regionally there was a marked difference in the development and use of the web page to promote each centres' services and resources. While some

promoted activities and resources, with pictures of staff and facilities, other sites simply identified the centre's contact information.

Table 9

Percentage distribution of programs and services promoted by Aboriginal student service centres web pages by region

Aboriginal student service centres				
by region (percentage)				
Programs/Services	Western	Central	Eastern	Total
Academic advise/counsel	50.0	75.0	50.0	62.5
Academic liaison	10.0	-	-	4.2
Academic workshops	40.0	25.0	50.0	33.3
Allocated space for events	10.0	-	-	4.2
Campus tours	10.0	-	-	4.2
Career counselling, advising	40.0	8.3	-	16.7
Childcare or referrals	10.0	16.7	-	12.5
Co-op advising	10.0	-	-	4.2
Community-university- student liaison/advocacy	80.0	8.3	50.0	41.7
Computer access	40.0	25.0	-	29.2
Counselling (general)	10.0	25.0	-	16.7
Cultural counselling	-	16.7	-	8.3

Table 9**Continued**

Cultural events and promotion of on-off campus events	70.0	41.7	-	50
Cultural workshops	30.0	16.7	-	20.8
Elders (in-residence, visiting)	40.0	33.3	-	33.3
Employment opportunities or referrals	10.0	16.7	-	12.5
Financial resources/referrals	60.0	16.7		33.3
First Nation admission policy	10.0	-	-	4.2
Friendship circles	10.0	8.3	-	8.3
Legal services	-	16.7	-	8.3
Library orientations	10.0	-	-	4.2
Native student association	50.0	41.7	-	41.7
Newsletter	10.0	-	50.0	4.2
School-to-work program	10.0	-	-	4.2
Orientation, welcome feast	20.0	25.0	-	25.0
Outreach programs	10.0	8.3	-	8.3
Peer helpers, student ambassadors	60.0	33.3	-	41.7
Personal counselling	40.0	33.3	-	33.3

Table 9**Continued**

Phone-fax access	10.0	8.3	-	8.3
Pre-admission advocacy	40.0	25.0	50.0	29.2
Program and/or course planning	40.0	-	-	20.8
Recruitment	-	16.7	-	8.3
Residence	10.0	-	-	4.2
Resource library/centre	10.0	16.7	100.0	20.8
Service referrals	10.0	8.3	-	8.3
Social events	10.0	16.7	-	12.5
Speakers, role models, guests	-	25	-	12.5
Student on-line art page/web-pages	10.0	-	-	8.3
Student representative on committees	10.0	8.3	-	8.3
Study room- student centre	60.0	66.7	-	58.3
Transition program	10.0	-	-	4.2
Tutoring	30.0	33.3	-	12.5
Volunteer opportunities	10.0	-	-	4.2

Aboriginal Student Services Survey

The Aboriginal student service professional survey instrument was comprised of 14 questions, a mix of forced choice, closed and open-ended questions. Each question was asked with a specific intention. The purpose of first five questions was to gather general demographic information on those institutions which provide Aboriginal student services, such as: location, total student population, percentage of Aboriginal students, total faculty-staff population and percentage of Aboriginal faculty and staff. Questions 6-8 were designed to develop a perspective of Aboriginal student service provision. For example, defining the student-user population, Aboriginal groups on campus, programs and services offered and if student service theory was used to inform service delivery. Questions 9-13 purpose was to gather the professionals' perspectives on Aboriginal student services. For example, what programs and services should be offered, the other responsibilities and duties of a student service professional, the top five needs of Aboriginal students and top three services provided by Aboriginal student services. Question 14 was included in the survey instrument to invite the student service professionals to make further comments or suggestions.

An analysis of frequency was conducted on the survey responses along with the non-parametric test, Chi-square. The ranking of the programs and services identifying the top 3 services and top 5 concerns were analyzed with a multiple response cross tabulation.

The response rate for each individual question was high, 11 out of 14 of the questions had a 92% response rate (N=23). Due to question 14 being an optional question its response rate was the lowest. Question 8b was only utilized by those who answered 'yes' to question 8a, therefore a high response rate was not expected for this question. Since questions 9 and 10 were open-ended questions the rate of response to these two questions were lower, 65% and 84% respectively.

Also questions were designed to gather information about the students using Aboriginal support services. Respondents were asked which student group they assist more frequently. If they saw both groups equally (e.g., both male and female students) they were asked to check both responses.

Table 10 provides evidence that there were no significant differences between the regions in terms of the type of student who utilized Aboriginal student services. The Western region users of Aboriginal student services tended to be older than average. While female, status, and students with children were more frequent users, males, non-status and students without children also used Aboriginal student services. For the Central region, user demographics indicated students were more likely to be female, older than 21, and status. There was equal representation between students with and without children in this region.

For the Eastern region, students who used Aboriginal student services were mixed. While mostly females used the services, males were also common. Students tended to be older than average, had status and children. However,

students who were younger than twenty-one, were non-status and did not have children were also likely to use support services.

Table 10

User population of Aboriginal student services by region

Aboriginal student service centres by region				
Group	Western	Central	Eastern	Total
Gender¹				
Female	40.0	66.7	50.0	54.2
Male	-	-	-	-
Both, female and male	60.0	33.3	50.0	45.8
Age Group²				
Students under 21	-	10.0	-	4.3
Students over 21	63.6	60.0	50.0	60.9
Both age groups, < 21 and >21	36.4	30.0	50.0	34.8
Status³				
Status	18.2	72.7	50.0	45.8
Non-status	9.1	-	-	4.2
Both, status and non-status	72.7	27.3	50.0	50.0
Children⁴				
Students with Children	11.1	33.3	50.0	25.0
Students with no Children	-	22.2	-	10.0
Both, with and without children	88.9	44.4	50.0	65.0
1	$\chi^2=1.578, p = .454, df=2$		3	$\chi^2=7.033, p = .134, df=4$
2	$\chi^2=1.561, p = .816, df=4$		4	$\chi^2=5.333, p = .255, df=4$

Professionals were asked to identify which Aboriginal groups have used their services. While the following information does not indicate specific numbers or percentages of the total Aboriginal student population present on Canadian university campuses, the information does shed light on which groups are using and those that are not using Aboriginal student services in each region.

The purpose of having professionals indicate the different Aboriginal groups using their Centre in Table 11 was to illustrate the diversity of Aboriginal groups using Aboriginal student services across the country. This diversity was further supported from the self-identification of Aboriginal group by participating Aboriginal university students in Table 7. This provided important information for professionals who are responsible for developing programming and services to such a diverse yet small group. The Aboriginal group who reported the highest usage of Aboriginal student services was the Metis (96%). A regional breakdown was not provided since this might compromise the identity of participating institutions.

Table 11

Aboriginal groups using Aboriginal support services in Canadian Universities, based on the percentage of Aboriginal student service centres indicating which Aboriginal groups had used their services*

Percentage of Centres	Aboriginal group(s) who have used Aboriginal support services
96	Metis
76	Anishinabek
72	Cree
68	Mohawk
56	Inuit
44	Mi'kmaq
36	Maliseet, Nisga'a, Oneida
32	Gitksan, Haida, Kootchin, Salish
28	Assiniboine, Innu, Secwepemc
24	Cayuga, Chipewyan, Huron, Nuxalk, Potawatomi, Squamish, Wet'suwet'en
20	Dene-thah, Haisla, Nlaka'pamux, Nuuchahnulth, Okanagan, Tlingit
16	Blackfoot, Dalkelh, Heiltsuk, Stl'at'imx/Lil'wat, Nass-Gitksan, Tsimshian
12	Chilcotin, Halkomelem, Kwakwaka'wakw, Onodaga, Sechelt, Teuu-T'ina
8	Abenaki, Dogrib, Kaska, Ninuuarimuit, Sahtu Dene, Sekani, Tahltan, Tutchone
4	Dunne-za, Koyukon, Kutenai, Tsetsaut, Seneca

* This chart only reflects the opinions of the professionals. It indicates which groups have used Aboriginal support services. This does not reflect that various groups are not present on campus or are not pursuing post-secondary education.

To develop a national perspective on Aboriginal student services in Canada, it was important to gather a profile of the types of programs and services that were being provided to across the country.

The data in Table 12 illustrates that roughly 11% percent of Centres provided academic advising. Personal counselling was the second most common service amongst 10% of professionals. The third most popular service was orientation with 9.6% and holding Aboriginal cultural activities was forth in the ranking, with 9.1% of the Centres providing this service.

In comparing the Centres' responses with the content analysis of the web pages, there were indications that there were some services, programs and duties that Aboriginal student service professionals provide but the services were not on the Centres' web pages. This was most evident in the comparison between the Eastern region web pages and the professionals' responses to this question. On their web-sites, only 50% of Eastern region participants indicated they provided academic advising, academic workshops, liaison/advocacy services to student, university and community, newsletter, and pre-admission advocacy. One hundred percent indicated that they provided a resource library/centre. However, the Eastern region student service professionals' survey responses showed that in addition to those services listed on the web-site, Eastern Centres also provided orientation, leadership programs, residence, spiritual/religious, career counselling, wellness, academic transition, and time management. For the other two regions, there seemed to be more consistency between the Centre's and their web pages.

Table 12

Percentage distribution of programs and services provided by Aboriginal student service centres by region

Aboriginal student service centres by region (percentage)				
Program or service	Western	Central	Eastern	Total %
Academic advising	11.1	10.4	9.5	10.6
Personal counselling	9.9	10.4	9.5	10.1
Orientation	12.3	8.5	4.8	9.6
Aboriginal cultural activities	8.6	9.4	9.5	9.1
Spiritual/religious	8.6	6.6	9.5	7.7
Career counselling	6.2	7.5	9.5	7.2
Mentoring	7.4	6.6	-	6.3
Wellness	6.2	6.6	4.8	6.3
Career development	3.7	4.7	9.5	4.8
Time management	4.9	5.7	9.5	5.8
Training seminars	4.9	4.7	-	4.3
Leadership programs	2.5	5.7	4.8	4.3
Academic transition	4.9	3.8	4.8	4.3
Residence	2.5	2.8	4.8	2.9
Health services	1.2	.9	.9	1.4
Total	38.9	51.0	10.1	100

There has been a shift from the haphazard development of programs and "hoping that they meet intended needs" to the use of theory and research in offering and developing programs. There were no significant differences between regions in using student service theory or research in Aboriginal student service provision. Seventy-two percent of the participants indicated that they did not use any theory or models in delivering their services.

Table 13 provides evidence to illustrate the regional breakdown of the Centres' indication of use of theory in the running of their programs and services. Of the 28% who indicated 'yes', they used theory, four participants made comments about using an 'indigenous based approach, based on the concepts of egalitarianism and holism and remaining 'client focused'. Chickering's seven vectors were used in developing programs and services in one other instance.

Table 13

Percentage distribution of the use of student service theory in Aboriginal student service centres

Aboriginal student service centres by region				
Theory	Western	Central	Eastern	Total
Yes	9.1	50	-	28
No	90.9	50	100	72
Total	100	100	100	100

$\chi^2 = 5.610, p = .061, df = 2$

With reflection services currently being offered, participants were also asked to report on what could or should be offered as services or programs for Aboriginal students. To learn more about similarities and difference in the regions, it was helpful to see how the different regions provide services to their respective Aboriginal student population. The responses to this open-ended question covered many different aspects of student service provision. The responses have been categorized to identify key areas of interest and concern in Table 14.

Table 14 provides evidence to illustrate the areas service respondents believed could be developed within each region. The data does not presume that all Centres in the region did not provide these services, in fact, some centres may have provided many more services than were listed. The role of the student service professional has many demands, as one student service professional from the Western region of Canada stated: *"I feel that I am the only person that was hired to work specifically with Aboriginal students. . . sometimes I feel totally overwhelmed with the amount of work and expectations that are placed on me..."*. Exploration of other duties and responsibilities professionals working with Aboriginal student services encounter on a daily basis, outside of their normal duties, provided insight into the working role and demands placed on many professionals outside of their regular job duties.

Table 14

Programs and services that should be offered as part of Aboriginal student services from the perspective of the professionals

Aboriginal student service centres by region			
	Western	Central	Eastern
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial sponsorship from HRDC and FN communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial/scholarship applications, scholarships and emergency bursaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Budget to plan and offer services; securing funding for student activities; scholarships and bursaries (a national booklet); Budgeting services
Academic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal studies degree program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career fairs; tutoring; computer training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course development; teaching; tutoring; academic bridging program
Personal		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor programs, parenting, more support from families and communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation services; training seminars; campus to keep network going
Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal cultural activities; Elders programs; spiritual; transition programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Native specific resources (e.g., books, directories); guest lecturer series as role models and increases awareness within university 	

From Table 15, evidence is provided to illustrate that a large role for the Aboriginal student services professional was being a student advocate, whether it was for more financial support, dealing with racism or handling housing or academic issues. Crisis management was another major responsibility of the professional, especially dealing with students' personal issues (e.g., drug abuse, suicide, death in family). Counselling skills or at least access to the resources to provide referrals was another important aspect of Aboriginal student services. Based upon their own experiences and point-of-view, participating professionals were asked to identify the top 5 concerns of students.

Table 16 provides the ranking of the top five concerns of Aboriginal students as perceived by student service professionals. Approximately nineteen percent (N=24) of the student service professionals who responded to this question saw finances being the most important concern to students. Academic preparation came a close second with 18%. Thirteen percent identified distance from family; racism and finding suitable accommodations both received 12%; and the fifth top concern as perceived by 11.3% of the professionals was loneliness.

Table 15

Other responsibilities and duties encountered by Aboriginal student service professionals

Aboriginal student service centres by region			
	<u>Western</u>	<u>Central</u>	<u>Eastern</u>
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contacting bands for additional • Funding and tutoring • Emergency student loans • Financial aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding troubleshooting; Financial difficulties; Funding research 	
Academic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advising prospective students • Guiding application for admission • Editing • Problem solving • Representing centre and student interests on University committees • Supervision of exams • Instruction of study, reading, writing, & exam skills • Recruitment visits/career fairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic difficulties • English difficulties • Web-site development • Transitional program research • Pre-admissions information and recruitment • Handling administrative issues for students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpreting institutional requests and expectations of students

Table 15**Continued****Aboriginal student service centres by region**

	Western	Central	Eastern
Personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocating for students • Crisis management • Help to find childcare • Talking with parents, band education administrators at request of students • Referrals and Liaison services • Conflict resolution • Deal with racism issues • Stress management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home sickness • Substance abuse • Suicide • Crisis management • Personal counselling • Employment information • Legal issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis management • Domestic violence • Death in the family • Referrals for crisis counselling- mental or physical help • Advocacy on student issues • Career fair • Information on university life • Campus tours
Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual graduation and pow wow • Assist in planning of First Nations student events • Referral to outside Aboriginal resources Resource centre for all those interested • Organizing extra activities, (e.g. sports, trips to conferences) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture shock • Feelings of loss of culture • Racial misunderstandings • Issues with Native student association • Pow Wow planning 	

Table 16

**Ranking of the top concerns of Aboriginal students from the perspective of
Aboriginal student service professionals**

Top Concerns	Aboriginal student service centres by region (percentage)			Total (%)
	Western ^a	Central ^b	Eastern ^c	
1. Finances	17.4	20.3	20	19.1
2. Academic preparation	15.2	20.3	20	18.3
3. Distance from Family	10.9	15.3	10	13
4. Racism; Finding suitable accommodations	13	10.2	20	12.2
5. Loneliness	13	11.9	-	11.3

$\chi^2=3.924$, $p=.416$, $df=4$

a N = 10

b N = 12

c N = 2

Professionals were invited to make further comment on this question and their choices. The following comments were excerpted from the surveys:

Our students are unprepared for the Anglo. University, this is seen in poor academics as well as loss of culture and identity, often campus connections are all they have to home. Professional, Central region

The first nations community I work with are very close knit community, so loneliness and finding friends are non-issues, depression and stress are two categories that would work better for my students. Professional, Western region

Regionally, the top five concerns were ranked a little differently when a multiple-response cross-tabulation was conducted. While all three regions saw finances as the top concern of students, there was some variation between the regions for the other top concerns as ranked by student service professionals.

While Western and Central student service professionals ranked academic preparation as the second top concern of their students, Eastern professionals saw finding suitable accommodations as the second top concern. The third ranking was different between each region, Western professionals judged finding suitable accommodations as the third top concern of their students, while Central participants ranked distance from family and the Eastern region ranked racism as concerns of their students respectively. The fourth and fifth top concerns of Aboriginal students from the Western and Central region were ranked as loneliness and racism respectively by the professionals from those regions. The Eastern region professionals ranked academic preparation as the fourth top concern and distance from family as the top fifth concern of students.

Table 17

Regional comparison of professional's perception of Aboriginal university students top concerns.

Aboriginal student service centre by region			
	Western	Central	Eastern
1	Finances	Finances	Finances
2	Academic preparation	Academic preparation	Finding suitable accommodations
3	Finding suitable accommodations	Distance from family	Racism
4	Loneliness	Loneliness	Academic preparation
5	Racism	Racism Finding suitable accommodations	Distance from family

The professionals were then asked to rank the top three services that they provided to students. In Table 18, the top service identified by 29.2% of the responders was academic advising. Providing Aboriginal cultural activities was ranked second by 20.8% of the participants and 12.5% of participants ranked orientation third. There were no regional differences in the ranking of services. Again, professionals were invited to make further comments on this issue.

The most important thing: holding office hours, my students need someone to talk to due to cultural isolation. I smooth the rough edges and deal with the red tape. Professional, Central region

I suppose that I am a friendly brown face in the midst of white faces within the administration of our institution. Students feel that they can come to me with any problem and not be afraid of being judged, ridiculed, questioned. I have a high respect for students and vice versa. Students have generally said that I am a cornerstone, foundation, anchor to hold them steady while the sea storms both within their personal and academic lives. I feel honoured.' Professional, Eastern region

Table 18

Ranking of top services provided by Aboriginal student service centres by student service professionals

Rank Services	Aboriginal student service centres by region (percentage)			Total %
	Western ^a	Central ^b	Eastern ^c	
1 Academic advising	29	28.6	33.3	29.2
2 Aboriginal cultural activity	16.1	25.7	16.7	20.8
3 Orientation	6.5	17.1	16.7	12.5

a N = 11

b N = 12

c N = 2

The final question professionals were invited to share their experiences on was their perceptions of Aboriginal student needs/expectations and Aboriginal student service provision. The comments covered topics such as lack of academic preparation and support, racism, financial supports and needs. A small sample of comments have been selected to create a sense of what was

said about Aboriginal student needs and expectations of Aboriginal student service provision:

1) Aboriginal student needs and expectations

There are some great programs however, funding is limited, needs of Aboriginal students are meeting place, a place they can call their own, Aboriginal peers and professionals to talk to, career opps [opportunities], native student association – Professional, Central region

I am pleased to see that the needs of the students are being met in a much more proactive fashion than in the past. It is still a struggle with the internal administration of the university. I also find that it is frustrating to see the students who come in for help and then fail to make use of the aid that is available to them. I believe that it is necessary to foster a safe environment for them to come to and be a part of. It seems that some, not all, of the students are not equipped with the skills necessary to succeed at the post-secondary level. Transitional programs are a great idea and I would like to see a proliferation of them throughout the country. However, I would like to suggest that this type of program, which prepares the student for the rigours of university, would be more effective if introduced to students in their latter years of high school. – Professional, Central region

I think students expect us to be there to help them when in need, regardless of the problem – Professional, Central region

For many students raised off reserve and in urban areas, their participation in the Native Centre and First Nations Student Association are the first opportunities they have to participate in cultural/ceremonial events and it is valued by them, and will continue to be a need. Establishing community is a priority for many students, and improves their University experience considerably - involvement and volunteering. – Professional, Western region

Aboriginal students are unique and there is lack of recognition as to the role they play consequently they feel marginalized and the view their culture, traditions and history as insignificant for there is no mention of it in present day history books or in academia – Professional, Eastern region

I am finding the switch from high school to Post Sec or from a stay at home or unemployed person to post sec is a quite difficult transition for them to make. Most Aboriginal students I see are unable to meet their financial needs while in school and the money they do get does not last very long as they do not have the skills to budget their money for the month. Most students I see end up going to the food bank. As well, Most students come from far off places and do not have friends, family, or contacts and are very lonely, homesick and not prepared to handle 3-4 courses. They are not prepared academically, mentally, emotionally or socially. I see Student services covering very well the academic and career counselling areas for Aboriginal students but not the mental, emotional, physical side of students coming to campus. There needs to be a structure for First Nation's students who are lonely etc to find support on campus. – Professional, Western region

2) Aboriginal student service provision:

Unfortunately, student service is a # game, very few schools are able to put a full time person in place for less than 1% of students, if there is staff funds are not available – Professional, Central region

From my experience Aboriginal students expect a lot of financial support. Student services are able to guide where bursaries and scholarships are available and when etc, but the applications do not necessarily get completed. The students who I see are usually in need of financial assistance and they are not usually in a position to wait -- i.e.--it is an emergency by the time they come to see me. – Professional, Western region

The bottom line for Aboriginal student services is not programming or even specialized services initially but someone who can identify with the students and has been there (in university) as well a designated space for the Aboriginal students to meet. This is important as it establishes a sense of community for those students far away from home. Historically, our Aboriginal students have been mature students with children. They have also moved their whole family from their community so that the social supports may not be there for them. In my opinion if you can establish these two things immediately, then the rest will follow, the rest being orientation, specialized support services, etc. – Professional, Central region

Students should expect that Aboriginal services deliver quality programs that are open and culturally relevant, not 'feathers and beads' there needs to be a strong connection to academics and professionalism...that's what students have worked hard to achieve – Professional, Central region

Aboriginal University Student Survey

Questions were designed to gather academic and demographic information and participants' experiences with and opinions on Aboriginal student services. The response rate for each question of the Aboriginal University Student Survey instrument was 100%. In cases where some questions had choice responses (e.g., question 11) some individuals chose not to respond to all parts. A frequency analysis was conducted on the survey responses along with the non-parametric test, Pearson chi-square. The ranking of the programs and services currently used by students were tabulated with the use of multiple response cross tabulation.

Student service professionals who participated in this study were asked to identify programs and services that they offered as part of their services, likewise Aboriginal student participants were asked what programs and services they have used in the past. Table 19 reveals the student participant's responses according to region.

Table 19 provides evidence that approximately 16% of the Aboriginal university students used career counselling, 14% used food services, 11% used financial services and personal counselling and 10% used health services and orientation services.

Table 19

Programs and services used by Aboriginal university students

Aboriginal university students by region (percentage)				
Programs – Services	Western^a	Central^b	Eastern^c	Average
Career Counselling	18.5	16.7	14	15.7
Food Services	18.5	16.7	10	13.5
Personal counselling	7.4	8.3	14	11.2
Financial	11.1	16.7	10	11.2
Orientation	7.4	8.3	12	10.1
Health	11.1	8.3	10	10.1
Volunteer Programs	11.1	8.3	6.0	7.9
Scholarship office	7.4	8.3	6	6.7
On-campus housing	-	-	10	6.3
Other*	7.4	8.3	2.0	4.5
Leadership programs	-	-	6	2.8
Total	22.5	15	62.5	100

a N = 7
b N = 3
c N = 11

Volunteer programs were used by 8%, while scholarship office services and on-campus housing were used by 7% of the Aboriginal university students. Less than 3% of the participants indicated they had used leadership programs.

Approximately 4.5% of the students indicated use of programs and services other than the ones that were listed, these services were work-study, use of Aboriginal lounge 'good safe place to study' and use of First nations student services.

Aboriginal university students were also asked to rank the top three services that were provided by Aboriginal student services. The top service ranked by Aboriginal students was academic transition programs with 18.2%, while personal counselling was ranked second, 16.4%. There was a tie for third with orientation, career counselling, and Aboriginal cultural activity, 14.5% participants ranked these as one of three of their choices.

Table 20

Rankings of the more important student services as indicated by

Aboriginal university students

Aboriginal university students				
by region (percentage)				
Services	Western^a	Central^b	Eastern^c	Average %
1. Academic transition programs	23.1	8.3	20	18.2
2. Personal counselling	15.4	25	13.3	16.4
3. Orientation	15.4	16.7	13.3	14.5
Career counselling	15.4	16.7	13.3	
Aboriginal cultural activity	15.4	-	20	
4. Wellness	-	25	13.3	12.7

a N = 7

b N = 4

c N = 11

The multiple response cross-tabulation analysis provided evidence that saw a regional difference in the ranking of the top three services. For Eastern region, both Aboriginal cultural activity and academic transition programs were chosen as top services by 20% of the students. While orientation, personal counselling, career counselling and wellness were tied in the ranking by 13% of Eastern students. Twenty-five percent of participants from the Central region ranked both personal counselling and wellness as the top service, while orientation and career counselling tied with approximately 17% of the participants ranking. The Western region participants ranked their top concern as academic transition (23%). Fifteen percent of the participants ranked orientation, personal counselling, and career counselling among their top three services.

Some Aboriginal university students chose to further comment on the ranking of the top three services they needed. Their comments were primarily directed towards professor's attitudes, self-esteem issues and the need for a holistic approach by the university for services.

[Aboriginal student services] to be successful, a holistic perspective and approach must be taken and subsequently delivered by the services at university, the university must focus on the total needs of Aboriginal students rather than specific compartmentalized needs – Student, Western region

I found that a lot of natives suffer from low-self esteem which hinder their academic achievement i.e., they set themselves up for failing, aren't motivated or determined to succeed – Student, Central region

Myself, I notice that a few professors and demonstrators are quick to see weaknesses and are quick to give help. While some demonstrators feel like, why should I, these ones, looking for a credit only. Native tutorial sessions- preferably someone not from the same district would be a plus! Must be well educated and at ease to explain key concepts and to be able to listen and see where weaknesses lie, rushing is not good! More tune to what is out there, they would have to know best of how it is in a racist society – Student, Eastern region

Students were asked to identify their top five concerns about post-secondary experiences. From the overall ranking, Table 21 provides evidence that illustrates the top five concerns of the Aboriginal students were 1) adjustment to a new environment; 2) loneliness, distance from family; 3) academic preparation; 4) finding/meeting friends and 5) racism.

Table 21

Ranking of the top concerns of Aboriginal university students by region

Aboriginal university students				
by region (percentage)				
Top concerns	Western^a	Central^b	Eastern^c	Total
1. Adjusting to new environment	14.8	20	18	17.5
2. Distance from family	11.1	15	16	14.4
Loneliness	14.8	10	16	14.4
3. Academic preparation	14.8	20	10	13.4
4. Finding friends	3.7	20	12	11.3
5. Racism	22.2	-	8	10.3
6. Finding adequate finances	11.1	10	8	9.3

Table 21***Continued***

7. Finding suitable accommodations	7.4	-	12	8.2
8. Other	-	5	-	1.0

a N = 7

b N = 4

c N = 10

Table 22 provides evidence that illustrates the differences in the ranking of the top five concerns of Aboriginal students from each region. It is important to remember the small number of students participating in this study. Keeping this in mind, it can be seen that Aboriginal university students from the Western region ranked the top five concerns as being: racism (22.2%), adjustment to a new environment (14.8%), loneliness (14.8%), academic preparation (14.8%) and distance from family (11.1%). Central participants ranked their top five concerns as being: academic preparation (20%), adjustment to a new environment (20%), finding friends (20%), distance from family (15%) and there was a tie for fifth place with loneliness and finding adequate finances both ranking with 10%. The top five concerns for students from the Eastern region were: adjustment to a new environment (18%), loneliness (16%), distance from family (16%), finding suitable accommodations (12%) and finding friends (12%).

Table 22

Regional breakdown of the ranking of the top concerns of Aboriginal university students

Aboriginal university students by region			
	Western	Central	Eastern
1	Racism	Academic preparation	Adjustment to new environment
2	Adjustment to new environment	Adjustment to new environment	
3	Loneliness	Finding friends	Distance from family
4	Academic preparation	Distance from family	Finding suitable accommodations
5	Distance from family	Loneliness Adequate finances	Finding friends

Student participants were invited to make further comments about the top five concerns of Aboriginal students; the following are excerpts from participants' responses.

Institutionalized racism, in that the university model is predominately Euro-centric systems of knowledge. An emphasis is placed on 'testing' knowledge in ways, which are not always beneficial to Aboriginal students. Examples of such instances are 'timed' test which do not reflect what someone knows, but rather if they can reiterate their knowledge with in a socially constructed time frame. Consequently, Aboriginal students need to be taught how to be successful when tested within Euro-centric framework of evaluation – Student, Western region

Most natives are funded, I am not- because I am Métis so my primary concern is funding, whereas in my experience, most natives have a hard time adjusting to academics – Student, Central region

I feel that the political bull in university is aggravating, favouritism is something that is ignorant on the part of profs – Student, Central region

The most important concern was preparation for university, failure of current levels of up grading courses to provide adequate teaching, learning at a university level, this leads to a shock when you finally get here. When you see that the knowledge you gained, failed to prepare you. You were left holding the bag, trying hard to just survive and make it to the surface and take a breath and go forward again. And when you feel alienated due to racist attitudes, subtle as some are, yet more is a blunt and real, as a dull axe, these issues have to be addressed! – Student, Eastern region

Loneliness is the worst! But since I found out about the Native Liaison Office it has been much better and I feel so much better – Student, Eastern region

Since age was a significant factor between regions, a further cross tabulation analysis was done to see if any of the variables became significant when the student participants' ages were taken into account. In the cross tabulation of age, region and attendance at another post-secondary institution there was only a significant difference in those participants who were older than 41 ($\chi^2=4.00$, $p=.046$, $df=1$). There was not a significant difference between regions, age group and gender. All the participants who were over 41 were male therefore considered a constant variable in the cross analysis.

The use of services was also considered a variable, which could be influenced by student's age. In the multiple response analysis of age, region and programs and services used, Aboriginal students who were under 21 were unique in their use of leadership programs (7.9%), and on-campus housing (12.2%) The 31-40 age group did not make use of personal counselling or

volunteer programs, while the other age groups did. However, all age groups made use of health, scholarship office, orientation, career counselling, and financial services.

The age of participants was also analyzed with their identification of the top three services provided by Aboriginal student service and the top five needs of Aboriginal students. From Table 20 it can be seen that the top three services were identified as 1) academic transition programs, 2) personal counselling, 3) orientation, career counselling, and Aboriginal cultural activity tied for third.

A detailed analysis of age and ranking of services reveals an interesting finding. Participants who were under 21 and those in the age group 31-40 did not indicate spiritual/religious services as a top service, while those 22-30 and 31-40 did not indicate residence among their top choices. Those aged 22-30 did not include orientation among their choices. Those participants over 41 did not choose career counselling or wellness as a top service. Although the number of student respondents was low, one must be mindful that at different stages of their lives, students seek different services.

Overall the top five concerns of Aboriginal students were identified as: 1) adjustment to new environment, 2) distance from family, loneliness, 3) academic preparation, 4) finding friends and 5) racism. Table 24 illustrates how each age group varied from the main list.

Table 23

The top services provided by Aboriginal student service centres as ranked by participating Aboriginal university students by age group

Aboriginal university students by age group (years)			
21 and under	22 – 30	31- 40	41+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal cultural activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career counselling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic transition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career counselling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career counselling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal counselling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic transition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal counselling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellness 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual religious services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic transition 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal counselling
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal cultural activity

Data from Table 24 provides evidence that illustrates that students under the age of 21 omitted racism and included finding suitable accommodations as one of their top concerns. Those in the age groups, 22-30 and 31-40 omitted racism in their top five concerns and included finding adequate finances. For those older than 41, the top five concerns were more focused on racism,

academic preparation, adjustment to a new environment, and finding adequate finances, while loneliness and finding friends were tied for fifth place.

Table 24

Relationship between the top concerns of Aboriginal university students by age group

Aboriginal university student participants by age group (years)			
21 and under	22 - 30	31- 40	41+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance from family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjustment to new enviro 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjustment to new enviro 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjustment to new enviro 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loneliness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loneliness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic preparation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loneliness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance from family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance from family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjustment to new enviro
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding suitable accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic preparation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding finances
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic preparation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding suitable accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loneliness
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding finances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding friends

Students were also provided the opportunity to express their experiences with and their expectations of Aboriginal student services. Those participants from the Central and Eastern regions were unanimous in expressing their positive experiences with their respective local centres.

Pretty cool for the most part – Student, Central region

My experiences with Aboriginal student services is a real positive one, communication lines are always present. Helpful, always there for the students needs, 24-7 – Student, Eastern region.

While the experiences of the Western student participants were for the most part positive, some expressed concern over their institution's attitude towards First Nation peoples.

Until recently [my experiences] have been minimal, this university doesn't feel it should show any kind of bias toward First Nations students- Student, Western region

Another participant expressed his/her displeasure with the current level of services and their institutions' disposition towards Aboriginal students:

Currently [services] are insufficient and severely lacking. Finding support is difficult and maintaining continuity extremely difficult. The university does not support or recognise First Nations needs – Student, Western region

Students expectations regarding the level and quality of services, the student service professional's role and the institution's responsibility or role in Aboriginal student services are captured in the following comments:

I would expect there to be access to a First Nations (FN) academic advisor- there isn't; I would expect there to be on-campus access to FN programs, there isn't, everything is by distance; I expect that, in some way, the FN co-ordinator would have a say in how monies for FN students, coming through the university is spent, she doesn't so we don't – Student, Western region

My expectations are high, as are my needs, I think this is common for native students – Student, Central region

To have services that are reflective of each university's Aboriginal population's needs. These services should be dedicated from the bottom up, in that the students have the primary say in what their needs are. These needs are not generic as are the respective communities where they originate – Student, Western region

I need a positive, encouraging environment that provides a support system to help me succeed – Student, Central region

I feel that the services should have names and numbers of tutors for each academic level . . . when you seek help and try to get help it takes you a while to find help and if even with the professors help it is sometimes too late and then you have already failed. – Student, Eastern region

Needs and provisions such as helping with what ever you need help with regarding your school life, or just life in general. To assist, inform, help, guide, and understand. – Student, Eastern region

Phase III

Comparison of Aboriginal students and student service providers

The two surveys were designed in this study to gather the perspectives of two different populations (Aboriginal university students and student service providers) on similar issues. Having both of these perspectives was seen as an important part of the process model and in honouring the ideology of holism and community in the process of this research.

In reviewing Table 9 and Table 12, it can be seen that most common services (e.g., offered by most of the participating centres/offices) were: academic advising, personal counselling, orientation, Aboriginal cultural activity, spiritual/religious services and career counselling. Participating students were asked to share what services they had used in the past, the list of services included a wide range of services that can be found under the student service

umbrella. Students used services such as: career counselling, food services, personal counselling, financial, orientation, and health. While these comparisons show the services provided by the Centres were being used, they also identified other service agencies student relied on for help.

The data in Table 25 provides a comparison of the ranking of the top services by professionals and students. While both professionals and students saw orientation as an important service, the two groups had different opinions on the other top services. The professionals indicated that academic advising was considered more important, while students saw personal and career counselling and academic transition as important.

Table 25

Comparison of the top three Aboriginal student services as ranked by student service professionals and Aboriginal university students.

Ranking	Student service professionals	Aboriginal university students
1	Academic advising	Academic transition
2	Aboriginal cultural activity	Personal counselling
3	Orientation	Orientation; Career counselling

In reviewing the perspectives of the students and the professionals on their opinions of the top concerns of students, Table 26 provides evidence that while professionals saw finances as the top concern of students, participating

students did not rank this among their top five concerns. Concerns that were common to both groups were: academic preparation, distance from family, loneliness. Students seemed more concerned with adjusting to their new environment and finding friends, while professionals saw student concerns being finding suitable accommodations, racism, and finances.

Table 26

Comparison of the top concerns of Aboriginal students as ranked by student service professionals and Aboriginal university students

Ranking	Student service professionals	Aboriginal university students
1	Finances	Adjustment to a new environment
2	Academic preparation	Distance from family; Loneliness
3	Distance from family	Academic preparation
4	Finding suitable accommodations; Racism	Finding friends
5	Loneliness	Racism

Table 27 provides evidence that illustrates the perspectives of students and professionals according to region. In comparing the views of the professionals and students from the Western region, they were similar in identifying academic preparation, loneliness, and racism as concerns. However, professionals saw finances and finding suitable accommodations as the other top

concerns, while the participating students identified adjustment to new environment and distance from family among their top five concerns.

The Central region, students and professionals identified four similar concerns: finances, academic preparation, distance from family and loneliness.

Students also identified adjustment to new environment and finding friends.

Professionals identified finding suitable accommodations and racism.

Participants from the Eastern region identified finding suitable accommodations

and distance from family as top concerns. However, students further identified adjustment to new environment, loneliness and finding friends, while

professionals added finances, racism and academic preparation as top concerns.

Overall the professionals were more consistent in identifying what they thought were the top concerns of students. All three regions identified finances, academic preparation, finding suitable accommodations and racism as top concerns. The professionals in two regions, Central and Western, identified loneliness, while Eastern identified distance from family.

The students also shared the same consistency amongst their regional groupings. All three regions identified adjustment to new environment, loneliness, and distance from family. Students from the Western and Central region identified academic preparation as top concerns. The Central region participants were unique in choosing finances while the Eastern region participants were unique in choosing finding suitable accommodations.

Table 27

Regional distribution of student service professionals' and Aboriginal students' perspectives on the top concerns of Aboriginal university students

Perspective	Regions		
	Western	Central	Eastern
Professional	• Finances	• Finances	• Finances
	• Academic preparation	• Academic preparation	• Finding suitable accommodations
	• Finding suitable accommodations	• Distance from family	• Racism
	• Loneliness	• Loneliness	• Academic preparation
	• Racism	• Finding suitable accommodations; Racism	• Distance from family
Students	• Racism	• Adjustment to new environment	• Adjustment to new environment
	• Adjustment to new environment	• Finding friends	• Loneliness
	• Loneliness	• Academic preparation	• Distance from family
	• Academic preparation	• Distance from family	• Finding suitable accommodations
	• Distance from family	• Loneliness; Finances	• Finding friends

In Table 28 the data presented provides evidence of the differences in perspectives from students and professionals in the same region can be seen. Unlike Table 27, which had some similarities amongst regions and between groups in ranking of the top concerns of Aboriginal students, Table 28 shows there was little to no similarity in students and professionals opinions from the same regions on the top three services. As can be seen from Table 28, the only region in which students and professionals both identified similar services was the Eastern region. Both groups from this region identified Aboriginal cultural activity and orientation among the top services.

There were, however, more similarities between groups of participants. For example, all professionals identified academic advising and Aboriginal cultural activity as top concerns. Two regions, Central and Eastern, identified orientation among top services, while professionals in the Western region chose mentoring. For the Eastern region, there was a tie between orientation, mentoring, and career counselling.

Table 28

Comparison by region of student service professionals' and Aboriginal university students' perspectives on the top Aboriginal student services and programs

Perspective	Regions		
	Western	Central	Eastern
Professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic advising • Aboriginal cultural activity • Mentoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic advising • Aboriginal cultural activity • Orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic advising • Aboriginal cultural activity • Orientation • Mentoring • Career counselling
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic transition • Orientation • Career counselling • Personal counselling • Aboriginal cultural activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal counselling • Wellness • Career counselling • Orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal cultural activity • Academic transition • Orientation • Career counselling • Personal counselling • Wellness

The same can be found in examining the top services identified by participating students. Students from the three regions chose personal counselling and orientation. Eastern and Western participants chose academic transition as another top service, those from Central choose wellness. There was a tie in the Eastern region amongst orientation, career counselling,

personnel counselling and wellness for third place. In the Western region, orientation, career counselling, personal counselling and Aboriginal cultural activity were ranked by 15.4% of the participants.

Summary

The posed research questions allowed for the gathering of much needed data to form the national perspective on Aboriginal student services in Canadian Universities. This perspective was formed in large part from the input from the student service professionals and Aboriginal university students who took part in the study's survey. There are a wide array of services being offered across the country; there is some consistency in programming across the country; however, there needs to be a stronger base-line established. While there were no significant differences found within each group, there were significant differences found in the experiences and expectations of student service professionals from those of the Aboriginal university students. The use of formal student service theory is also lacking amongst the participating Aboriginal student service centres. Of the 28% who said that they did use theory, over 80% of this group indicated they used a holistic approach.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Recommendations

Discussion of the findings

Aboriginal student services centres in many Canadian universities are at various stages of development. While some centres have had specific services for Aboriginal students since the early 1970's, most of the centres have only been opened since the 1990's. Many of these Centres began with government funding in reaction to recruitment and retention issues for Aboriginal students who were pursuing specific native-focused programs, such as, Aboriginal teacher education programs or First Nations studies programs. Today many centres have extended their services to all Aboriginal students on or off campus. Ultimately, student services exist to support students and to promote their development (Westit LaCounte, 1987).

Conducting a needs assessment of Aboriginal student services in Canadian universities was important for several reasons. It gathered information on a national level of the current status of service provision to Aboriginal students in Canadian universities; it provided a comparison of the perceptions of those providing the services and those using the services; and it addressed some of the issues surrounding student recruitment and retention as it pertained to the Aboriginal university student population. Indirectly, the study resulted in the compilation of resources that can be used as a national reference guide for Aboriginal student services centres in Canadian universities. All of this

information was viewed as benefiting the greater university community and Aboriginal peoples who seek improvements to higher education opportunities and more importantly, Aboriginal student service provision in Canadian universities.

As Calliou (1998) pointed out a hyperconsciousness exists among many professionals and institutions over 'aboriginal' versus 'non-aboriginal' needs which has the potential of leading to a dangerous path of differentiating students solely on their self-identification to one group or the other. While this study attempted to identify the need for specific Aboriginal student services amidst the literature on mainstream versus minority groups, namely Aboriginal students. It did not exclude other factors which influence service provision, such as: age, gender, marital status, and having or not having children.

Following the principles of Aboriginal research (Archibald et al., 1995) and incorporating technology into the study led to the creation of a community environment amongst all involved. Through the development of a resource base for all Aboriginal student service providers in Canada, many professionals realized that they were not alone in their struggle. This study also expanded the current knowledge and literature on Canadian student services and more importantly, Aboriginal university students.

To provide some context and structure to this discussion the research questions were revisited and answered in the following sections.

Services being offered by Aboriginal student services centres and those being used by Aboriginal students

In comparing web pages of the participating Centres with the responses from the participating professionals, there was a discrepancy found between what was indicated on the web pages and the professional survey results. One plausible explanation for these differences is the fact that many Centres listed specific Aboriginal cultural activities and events on-line, while in the survey instrument, Aboriginal cultural activities sought only inclusive responses.

Therefore, while some Centres, predominately those in the Western and Central regions, offered a plethora of activities on their web site, professionals only had to check one response on the survey instrument. Their web site listed activities included: friendship circles, feasts, bannock and fry bread, elder programs, beadwork class and community referrals to off-campus events. The web pages of the Eastern region provided no information regarding Aboriginal cultural activities, however, 9.5% of student service professionals indicated through their survey, that they were provided some form of Aboriginal cultural activities. The Eastern region had the least developed pages while those Centres in the Western and Central regions were well rounded. The latter supported the holistic approach used to promote their services and programs on an academic, personal, spiritual and physical realm.

From the students' responses, it could be seen that they not only relied on services that were specifically provided by Aboriginal student service centres, but

also utilized other services that fell under the larger student service umbrella. To overcome educational barriers, successful minority students sought out and used all available campus resources (Padilla, et al., 1997). Constrained by resources, fiscal limits and staff size, Aboriginal student centres are challenged when attempting to offer all the services Aboriginal students seek. Therefore, working in partnership with other service providers on-campus and within their local communities, Centres are able to meet the needs of their students. Aboriginal university students who participated in this study shared that they had past experience with these other services providers. This was important in terms of referrals and sharing of resources at the service provision level. However, it is crucial that First Nation centres maintain essential services that Aboriginal students would not receive from the mainstream student service centres.

Counseling issues, both personal and career, were important services to the students, in terms of students' use of these services and in their ranking of the top three services. Regionally, Western and Central students seemed less likely to use personal counselling service, but still ranked it among their top three services. The participants from the Eastern region indicated a use of counseling services also ranked counselling as one of their top services (13% and 14% respectively) (see Table 26). Betz & Fitzgerald's (1995) study emphasized the importance of career counseling; their work was further supported by this study's findings. The diversity of the Aboriginal student population, socio-economic status, education, health issues and adherence to one's culture and language

are all factors that a student service professional must be cognisant of when counselling an Aboriginal student (Johnson, Swartz, & Martin, 1995).

Professionals from all three regions chose academic advising, aboriginal cultural activities and orientation as the top three services they provided to Aboriginal students. These choices, while different from the students, were seen by the professionals as the ones that were important from their perspective. At this stage, it is important to consider the implications of having different consumer-producer viewpoints when it comes to service provision. Many of the professionals admitted that counselling, especially just being there for students on a personal level was important in their role as an Aboriginal student service professional. Since counselling and mentoring may be seen as something that is always present in the Centre, informally or formally, their focus would be on what services would be helpful in students' lives (e.g., orientation) and what services they are asked the most for (e.g., academic advising and Aboriginal cultural activities). The following excerpt illustrates this view:

. . . I see student services covering very well the academic and career counselling areas for Aboriginal students but not the mental, emotional, physical side of students coming to campus . . . – Professional, Western region

While orientation services do cover a wide gamete of these issues, this service is another example of the discontinuity between the web page and the survey findings. Less than 10% of the student service professionals surveyed indicated they provided orientation services, 25% of participating Centres' web

pages indicated that such a service was available. Ten percent of students indicated they had used orientation services before and almost 15% indicated orientation was a top three service. Keeping in mind the small student sample, it is interesting to note that orientation remained in the top rankings of both Aboriginal students and student service professionals.

The reasons for students using, or not using, Aboriginal support services was a topic that was beyond the scope of this study and requires further investigation. However, with the assistance of the student service professionals and the Aboriginal university students who participated in this study, a more accurate description of the "typical-user" of Aboriginal student services was gathered in this study. The Aboriginal university student who used Aboriginal student services was typically older than average students, beyond twenty-one years of age; was more likely to be female than male; and was just as likely to have children as to not have children.

Aboriginal university students' needs and expectations: perceptions of the professionals and students

The development and provision of support services are often based on the 'expressed need' by the users, that is Aboriginal university students or a 'perception of need' by the providers, the student service professionals (Smith, 1982). For this reason, gathering the perceptions of both the student service professionals and the Aboriginal university students was seen as a crucial aspect of creating a national framework of Aboriginal student services.

It is important to remember that the Aboriginal students who will access your services are not homogenous. You will have students directly from a First Nation, Urban Native students who have never lived on a reserve, Aboriginal students who are only beginning to identify as Aboriginal and have never even visited a reserve and do not know their heritage, Metis students and then you have Aboriginal students who are Traditional to those who do not participate in traditional ceremonies because they are Christian. In Aboriginal student services you have to understand and respect all Aboriginal students for where they may be on that continuum. That is also the key to success in Aboriginal Student Services. - Professional, Central region

This quote sets the context to compare the professionals' and students' perceptions regarding Aboriginal student's concerns; a comparison, which revealed differing perspectives. While three regions of participating professionals saw finances, academic preparation, finding suitable accommodations and loneliness as top concerns, the Central region identified racism, and Western and Eastern regions identified distance from family as other top concerns of students.

The expressed concerns of all participating Aboriginal students were seen as adjustment to new environment, loneliness, and distance from family. Those from the Western region chose racism and academic preparation, along with Central region participants. Those students from the Eastern region indicated that finding friends was another top concern of theirs.

While some themes of concern are common between groups of professionals and students from the same region, there is more agreement among the two cohorts, professionals and students. Accounting for these differences again goes back to how professionals perceive the services they provide (Martin, 1994) and what is requested of them from students. This does

not imply that professionals are totally off base with their service provision, in fact from students' accounts 95% of participating students were more than happy with the current service they provided.

Just as students are unique in how they learn and adjust to a university environment, so are students in their cultures and backgrounds. While an orientation program is often a short term (e.g., two days before semester beginning), some students' may be overwhelmed by all the information presented to them at one time. One can conclude that it is important to build in other programs and services that complement the purpose of the orientation service on a year round basis.

Finance was one area of concern that did not arise from the students but was highly ranked by the professionals. Professionals in their closed and open-ended responses indicated that counselling students on financial matters, providing referrals to federally funded or bank loan programs, scholarships and even in-house emergency student loans were a large part of their responsibilities. Although students did not address this as a concern, fiscal issues are always an important part of a student's life. It follows that providing services such as orientation, finance, as well as those services previously discussed should continue and strengthen.

Experiences with Aboriginal student services

Professionals provided most of the feedback on this question. Ninety-five percent of students were satisfied with the job their Centre was doing and

recognized what a hard task it was in being a service provider. However, the concern of some Western region students was of the effects of resource cut backs and perception of the lack of institutional support.

For the most part it would seem that resources are limited and the statistics that are relevant to Aboriginal students reflect the inadequacy of the system. – Student, Western region

Aboriginal student services are being delivered within the political and bureaucratic environment present in many Canadian universities. In this sometimes constrictive environment student service professionals are working diligently to put together a reputable and successful Aboriginal student service centre for the Aboriginal students on their campus. These professionals can feel isolated as solely responsible for Aboriginal students. The majority of the centres are taking a holistic approach to service provision, setting high standards in terms of academic, personal, spiritual, physical and cultural supports for their students.

The most important thing: holding office hours, my students need someone to talk to due to cultural isolation, I smooth the rough edges and deal with the red tape – Professional, Central region

Expectations of Aboriginal student services

The role of the professional in meeting the expectations of students regarding the Aboriginal student services were often limited by the authority and responsibilities the student service professionals held within the institution and how the institution regarded Aboriginal peoples. The following quote from a

professional from the Central region further describes the role of the student service professional :

The bottom line for Aboriginal Student Services is not programming or even specialized services initially but someone who can identify with the students and has been there (in university) as well a designated space for the Aboriginal students to meet. This is important as it establishes a sense of community for those students far away from home. . . In my opinion if you can establish these two things immediately, then the rest will follow, the rest being orientation, specialized support services, etc. - Professional, Central region.

Cultural congruency needs to be a goal of Aboriginal student centres and their institutions. This is achieved through the holistic integration of structure and function as institution and participants enter into natural flow of community (Barnhardt, 1993).

Finding support is difficult and maintaining continuity extremely difficult. The university does not support or recognize First Nation needs. – Student, Western region

This institution is just beginning to accommodate for Native Canadians and therefore courses are generally constructed within a colonist framework, students are often subjected to outright and inadvertent racism – Professional, Central region

Students, for the most part, expected professionals to have a great deal of knowledge and resources available to assist or refer students with their concerns, whether academic or personal in nature. A positive supportive environment that fosters friendships in a safe environment is also important to students. Consistency in the Centre's services and staff is another expectation expressed by Western region students.

Theories and models best suited for Aboriginal student services

A strong majority of Centres indicated that they did not use a specific theory or model in the development and delivery of services to Aboriginal students. Many were still using the pragmatic, reactive approach (Smith, 1982) in providing support services. In such a specialized unit, Aboriginal student service centres were being held more accountable for the services they provided to a very small percentage of the student population in terms of fiscal responsibilities and in terms of their responsibilities to these students. In the quest to prove one's accountability, student service professionals from all aspects of the university community are moving towards the use of applicable student development theories and models (Harpel, 1975). The use of theory in the developing and implementing of programs and services provides professionals with a base to set standards and measure success.

Of the 28% of professionals who indicated that their Centre does use theory, 86% made reference to using a holistic indigenous-based approach to their service delivery. There has been some research pertaining to the sacred circle and medicine wheel (Anderson, 1998; Battiste, 1995; Calliou, 1998; Calliou, 1995; Coyhis, 1997; Meadows, 1996; Murk, 1995; O'Meara, 1994; Pepper, 1991; Regnier, 1995a; Regnier, 1995b; Stiegelbauer, 1992) in respect to healing, education and individual development. While the concept of the sacred circle and medicine wheel could be applied to Aboriginal student services, to this date, there has been no formalized approach or model developed for an

Aboriginal student services ideology. This would be the next step in the evolution of Aboriginal student services provision.

Currently, there are several theories addressing student transition, retention and recruitment, unfortunately, many of these theories were developed with mainstream students, who were typically male, under 21 years of age and middle class. Research on minority students, especially African Americans and students with disabilities is growing. To date there has been no specific student development theory for Aboriginal students.

It would appear that holistic programs were seen as the key to success for Aboriginal student services. Having the student service professional's perceptions of need on par with those of Aboriginal university students was viewed as crucial, and the best theory or model for Aboriginal student services was one in which the holistic teachings were exemplified in the approach of the Medicine wheel or the sacred circle. However, since there was little evidence to support that a singular theory in respect to student services and Aboriginal students exists, it is proposed that further research be conducted in developing a student services theory with a holistic ideology that would benefit Aboriginal student service provision.

Conclusions

To increase Aboriginal student success by the Euro-Western definition (i.e., convocation) students would need support services in place that not only assist students academically, but services which also provided a holistic

approach reflecting student's personal, spiritual, physical, and emotional well being. Across the country there were indications that student service professionals, between bureaucratic red tape and institutional/community politics, were attempting to provide support services in a holistic manner.

Regionally, service variation may have varied due to funding, staff allocation, staff training, student demands and mission statements of university and Aboriginal communities.

Age is a variable that revealed some differences in student preferences for services. Knowledge of the age cohort using the services should dictate provision. Since the majority of the identified users of Aboriginal student services were typically 'older than average', the scope of service delivery should focus on issues that concern older than average learners. For example, the older-than-average Aboriginal students' life experiences influence their expectations of services, which could be incorporated into the aspects of a holistic theory. While Pepper & Henry (1991) focused on the development of a child's self-esteem within the context of the life cycle, their message can be applied to an older population. Being treated with mutual respect and encouragement through praise, acknowledgement, appreciation and admiration for one's constructive actions and contributions could be developed as a dimension of a holistic model for Aboriginal student services provision.

Career counseling and academic transition programs were two services identified by all age groups and therefore, should be considered the foundation of

any Aboriginal student support service. Only 16.7% of the centres' web pages indicated providing career counseling and only 4.2% specifically stated an academic transition program. However, if academic workshops and advising were considered support services for one's transition then a higher percentage of centres offer a form of transition programs.

Recommendations

This section has been organized to reflect recommendations for the different aspects of this study. The recommendations evolved from the voices of those who participated in the research process. The opinions of both the professionals and Aboriginal university students who shared their experiences and points of view on Aboriginal student services were used to make the following recommendations to further build and enhance Aboriginal student services across Canadian universities.

Canadian universities need to: respect Aboriginal peoples, develop programs that are relevant in their relationships, develop programs that are relevant to an Aboriginal world view, offer reciprocity in their relationships with Native peoples and help Aboriginal people exercise responsibility (Kirkness & Barnhart, 1991).

Aboriginal Student Services:

Professional interest groups

Aboriginal student services is a growing field, which is a great benefit to student service professionals and Aboriginal university students. The findings

would suggest that it would be prudent to create and foster a national sense of unity through respecting the teachings of the sacred circle. It is therefore recommended that:

- 1) *A national interest group be established to deal directly with Aboriginal student concerns and issues.*

This can be expedited through the Canadian Association of College and University Student Services (CACUSS). This organization is well established across Canada and holds an annual conference. This national conference would provide a network for Aboriginal student service providers and Aboriginal university students to create a sense of community and peer-help on the national level. It would also address an educational void for all student service providers through offering workshops and presentations on issues in Aboriginal student services and Aboriginal higher education. Another aspect of the infrastructure of CACUSS is its national newsletter and list-servs, which could provide links to all Aboriginal student centres across the country. The latter would be a great way to increase awareness about other Centres, share ideas, develop service benchmarks and create a sense of belonging.

Institutional mission

If student services are to be seen as supporting the institutional mission, the Centre must be viewed as part of the institution by the institution and itself. It is recommended that:

- 2) Institutional and Centres' mission statements be reviewed to ensure Aboriginal students needs and expectations are being adequately addressed.***

Evaluation

Although students were quite happy with the current services, the discrepancy between the students and student service professionals' expectations warrants the need for improvement. Professionals must 'wear a different hat' when thinking about service provision for students. In looking at the identified concerns of students, professionals should evaluate whether a program or service is currently in place that is intended to address this concern. If the answer is yes, then professionals can further evaluate why this service was not meeting students expectations and needs. If there was no such service or program in place then professionals and students should work together and lobby for the establishment of such a service. For example, if adjusting to a new environment is such a great concern to students, then an orientation program that focuses on transition, loneliness, academics, and establishing peer support networks would address some of the concerns students have. It is recommended that:

- 3) Regular evaluation of Aboriginal student needs be conducted and more importantly of current programs and services offered by Aboriginal student services centres.***

Theory- Models

The holistic approach to Aboriginal student services entails the provision of services, programs and supports along the following dimensions: personal, spiritual, cultural, social, academic, physical wellness and health. Together, these dimensions foster growth in the student. The holistic approach follows the principles of the sacred circle or medicine wheel of Aboriginal cultures (Reigner, 1995). The four aspects of the self-esteem medicine wheel are models, connectiveness, power and uniqueness (Pepper & Henry, 1991). All of these dimensions can be applied as a potential theory/model for Aboriginal student services through the development programs such as: visiting or in-house elder mentors; self-esteem programs; peer mentoring and more importantly, celebrating the diversity amongst students. The use of theory/models in Aboriginal student services is limited. A recommendation arising from this study is:

- 4) *The need to develop a theory and model that can be used to support the development of Aboriginal student services, with a focus on holistic ideology, encompassing the teachings of the sacred circle or medicine wheel.*

The development of a national model, framework, and theory with a Canadian perspective would move forward the provision of Aboriginal student services on a national level. It would bring together the professionals and students to work together to ensure the services address the needs and expectations of students.

Communication

Aboriginal student services require a high level of contact and follow up. Being aware of community and campus resources is an integral part of the position (Westit LaCounte, 1987). Since the professionals identified advocacy and support as major components of their responsibilities, better lines of communication between the professionals and students would ensure that awareness of the services and supports available on-campus and in the community is improved. It is recommended that:

- 5) *Campus Aboriginal student service web pages be designed to further elaborate and promote services, programs, and resources regarding Aboriginal student services.*

The site would include staff, their relevant positions and titles, and their contact information such as numbers, e-mail, and mail addresses. An informative site with program descriptions and services available to students would enhance the awareness and promote usage of such services.

Through the establishment of a sense of ownership on campus and through the utilization of peer programs and role models, Aboriginal student service centres will successfully support and encourage Aboriginal university students in their post-secondary education. Promotion of services will go a long way in balancing what is available to what students want. It is recommended that:

6) The Internet be used to establish a newsletter or even an electronic memo board to open channels of communication between the professionals and the students.

Financial resources

A consistent finding amongst all the regions was the focus on the provision of financial services, either in terms of advising (budgets) or emergency financial assistance. It is recommended that:

7) A national resource listing be created of available scholarships and bursaries, and sponsorship from First Nation communities and HRDC.

Recruitment and retention

In terms of recruiting, the development of a well-balanced, culturally vibrant web-page can be used to promote services and programs, even recruiting for volunteer programs could be done on-line.

The development of relevant orientation programs would assist many professionals in helping Aboriginal students adjust to many of the transitions of a university environment. Examples of the different dimensions of a student's adjustment can include: academic, mental, emotional and physical. More importantly it would introduce Aboriginal students to the wide array of services and supports available to them and begin creating a peer support network for them on-campus. It is recommended that:

8) Recruitment and retention of Aboriginal students be incorporated into the mission and focus of the University through the support of specific

programs that would encourage and support Aboriginal students wishing to pursue a post-secondary education.

Regional Specific Recommendations

Successful programs are those that have: a holistic approach; the involvement of leaders; strong local leadership; cultural sense of spirituality; use of local language; support of traditional ways of learning and teaching; congenial, social and physical environment (Barnhardt, 1993). The following recommendations are based on the expressed opinions of participating student service professionals and Aboriginal students. While some institutions in the various regions may already provide these services, the following recommendations inform the establishment of a common base-line of support services amongst all Canadian universities.

Examining the survey results by age group and region, several recommendations arise. It is recommended that:

- 9) *Service providers become more familiar with the demographic profile of their attending students.*

Understanding the needs of different age groups will provide insight into program and service development that would be more in-tune with student populations.

While some institutions in the Western region have a longer history of providing Aboriginal student services, some institutions are just beginning to provide services to their Aboriginal student population. Some professionals shared that the establishment of an Aboriginal studies degree program would

help in the development of services to Aboriginal students. Such programming was often the catalyst in the establishment of other Aboriginal student centres in Canada. There was a strong focus on providing more cultural activities such as elders programs and spiritual programs/events.

Academically, professionals from the Eastern region suggested that the focus should be on the development and implementation of culturally sensitive courses and teaching methods, along with tutoring programs and academic bridging programs. Professionals from the Eastern region also made recommendations for orientation services, training seminars and networking skills for personal development programs. A recommendation arising for the professionals from the Western and Eastern regions is that:

10) There be more development and implementation of academic transition programs and personal development programs for Aboriginal students, especially high school students and those returning to school.

Students from the Central region shared their expectations of Aboriginal student services as being a supportive, positive environment that provides support systems which foster success. Students from the Western region expressed concerns about the institutional treatment or attitude towards Aboriginal students. A campus environment should be fostered and encouraged that creates a sense of belonging and ownership amongst Aboriginal students. It is recommended that:

11) *The university's campus environment begins with the establishment of an Aboriginal support centre, a physical place where students can gather and call their own.*

12) *Together with their peers and students, student service professionals should work towards establishing a sense of belonging across the campus*

This would include cultural sensitivity training for professors and staff and the involvement of Aboriginal students in the decision making process and delivery of programs and services. Establishing native specific resources (e.g., books, and directories), having a guest lecturer series for role modeling and events/activities that increased awareness within the university community were cultural recommendations made by Central region professionals.

Creating a campus culture also includes the involvement of the Aboriginal community. Barnhardt' s (1993) research supported this recommendation, by identifying the most consistent feature of indigenous higher education was the active role the elders played in the life of the institution. The findings of this study support the importance of this role and the need for elders involvement in Aboriginal student services campus programs.

Those from the Central region focused not only on need for more relevant cultural activities in the centres, but also services on the academic and personal level. Career fairs, tutoring and computer training were some academic services

professionals thought should be included in the services they provide to Aboriginal students. It is recommended that:

13) Aboriginal service centres establish peer-mentor and intervention programs, parenting counseling and support networks that include parents, families and communities.

Students from the Eastern region also made recommendations for better tutoring services, however, they were more general in their expectations in that they want professionals to be able to help them with any problem that arises in the student's life, or at least know where else to get help. This is an enormous task and responsibility for those professionals who work alone.

A recommendation arising from this expectation is:

14) The need for Aboriginal student services professionals to be aware of other support services available on campus, resource persons and student groups, clubs and organizations on campus.

Networking and being cognizant of what comprises their university community will help Aboriginal students in times of need and crisis.

Recommendations for further research

The delimitations of this study stimulate questions for further research. Conducting this study within the confines of Canadian universities could be seen as a delimitation. However, it must also be seen as a future research opportunity for those interested in furthering Aboriginal support services in the public and private college sector. There are over 60 different Aboriginal groups utilizing

Aboriginal student services in the twenty-five institutions who took part in this study. Of those groups it is important to explore reasons why any one group is using services more than others. The following questions arising from usage of student services could be posed for future research:

- 1) What role does being part of the campus community play in encouraging usage?**
- 2) What role does band/tribe/community play in liaising with office/centre?**
- 3) How does this impact the usage of Aboriginal student services amongst students?**
- 4) Does mandatory usage (e.g., having to go to centre to pick up their cheque, scholarships, mail, and messages) encourage the use of other available services?**

The question of service provision impact conversely raises other possible research questions on 'not-using' such services. It follows that further research is needed to respond to the following questions:

- 1) What associations/assumptions are made about those students who use these services that might discourage use?**
- 2) How are Aboriginal student services being promoted to students?**
- 3) What role does the political aspect of being Aboriginal play in determining who uses or not uses these services?**
- 4) What factors discourage students from using services on a regular basis?**

This study had a random sampling of Aboriginal students participating. However, their opinions and experiences are not to be discounted. In fact, it is their voices that encourages and supports the need for further study with a larger more diverse student population. This researcher is hoping to continue this study and in particular, focusing on gathering more Aboriginal university students' voices, through external funding with a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) grant.

Past research often made generalizations and assumptions about Native Americans (Oppelt, 1989; Ross, 1982). While such generalizations help in designing outcomes, programs, etc. they also open the field to criticism for encouraging the formation of racist stereotypes and lack of sensitivity to the population studied. Native Americans are not a homogenous group, similarly current Canadian research should explore the difference and similarities of Aboriginal groups, to address the stereotypes and encourage a community of research, which aims to strengthen the lives of Aboriginal peoples.

Personal experiences of the Researcher:

This experience was a great undertaking that provided an opportunity to conduct groundbreaking research in several different fields, student affairs and services, Aboriginal research processes higher education and of course, Aboriginal university student experiences and expectations.

Kowalsky et al. (1996) made several recommendations for researchers such as: be prepared for uncertainty in their study; recognize that Aboriginal

people are in charge; be honest about the researcher's motives; be ones' self; be prepared for the unexpected; allow for time; show sensitivity; respect confidence; and maintain on-going consultation. Throughout this study, earnest attempts were made by the researcher to maintain honesty, sensitivity, integrity and more importantly, an open dialogue with those participating in the study. The researcher's motives were clear from the start, to simply gather a national perspective on Aboriginal student services in Canadian universities. Research must follow, respect and honour First Nations ways (Archibald, et al., 1995). This study attempted to model First Nation ways through the inclusion of Aboriginal university students and student service professionals in the entire process of the research.

Although the research process, itself, took time and patience, it resulted in a detailed picture of Aboriginal student services in Canadian universities that did not exist previously. In the process, an awareness of those working in the field of Aboriginal student services was created and the beginnings of a national sense of community among those working in this diverse field was instilled at heart in the researcher. The research process respected Aboriginal values and provided further support for the growing need of Aboriginal research methodologies that were inclusionary and not exclusionary of these important principles.

Honor and respect were the researchers' guiding lights. By embracing an opportunity to work with some of the best and brightest and upcoming Aboriginal leaders in this country's university community, whether they were student service

professionals or Aboriginal students, the researcher was able to tap contributions and guidance throughout this study and this was found to be invaluable. It was an honor to share your voices with others.

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Appendix A
Opening Prayer

Opening Prayer

**O Great Spirit
Whose voice I hear in the wind
Whose breadth gives life to the world
Hear me
I come to you as one of your many children
I am small and weak
I need your strength and wisdom
May I walk in beauty
Make my eyes behold the red and purple sunset
Make my hands respect the things that You have made
And my ears sharp to hear Your voice
Make me wise so that I may know the things
That You have taught your children
The lessons that You have hidden in every leaf and rock
Make me strong, not to be superior to others
But to be able to fight my greatest enemy: myself
Make me ever so ready to come to You with straight eyes
So that when life fades as the faded sunset
My spirit will come to You without shame**

(The author of this prayer is unknown)
Archibald et al. (1995)

Appendix B

Introduction letter to the Aboriginal student service professionals

March 23rd, 2000

To Whom It May Concern,

I am a graduate student in the Faculty of Education at Memorial University of Newfoundland. My thesis's goal is to develop a national perspective on Aboriginal student service provision with a student service's theoretical focus for Canadian Universities. I would like to conduct a survey and focus group with Aboriginal university students and student service professionals working with Aboriginal support services, at your institution to assist in the development of the perspective.

Eligible participants will be Aboriginal students currently enrolled at a Canadian university, which offers specific services for Aboriginal students and student service providers. These services can be offered in the terms of a specific office or center or an individual who works directly with Aboriginal students. There is a separate survey designed for Aboriginal students and student service providers.

Participants' role in this research is crucial. They will be asked to fill out a survey about their experiences and opinions on Aboriginal students' needs and support services. Student service professionals will also have the role of asking students, who visit their offices to participate in the study. The survey results and applicable student service theories will be used to develop the perspective. Once the perspective has been developed, participants will be re-contacted to review and discuss the findings and recommendation in an on-line focus group. The survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes and the focus group will take ½ to 1 hour of their time.

Both the survey and the focus group delivery is designed for the World Wide Web. However, realizing not all students have access to the web, a paper version of the survey (with a stamped return envelope) will be made available through their on-campus Aboriginal student service office/center. The web site may be previewed at the following address: <http://www.uccs.mun.ca/~e02mep>. The research section of the site has been secured with a password to ensure only those invited individuals participate in the research. The secured site is also designed to protect the identity and safety of any individual or institution. The password to access this site will be provided to the student service professional to distribute to students who visit their offices. This ensures further security and control over the research. Access will be provided to the professionals once the researcher receives notice of their interest in participating in this ground-breaking research.

All information gathered in this study is strictly confidential, at no time will any individual or institution be identified. The research is focused on gathering the students and student service professional's opinions in general. It will not signal out any department or institution. Participation is voluntary and the students or the student service professionals may withdraw at any time. This research has received approval of the Faculty of Education's Ethics Review Committee. The results of my research will be made available to you upon request along with a national reference listing of Aboriginal support service providers compiled during this study.

If you are interested in participating in this national research project, please contact the researcher via e-mail or regular mail. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Michelle Pidgeon at Memorial, (709) 737-8587. If at any time you wish to speak with a resource person not associated with the research, please contact, Dr. Bruce Sheppard, Associate Dean, Graduate Programs & Research at the same number.

I would appreciate it if you would please indicate interest in participating in this study as soon as possible. At this time I will forward you (by e-mail) the password for access to the study.

Yours sincerely in Aboriginal Student services,

Michelle Pidgeon, B.Sc.

Mailing address: **Aboriginal Student Services Study**
c/o Michelle Pidgeon
Box 59, General Mail Room
Education Building
Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, NF
A1N 5S7

E-mail: e02mep@pop.morgan.ucs.mun.ca

Appendix C

Introduction letter to the Aboriginal university students

March 15, 2000

Dear Student,

This letter is an invitation to be part of a national study exploring Aboriginal student services in Canadian universities. My thesis's goal is to develop a national perspective on Aboriginal student service provision in Canadian universities with a student service's theoretical focus.

My name is Michelle Pidgeon. I am a graduate student with the Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland. My interest is student services, more specifically, Aboriginal student services. As a person with Aboriginal ancestry, I have a personal connection and motivation for seeing post-secondary experiences for Aboriginal people be the best it can be. This is why my thesis study is exploring Aboriginal student services in Canada.

To ensure this study reflects the expectations and needs of Aboriginal students and student support services, it is crucial that Aboriginal university students and student service professionals who work with Aboriginal students to be part of this study from the beginning.

You are invited to participate in this ground-breaking study by sharing your thoughts through the survey and later on, the focus groups. To make this an enjoyable experience, you have the choice of filling out the service on-line at the web site address below or completing the attached paper version. You will be re-contacted at a later date to review the findings and recommendations and pass your comments. Again, to make the process easier, the focus group will have the on-line version, but for those who prefer not to participate on-line, the questions and findings will be made available through your Aboriginal student service office/center.

The on-line survey is password protected to ensure only those invited will be participating in this important study and to ensure the safety and confidentiality of participants. You may access the site by obtaining the password from your student service professional at the Aboriginal student service office on your campus or by e-mailing me.

Any information you choose to share will be held in strictest confidence and your identity will not be revealed at any stage in the study. At anytime through out this study, you may contact me via the address below or e-mail to discuss any relevant issue, ask any questions or suggestions.

Thank-you for your time,
Yours in Aboriginal support services.

Michelle Pidgeon, B.Sc.

My mailing address is:

**Box 59
General Mail Room, Education Building
Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, NF
A1C 5S7**

My e-mail address is:

e02mep@morgan.ucs.mun.ca

The Web site is:

<http://www.ucs.mun.ca/~e02mep/>

Appendix D
Aboriginal Student Service Survey

Aboriginal Student Services in Canada

For the purposes of this research, an Aboriginal person shall be defined as "any individual who has Aboriginal ancestry and self-identifies him/herself as an Aboriginal person".

General institution information:

(This information will only be used to gather general information about the types of institutions participating in this research and will be held in strict confidentiality).

1. Where is your institution located?

2. What is the total student population of your institution? Please include: undergraduate and graduate, distance, full time and part time students. (Please place a check mark next to your answer)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than 1000
<input type="checkbox"/>	1000-15,000
<input type="checkbox"/>	15,000-20,000
<input type="checkbox"/>	20,000-25,000
<input type="checkbox"/>	25,000+

3. What percentage of your total student population is Aboriginal? Please include graduate, undergraduate, distance, full-time and part-time students.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than 5%	<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than 10%	<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than 15%
<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than 20%	<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than 25%		

4. What is the total number of faculty and staff employed at your institution?

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
< 100	100-500	500-1,000	1,000-1,500
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
1,500-2,000	2,000-2,500	2,500-3,000	> 3,000

5. What percentage of the total number of faculty and staff at your institution is Aboriginal?

<input type="text"/> Less than 5%	<input type="text"/> Less than 10%	<input type="text"/> Less than 15%
<input type="text"/> Less than 20%	<input type="text"/> Less than 25%	

STUDENT SERVICES:

This information will be compiled to help develop the national perspective.

6. What group of students does your office assist most frequently? Please select the most appropriate answer; if you serve most groups equally, then select both responses.

<input type="text"/> Female	or	<input type="text"/> Male
<input type="text"/> Students under 21	or	<input type="text"/> Students older than average (over the age of 21)
<input type="text"/> Status	or	<input type="text"/> Non-Status
<input type="text"/> Students with children	or	<input type="text"/> Students with no children

7. What Aboriginal groups are present on your campus? Please check all that apply. Note: This is not an inclusive list of all Aboriginal peoples in Canada; it is intended to serve as a guide only.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Abenaki	Anishinabeg/Ojibwa (Algonquin/kin. Odawa, Saultaux)	Assiniboine (Dakota)	Blackfoot (Gros Ventre/Atsina, Pikuni/Piegan, Kainai/Blood, Siksika)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cayuga	Chilcotin	Chipewyan	Cree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dalkeh (Carrier)	Dene-than (Slavey)	Dogrib	Dunne-za (Beaver)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eyak	Gitksan	Haida	Haisla
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Halkomelem	Han	Hare	Heiltsuk (Hai Hais, Bella Bella, Oowekeeno)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Huron (Wendat)	Inuit (Inupiat, Igiulik, Yupik)	Innu (Montagnis/Naskapi)	Kaska
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kootchin/Kutchin (Gwich'in)	Koyukon	Kutenai	Kwakwaka'wakw
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Li/wat (Lillooet)	Maliseet/Malecite	Metis	Mi'kmaq
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mohawk	Nahani	Nass-Gitksan	Netsilik
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nisga'a	Niaka'pam ux (Thompson)	Nunivaarm uit (Nunivak)	Nuu-chah- nulth (Nootka)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nuxalk (Bella Coala)	Oneida	Okanagan	Onondaga

<input type="checkbox"/>	Potawatomi	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sahtu	<input type="checkbox"/>	Salish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sechelt
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	Dene	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Secwepemc/Shuswap	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sekani	<input type="checkbox"/>	Squamish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tagish
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tahltan	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tlingit	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tsetsaut	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tsimshian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tulalip	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tutchone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tsuu-T'ina (Sarcee)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wakashan
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wet'suwet'en	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unangax (Aleut)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other(s)		
					(pls specify)		

8. a) What programs and services are offered by your office to Aboriginal students? Please feel free to expand on this list

<input type="checkbox"/>	Academic Advising	<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal counselling
<input type="checkbox"/>	Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leadership programs
<input type="checkbox"/>	Residence	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spiritual/Religious services
<input type="checkbox"/>	Career counselling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Career development/center
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Aboriginal cultural activity
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wellness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Academic Transition Programs
<input type="checkbox"/>	Time management	<input type="checkbox"/>	Training seminars (eg, healthy relationships, stress management, budgeting)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mentoring	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify)

Please feel free to send the researcher any relevant information, e.g., booklets, brochures, or pamphlets that provide more information on offered services.

8. b) Are any of your programs or services designed or established with a student service theory, ideology or model?

YES

NO

If yes, please specify what theories, ideologies or models your office uses.

9. What programs and services not on the list in Question 8a) might or should be offered? (Please feel free to explain)

10. Outside of the above mentioned services and programs, what other responsibilities or duties may you encounter during your day? (e.g., parent counselling, crisis management, handling administrative issues for students, etc.)

11. From your perspective, please choose the top 5 needs of Aboriginal students from the list below. (Please rank your choices from 1-5, 1 being the most important.)

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="text"/> Finances | <input type="text"/> Finding suitable accommodations |
| <input type="text"/> Loneliness | <input type="text"/> Distance from family |
| <input type="text"/> Racism | <input type="text"/> Academic preparation |
| <input type="text"/> Finding friends | <input type="text"/> Other (pls specify) |

Feel free to comment further:

12. In your opinion, what are the top 3 services you offer students? Rank your choices from 1 to 3, 1 being the most important. (Please feel free to explain)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="text"/> Academic Advising | <input type="text"/> Aboriginal cultural activity |
| <input type="text"/> Orientation | <input type="text"/> Leadership programs |
| <input type="text"/> Mentoring | <input type="text"/> Spiritual/Religious services |
| <input type="text"/> Career counselling | <input type="text"/> Career development/center |
| <input type="text"/> Health services | <input type="text"/> Residence |
| <input type="text"/> Time management | <input type="text"/> Training Seminars (e.g., healthy relationships, stress management, budgeting, etc.) |
| <input type="text"/> Wellness | <input type="text"/> Academic Transition Programs |
| <input type="text"/> Other (please specify) | |

Feel free to comment further:

13. What is your perception of Aboriginal student needs/expectations and Aboriginal student service provision?

14. Thank you for your time and consideration on this important issue. I welcome you to take this time to ask any questions, make suggestions or to further elaborate on any relevant issue. Thanks again.

*** Please remember that your identity and responses will be kept in the strictest confidence and will not be released without your expressed consent.**

*** If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Michelle Pidgeon via e-mail at e02mep@pop.morgan.ucs.mun.ca**

Please return the survey in the envelope provided.

Appendix E
Aboriginal University Student Survey

Aboriginal University Student Survey

For the purposes of this research, an Aboriginal person shall be defined as "any individual who has Aboriginal ancestry and self-identifies as an Aboriginal person".

EDUCATION HISTORY:

1. In what province or territory are you currently attending a post-secondary institution?

2. How many semesters have you currently completed at university (including your present semester)?

3. How many courses have you completed at university (including your present semester)?

4. Have you attended any other universities or colleges (private or public)?

 Yes No

5. How many courses have you completed at another post-secondary institution (university or private/public college)?

6. What degree program or diploma are you currently working towards?

STUDENT SERVICES:

7. To determine what Aboriginal support services should be, it is important to know what services are currently being used. Please check all the services you have used prior to entering or during your university career:

<input type="checkbox"/> Food services	<input type="checkbox"/> Health
<input type="checkbox"/> Scholarship office	<input type="checkbox"/> Orientation
<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership programs	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal counselling
<input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer programs	<input type="checkbox"/> Career counselling
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial	<input type="checkbox"/> On-campus housing (e.g., residence)
<input type="checkbox"/> Student leadership programs	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (pls specify)

8. Based on your experiences what are the top 5 concerns of Aboriginal post-secondary students? Rank your choices from 1-5, 1 being the most important concern.

<input type="checkbox"/> Adjustment to new environment	<input type="checkbox"/> Loneliness (e.g., missing family)
<input type="checkbox"/> Finding suitable accommodations	<input type="checkbox"/> Racism
<input type="checkbox"/> Distance from family	<input type="checkbox"/> Finding friends
<input type="checkbox"/> Academic preparation	<input type="checkbox"/> Finding adequate finances
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (pls specify)	

Feel free to comment:

9. What would be the top 3 services you would need to succeed in a post secondary educational system? Please feel free to add any service that you consider important, but may not be listed below. Rank your choices from 1-3, 1 being the most important service.

Orientation

Leadership programs

Residence

Spiritual/Religious services

Career counselling

Personal counselling

Health services

Aboriginal cultural activity

Wellness

Academic Transition Programs

Other (pls specify)

Feel free to comment:

10a). How would you describe your experiences with Aboriginal student services? Please feel free to explain.

10b). As an Aboriginal university student, what are your expectations and needs in the provision of Aboriginal student services?

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

11. This information will only be used to gather general information on those people participating in this research.

Age

Gender Male Female

Marital Status divorced
 married (including common law)
 single
 widowed
 other

Do you have children? yes no

To which Aboriginal group(s) do you self-identify?

12. Thank-you for your time and consideration on this important issue. I welcome you to take this time to ask any questions, make suggestions or to further elaborate on any relevant issue. Thanks again.

Please remember that your identity and responses will be kept in the strictest confidence and will not be released without your expressed consent. If you would like to be personally contacted by the researcher to review the study's findings and recommendations. Please leave your e-mail or mailing address.

This information will only be used to contact you and will not be distributed. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me via e-mail at e02mep@pop.morgan.ucs.mun.ca

Please return this survey to Aboriginal Student Service Study, c/o Michelle Pidgeon, General Mail Room, Box 59, Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, NF, A1N 5S7

Appendix F

Hard Copy of the Developed Web Page



ABORIGINAL STUDENT SERVICES

in

CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES



INTRODUCTION



ABORIGINAL
STUDENT SERVICE STUDY



LEARN MORE
ABOUT
THE RESEARCHER

THIS PAGE IS BEST VIEWED
WITH
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UNDER CONSTRUCTION



Thank-you for visiting this site, you are the # 000000 vistor since March 2, 2000

.....



e02mep@pop.morgan.ucs.mun.ca



NEXT



INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE of this Web Page:

The purpose of this web page is to facilitate a national forum on Aboriginal student services in Canadian Universities. The goal of this study is to develop a national perspective on Aboriginal student services in universities across Canada.

Why this Research topic?

This study arises out of the need for more research on Aboriginal post-secondary students. More specifically, research focusing on Aboriginal university students and research providing a Canadian perspective on student service provision.

Ultimately, this study hopes to improve the quality of experiences Aboriginal students have in university.

Statement
of
Confidentiality

DISCLAIMER



CONTACTING
THE
RESEARCHER


HOME


The Research:
Opening Prayer

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

This study follows all ethical guidelines as set forth by the Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland and conforms to the use of e-mail as set forth by Computing and Communications.

All those individuals and institutions participating will be respected and honored.

The identity of an individual or an institution will be kept confidential.

All participation is voluntary and participants are free to withdraw from the study at any time.



DISCLAIMER



THIS WEB SITE IS TEMPORARY.

THE SITE WILL BE ACTIVE FROM
MARCH TO JUNE 2000

**ITS SOLE PURPOSE IS IN ASSISTING THE
RESEARCHER IN CONDUCTING HER STUDY
ACROSS CANADA.**

**Those who wish to participate must contact the
researcher or their on-campus Aboriginal student
service professional to obtain URL access to the
surveys.**

**Those who choose to participate in this study
should be 18 or older.**



CONTACTING THE RESEARCHER

e02mep@pop.morgan.ucs.mun.ca

or

Aboriginal Student Services

Study:

c/o Michelle Pidgeon

Box 59, General Mail Room

Education Building

Memorial University of

Newfoundland

St. John's, NF

A1B 5S7



[BACK](#)



[HOME](#)



[NEXT](#)

O Great Spirit

Whose voice I hear in the wind
Whose breadth gives life to the world
Hear me

I come to you as one of your many children
I am small and weak
I need your strength and wisdom

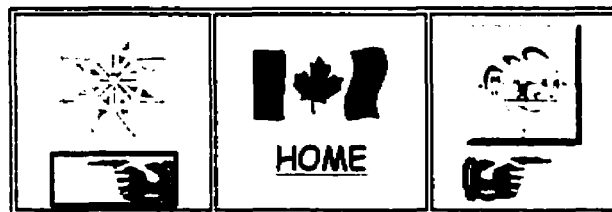
May I walk in beauty
Make my eyes behold the red and purple sunset
Make my hands respect the things that You have made
And my ears sharp to hear Your voice
Make me wise so that I may know the things
That You have taught your children
The lessons that You have hidden in every leaf and rock

Make me strong, not to be superior to others
But to be able to fight my greatest enemy: myself
Make me ever so ready to come to You with straight eyes
So that when life fades as the faded sunset
My spirit will come to You without shame

(The author of this prayer is unknown)

Source:

Archibald, J., Selkirk Bowman, S., Pepper, F., Urion, C., Mirehouse, G., & Shortt, R. (1995).
Honoring what they say: Postsecondary experiences of First Nations graduates.
Journal of Native Education, 21(1), 1-247.





This thesis study intends to explore Aboriginal student services in Canadian universities. The perspectives of Aboriginal university students who use such services and of those who provide the services, student service professionals, will be used to develop a national perspective on Aboriginal student services.

To ensure that this study reflects the expectations and needs of Aboriginal students and student support services, it is crucial that Aboriginal university students and student service professionals be part of this study from the beginning.

The study will be take place in three phases:

Phase 1: Survey Pre-testing

Both surveys will be pre-tested by those not directly involved in the study; they are however, familiar with the issues under investigation. For example, Aboriginal students who have convocated and student service professionals who are not directly involved in Aboriginal student services.

Phase 2: Surveying

Aboriginal university students and student service professionals, who work directly with Aboriginal student services, will be invited to share thier opinions on Aboriginal student service to understand their perceptions of the needs and expectations of Aboriginal students. From the survey results and applicable student service theories a national perspective will be developed on

Aboriginal student services in Canadian universities.

Phase 3: On-line Consultation

An on-line consultation will take the form of a focus group, which will be held for all participants to review the study's findings and proposed recommendations.

You are invited to be part of this ground breaking study by participating in the survey and later on, the focus group. You will be contacted at a later date to review the study's findings and share your comments. For those who prefer not to participate on-line, the surveys, questions will be made available to participating institutions. Student affairs officers working in most campuses Aboriginal support service centre/office will have copies of this study's instruments.

Any information that you choose to share will be held in strictest confidence and your identity will not be revealed at any stage in the study.

I ACCEPT CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION	I DECLINE TO PARTICIPATE
---	---



WELCOME

To further participate in this study, click the area relevant to you.

**Aboriginal University
Students**



**Student Service
Professionals**



BACK



HOME



Aboriginal University Student Survey

This survey has been designed to explore your opinions about support services for Aboriginal university students in Canada. Your responses and identity and the identity of your institution will be held in strict confidence.

With your insight and direction, the researcher will develop a national perspective on Aboriginal student services. It is important that the diversity amongst Aboriginal peoples of this country be seen throughout this study and in the proposed recommendations. This is why Aboriginal university students from all over Canada are being invited to participate in this ground breaking study.

You are encouraged to answer these questions based on your experiences and opinions. With your help Aboriginal support services can reflect the needs and experiences of Aboriginal university students.

Aboriginal University Student Survey

Those wishing to participate in the survey must have obtained the URL for the survey from your student service professional or the researcher. To access the survey, please enter the URL in the text box below and click the GO button. The survey will be launched in a separate browser window.

<http://www.ucs.mun.ca/~e02mep/>

Go!

Please do not hesitate to contact the researcher with any questions regarding this study.



Aboriginal University Student Survey

For the purposes of this research, an Aboriginal person shall be defined as "any individual who has Aboriginal ancestry and self-identifies as an Aboriginal person".

EDUCATION HISTORY:

1. In what province or territory are you currently attending a post secondary institution?

Newfoundland and Labrador ▼

2. How many semesters have you currently completed at university (including your present semester)?

3. How many courses have you completed at university (including your present semester)?

4. Have you attended any other universities or colleges (private or public)?

Yes No

5. How many courses have you completed at another post secondary institution (university or private/public college)?

6. What degree program or diploma are you currently working towards?

STUDENT SERVICES:

7. To determine what Aboriginal support services should be, it is important to know what services are currently being used. Please check all the services you have used prior to entering or during your university career:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food services | <input type="checkbox"/> Health |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scholarship office | <input type="checkbox"/> Orientation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal counselling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Career counselling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial | <input type="checkbox"/> On-campus housing (e.g., residence) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student leadership programs | <input type="text"/> Other (pls specify) |

8. Based on your experiences what are the top 5 concerns of Aboriginal post secondary students? Rank your choices from 1-5, 1 being the most important concern.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adjustment to new environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Loneliness (e.g., missing family) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finding suitable accommodations | <input type="checkbox"/> Racism |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Distance from family | <input type="checkbox"/> Finding friends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic preparation | <input type="checkbox"/> Finding adequate finances |
| <input type="text"/> Other (pls specify) | |

Feel free to comment:

9. What would be the top 3 services you would need to succeed in a post secondary educational system? Please feel free to add any service that you consider important, but may not be listed below. Rank your choices from 1-3, 1 being the most important service.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Orientation | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Residence | <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual/Religious services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Career counselling | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal counselling |

Health services

Aboriginal cultural activity

Wellness

Academic Transition Programs

Other (pls specify)

Feel free to comment:

**10a). How would you describe your experiences with Aboriginal student services?
Please feel free to explain.**

10b). As an Aboriginal university student, what are your expectations and needs in the provision of Aboriginal student services?

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

11. This information will only be used to gather general information on those people participating in this research.

Age

Gender Male Female

Marital Status divorced married (including common law)

single widowed other

Do you have children? yes no

To which Aboriginal group(s) do you self-identify?

12. Thank-you for your time and consideration on this important issue. I welcome you to take this time to ask any questions, make suggestions or to further elaborate on any relevant issue. Thanks again.

* Please remember that your identity and responses will be kept in the strictest confidence and will not be released without your expressed consent.

* If you would like to be personally contacted by the researcher to review the study's findings and recommendations. Please leave your e-mail or mailing address. This information will only be used to contact you and will not be distributed.

* If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me via e-mail at e02mep@pop.morgan.ucs.mun.ca



Aboriginal Student Services Survey

This survey has been designed to explore your opinions about support services for Aboriginal university students in Canada. Your responses and identity and the identity of your institution will be held in strict confidence.

With your insight and direction, the researcher will develop a national perspective on Aboriginal student services. It is important that the diversity amongst Aboriginal peoples of this country be seen throughout this study and in the proposed recommendations. This is why Aboriginal university students from all over Canada are being invited to participate in this ground breaking study.

You are encouraged to answer these questions based on your experiences and opinions. With your help Aboriginal support services can reflect the needs and experiences of Aboriginal university students.

Aboriginal University Student Survey

Those wishing to participate in the survey must have obtained the URL for the survey from your student service professional or the researcher. To access the survey, please enter the URL in the text box below and click the GO button. The survey will be launched in a separate browser window.

<http://www.ucs.mun.ca/~e02mep/>

Go!

Please do not hesitate to contact the researcher with any questions regarding this study.



Aboriginal Student Services in Canada

For the purposes of this research, an Aboriginal person shall be defined as "any individual who has Aboriginal ancestry and self-identifies him/herself as an Aboriginal person".

General institution information:

(This information will only be used to gather general information about the types of institutions participating in this research and will be held in strict confidentiality).

1. Where is your institution located?

2. What is the total student population of your institution? Please include: undergraduate and graduate, distance, full time and part time students.

- Less than 1000
- 1000-15,000
- 15,000-20,000
- 20,000-25,000
- 25,000+

3. What percentage of your total student population is Aboriginal? Please include graduate, undergraduate, distance, full-time and part-time students.

- Less than 5%
- Less than 10%
- Less than 15%
- Less than 20%
- Less than 25%

4. What is the total number of faculty and staff employed at your institution?

- Less than 100
- 100-500
- 500-1,000
- 1,000-1,500
- 1,500-2,000
- 2,000-2,500
- 2,500-3,000
- Greater than 3,000

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mohawk | <input type="checkbox"/> Nahani | <input type="checkbox"/> Nass-Gitksan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nisga'a | <input type="checkbox"/> Nlaka'pamux (Thompson) | <input type="checkbox"/> Nunivaarmuit (Nunivak) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nuxalk (Bella Coola) | <input type="checkbox"/> Oneida | <input type="checkbox"/> Okanagan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potawatomi | <input type="checkbox"/> Sahtu Dene | <input type="checkbox"/> Salish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Secwepemc/Shuswap | <input type="checkbox"/> Sekani | <input type="checkbox"/> Squamish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tahltan | <input type="checkbox"/> Tlingit | <input type="checkbox"/> Tsetsaut |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tulalip | <input type="checkbox"/> Tutchone | <input type="checkbox"/> Tsuu-T'ina (Sarcee) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wet'suwet'en | <input type="checkbox"/> Unangax (Aleut) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other(s)(pls specify) |

8. a) What programs and services are offered by your office to Aboriginal students? Please feel free to expand on this list

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Advising | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal counselling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Orientation | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Residence | <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual/Religious services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Career counselling | <input type="checkbox"/> Career development/center |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal cultural activity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wellness | <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Transition Programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Time management | <input type="checkbox"/> Training seminars (eg, healthy relationships, stress management, budgeting) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Other (please specify) |

Please feel free to send the researcher any relevant information, e.g., booklets, brochures, or pamphlets that provide more information on offered services.

8. b) Are any of your programs or services designed or established with a student service theory, ideology or model?

- YES NO

If yes, please specify what theories, ideologies or models your office uses.

9. What programs and services not on the list in Question 8a) might or should be offered? (Please feel free to explain)

10. Outside of the above mentioned services and programs, what other responsibilities or duties may you encounter during your day? (e.g., parent counselling, crisis management, handling administrative issues for students, etc.)

11. From your perspective, please choose the top 5 needs of Aboriginal students from the list below. (Please rank your choices from 1-5, 1 being the most important.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finances | <input type="checkbox"/> Finding suitable accommodations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loneliness | <input type="checkbox"/> Distance from family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Racism | <input type="checkbox"/> Academic preparation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finding friends | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (pls specify) |

Feel free to comment further:

12. In your opinion, what are the top 3 services you offer students? Rank your

choices from 1 to 3, 1 being the most important. (Please feel free to explain)

Academic Advising

Aboriginal cultural activity

Orientation

Leadership programs

Mentoring

Spiritual/Religious services

Career counselling

Career development/center

Health services

Residence

Time management

Training Seminars (e.g., healthy relationships, stress management, budgeting, etc.)

Wellness

Academic Transition Programs

Other (please specify)

Feel free to comment further:

Empty text box for comments.

13. What is your perception of Aboriginal student needs/expectations and Aboriginal student service provision?

Empty text box for response to question 13.

14. Thank you for your time and consideration on this important issue. I welcome you to take this time to ask any questions, make suggestions or to further elaborate on any relevant issue. Thanks again.

Empty text box for response to question 14.

*** Please remember that your identity and responses will be kept in the strictest confidence and will not be released without your expressed consent.**

*** If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Michelle Pidgeon via e-mail at e02mep@pop.morgan.ucs.mun.ca**





Hi, I am very excited about my study and I hope that my enthusiasm is seen in this web page and carries through to you.

My name is Michelle. I grew up in the City of Mount Pearl I currently reside in St. John's where I am attending Memorial University of Newfoundland completing my Masters in Education post-secondary education with a student affairs and services concentration.

My interests are hiking, reading and drawing, learning how to snowshoe, and of course, taking care of my dog, Jenu- a malamute-wolf cross.



This picture was taken in July of 1999, Jenu was 3 months old

Now he weighs over 120 pounds and is showing no signs of slowing down

Jenu is Mi'kmaq, it translates roughly to "hairy cannibal giant from the north"

Believe me it suits him!



I am very proud of my mixed heritage and I am currently in the process of trying to learn more

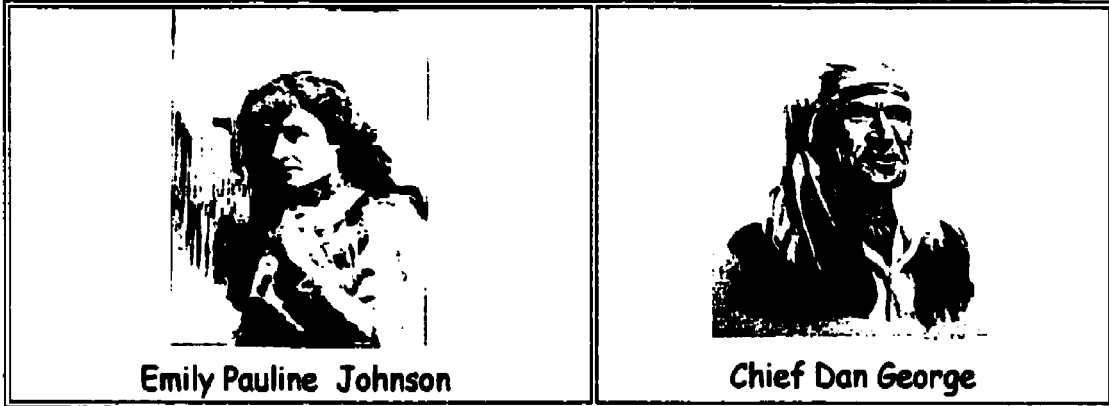
about my ancestors. My Aboriginal heritage is Cree from my grandfather on my father's side.

My mother is of Irish descent with a long connection with Newfoundland.

I wish to make a difference in this country for Aboriginal peoples, hence the pursuit of

this study. Inspired by my heroes, Emily Pauline Johnson and Chief Dan George, I hope to

motivate others to be the best that they can be and more importantly, remain true to themselves.



Appendix G

**Aboriginal Student Service in Canadian Universities:
A Reference Guide**

Aboriginal Student Services
in Canadian Universities
A Reference Guide

Source: <http://www.uwaterloo.ca/canu/index.html>

ALBERTA

Dobson, Peggy, Coordinator (dobson@ucalgary.ca)
George Calliou, director (calliou@ucalgary.ca)
Donna Mackling, (mackling@ucalgary.ca)
Les Jerome
John Cristescu
MacEwan Student Centre
University of Calgary
2500 University Dr. N.W.
Calgary, Alberta, T2N 1N4
Tel: (403) 220-4298 or 6034
Fax: (403) 220-6019
E-mail: sas@ucalgary.ca, 56704@ucdasm1.admin.ucalgary.ca
Web: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/>

Tracy Lindberg tracevl@athabascau.ca
Athabasca University
1 University Dr
Athabasca, AB, T9S 2A6
Tel: (708) 421-3287
Fax:
Web: <http://www.athabascau.ca/>

Lewis Cardinal, Communications officer . Lewis.Cardinal@ualberta.ca
Native Student Services Office.
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB, T6G 2M7
Tel: (780) 492-5677
Fax: (780) 492-1674
Web: <http://www.ualberta.ca/~uss1/>

BRITISH COLUMBIA:

LIST OF ABORIGINAL STUDENT SERVICE PROVIDERS IN BC

Web: <http://www.gett.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal/ab-list.htm>
Email: bcfnc@camosun.bc.ca

Darlene J. Willier, First Nations Education Coordinator, (darlene@kwantlen.bc.ca)

Kwantlen University College

12666 - 72nd Ave.

Surrey, BC, V3W 2M8

Tel: (604) 599-2269

Fax: (604) 599-2068

Web: <http://www.kwantlen.bc.ca/counadvs/first/first.htm>

Marie Scoretz, Online First Nations Services Manager (scoretzm@mala.bc.ca)

Malaspina University-College

900 Fifth Street

Nanaimo, BC, V9R 5S5

Tel: Nanaimo campus (250) 741-2636 or (250) 753-3245, local 2587.

Parksville/Qualicum campus (250) 248-2096

Fax:

Web: <http://www.mala.bc.ca>

<http://www.discover/services/FIRSTNAT.HTM>

Lyle Muller, First Nation Education Coordinator, (lmuller@okanagan.bc.ca)

Okanagan University College

1000 KLO Road

Kelowna, BC, V1Y 4X8

Tel: 250-762-5445 Ext. 4212

Fax: 250-862-5600

Web: <http://www.ouc.bc.ca/fns>

<http://www.ouc.bc.ca/fns/fnm.html>

Marilyn Dumont, First Nations Program Coordinator, (mdumont@sfu.ca)

Native Student Center

Simon Fraser University

8888 University Drive

Burnaby BC, V5A 1S6

Tel: (604) 291-3555

Fax: (604)291-5682

Web: <http://www.sfu.ca/student-services/nsc>

Vicky Manuel, (vmanuel@cariboo.ca)

Mel Galloway, Director, (galloway@cariboo.bc.ca)

Mathilda Charbonneau, Secretary, (charbonneau@cariboo.bc.ca)

Student Services / College and Student Affairs

The University College of the Cariboo

RM OM1671

900 McGill Rd., Box 3010

Kamloops, BC, V2C 5N3

Tel: (250) 828-5010/5246

Fax: (250) 371-5772

Web: <http://www.cariboo.bc.ca/drp/csa/index.htm>

Verena Cootes-Wilhelmson, (wilhelms@unixg.ubc.ca)

First Nations House of Learning (UBC)

The Longhouse

University of British Columbia

1985 West Mall

Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z2
Tel: (604) 822-8940 8941
Fax: (604) 822-8944
Web: <http://www.longhouse.ubc.ca/services.html>

James Andrew, jrandrew@interchange.ubc.ca
Institute for Aboriginal Health,
Division of Community Liaison
University of British Columbia
#408-Woodward Instructional Resource Centre
2194 Health Sciences Mall
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z3
Tel: (604) 822-5677
Fax: (604) 822-2495
Web: <http://www.health-sciences.ubc.ca/iah>

Theresa Neel, First Nations Access coordinator, neelt@ucfv.bc.ca
The University College of the Fraser Valley
45635 Yale Rd.,
Chilliwack, BC V2P 6T4
Tel: (604) 854-4528 (Abbotsford); (604) 795-2808 (Chilliwack)
Fax:
Web: <http://www.ucfv.bc.ca/stuserv/fnations.htm>

Anne Sam, Coordinator of the First Nations Centre, sama@unbc.ca
University of Northern British Columbia
3333 University Way,
Prince George, BC, V2N 4Z9
Tel: (250) 960-5517
Fax:
Web: <http://www.unbc.ca/nap/#Services>

Bill White, Aboriginal Liaison Officer, wmwhite@uvvm.uvic.ca
Roger John, Aboriginal Student Advisor, Faculty of Human and Social Development,
rogerj@uvic.ca.
Jennifer Fletcher, Secretary
University of Victoria
Aboriginal Liaison Office
PO Box 1700 STN CSC
Victoria, BC V8W 2Y2
Tel: (250) 721-6326 /6274 (Roger)
Fax: (250) 721-8570 /7067 (Roger)
Web: <http://www.uvic.ca/ablo>

MANITOBA

Florence Bruyere, Director, Aboriginal Student Centre, florence_bruyere@umanitoba.ca
University of Manitoba
537 University Centre
Winnipeg, MB, R3T 2N2
Tel: (204) 474-8850 or 1-800-432-1960 ext.8850

Fax: (204) 275-3142
E-mail: ASC@Umanitoba.CA
Web: <http://www.umanitoba.ca/student/asc>

Mary Young, Native Student Advisor, young-m@s-h.uwinnipeg.ca
University of Winnipeg
515 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MN, R3B 2E9
Tel: (204) 786-9865
Fax: (204) 786-8656
Web: <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/student/services/services.html>

Dr. Lynn McKay mckay@brandonu.ca
Brandon University
Room 101 George T. Richardson Centre
270-18th Street
Brandon, MN, R7A 6A9
Tel: (204) 727-7353
Fax:
Web: <http://www.brandonu.ca/StudentSvc>

NEWFOUNDLAND

Bobbi Shiwak, Native Liaison Officer, bshiwak@mun.ca
Student Development, University Centre 4003
Student Affairs and Services
Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, NF, A1C 5S7
Tel: 737-3495
Fax: 737-7601
Web: <http://www.mun.ca>

NOVA SCOTIA

Native Education Counsellor.
Dalhousie University
Henson College, 6086 University Avenue
Halifax, NS, B3H 3J5
Tel: (902) 494-8863
E-mail: henson-info@dal.ca
Web: <http://is.dal.ca/~services/mno.htm#students> ; <http://www.dal.ca/henson/>

Judy Bernard-Julian jbernard@stfx.ca
St. Francis Xavier University
P.O.Box 5000,
4th Floor Bloomfield Center (Students' Union Building)
Antigonish, NS, B2J 2W5
Tel: (902) 867-5413
Fax: (902) 867-3887
Web: http://www.stfx.ca/campus/stu_serv/aboriginal/advisor.html

Patrick Johnson, pjohnson@uccb.ns.ca
Room CE268.
Student Cultural and Heritage Centre
University College of Cape Breton
PO Box 5300
Sydney, NS, B1P 6L2
Tel: 902-563-1660, or 1-888-959-9995
Fax: 902-562-8899
Web: <http://mrc.uccb.ns.ca>

ONTARIO

Judy Syrette, syrette@tbird.auc.on.ca
Native student counsellor
Native Support Services
Algoma University-College
1520 Queen St. E.
Sault Ste. Marie, ON., P6A 2G4
Tel: (705) 949-2301 e.218
Fax: (705) 949-6583
Web: <http://www.auc.on.ca/services/student/native/index.html>

Sabrina Saunders, ssaunder@spartan.ac.brocku.ca
Aboriginal Student Services Advisor
Brock University
Student Development Centre
Schmon Tower room 400, ON
Tel: (905) 688-5550 ext: 3240
Fax: (905) 688-7260
Web: <http://www.brocku.ca>

Madeline Dion-Stout, Director, madeline-dion-stout@ccs.carleton.ca
Armand Garnet Ruffo, Associate Director, aruffo@ccs.carleton.ca
Gillian Whyte, Coordinator, gwhyte@ccs.carleton.ca
The Centre for Aboriginal Education, Research and Culture
Room 2208, Dunton Tower
Carleton University
1125 Colonel by Drive
Ottawa, ON.
Tel: 520-2600 ex. 4500/8165
520-4494 (Director's #)
Fax: 520-2512
Web: <http://www.carleton.ca/equity/CAERC/caerc.html>

Mike McIsaac, Native Support Services, MkMcIsaac@sky.lakeheadu.ca
Nova Lawson, Coor, Aboriginal Initiatives, nova.lawson@lakeheadu.ca
Toby Turner, counsellor, tturner@sky.lakeheadu.ca
Jean Pervais, counsellor, jean.pervais@lakeheadu.ca
Rm: SC 0004B
Lakehead University

955 Oliver Road
Thunder Bay, ON, P7B 5E1
Tel: (807) 343-8084
Fax: (807) 343-8023
Web: <http://www.lakeheadu.ca/~nsswww/>
<http://www.lakeheadu.ca/~firstnation/>

Shelly Moores smoores@Nickel.Laurentian.CA
Room L 210,
2nd floor, R.D. Parker Building.
Laurentian University
935 Ramsey Lake Road
Sudbury, ON, P3E 2C6
Tel: (705) 673-6506 ext. 1048 (704-675-1151)
Fax: (705) 675-4847
Web: <http://www.laurentian.ca/www/studserv/enative.htm>

Bonnie Freeman, Counsellor
Chester New Hall, 228A
McMaster University
1280 Main St. W.
Hamilton, ON, L8S 4K1
Tel: (905) 525-9140, ext. 27479
Fax: (905) 540-8443
Web: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/>

Patricia LaCroix, Aboriginal student services and Program administrator
Nipissing University
100 College Drive
Box 5002
North Bay, ON P1A 3B3 (P1B 8L7?)
Tel: (705) 474-3461, ext. 4252
Fax: (705) 472-8601
Web: <http://www.unipissing.ca/>

Bob Lovelace (rl3@post.queensu.ca)
Lynn Manitowabi-Mianskum (lm25@post.queensu.ca)
Melanie Howard (mdth@post.queensu.ca)
Four Directions Aboriginal Student Center
Queen's University
72 Queen's Crescent
Kingston, ON, K7L 3N6
Tel: 613-545-6970
Fax: 613-545-6581
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<http://www.pathcom.com/~ofifc/aets.htm> (from McMaster's Bonnie Freeman) Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy

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Appendix H

A list of Aboriginal peoples in Canada

Aboriginal Groups in Canada

The following is a list of the Aboriginal people of Canada. It is not intended to be an inclusive list of all Aboriginal peoples in Canada; it is intended to serve as a guide only.

Abenaki

**Anishinabeg/Ojibwa
(Algonquin/kin, Odawa,
Saultaux)**

Assiniboine (Dakota)

**Blackfoot (Gros Ventre/Atsina,
Pikuni/Piegan, Kainai/Blood,
Siksika)**

Cayuga

Chilcotin

Chipewyan

Cree

Dalkelh (Carrier)

Dene

Dene-than (Slavey)

Dogrib

Dunne-za (Beaver)

Eyak

Gitksan

Haida

Haisla

Halkomelem

Han

Hare

**Heiltsuk (Hai Hais, Bella
Bella, Oowekeeno)**

Huron (Wendat)

Inuit (Inupiat, Iglulik, Yupik)

Innu (Montagnis/Naskapi)

Kaska

Kootchin/Kutchin (Gwich'in)

Koyukon

Kutenai

Kwakwaka'wakw

Maliseet/Malecite

Metis

Mi'kmaq

Nisga'a

Nlaka'pamux (Thompson)

Nunivaarmuit (Nunivak)

Nuu-chah-nulth (Nootka)

Nuxalk (Bella Coola)

Oneida
Okanagan
Onondaga
Potawatomi
Sahtu
Salish
Sechelt
Secwepemc/Shuswap
Sekani
St'at'imx, Lil'wat (Lillooet)
Squamish
Tagish
Tahltan
Tlingit
Tsetsaut
Tsimshian
Tulalip
Tutchone
Tsuu-T'ina (Sarcee)
Wakashan
Wet'suwet'en
Unangax (Aleut)

Source:
Malinowski, Sheets, Lehman, &
Walsh Doig, 1998
McMillan (1995)