

Northern University Futures:
Working Together to Develop a

U Inuit Nunangat **niversity**

*nangat University Inuit
University Inuit Nunangat
Inuit Nunangat Un
nuit Nunangat Universit*

BACKGROUND PAPER

March 2015

Prepared by Sheena Kennedy Dalseg, Kelly Black & Thierry Rodon

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose and Background

The purpose of this background paper is to help inform and support the discussions that will take place at the March 2015 Inuit Nunangat University Workshop in Iqaluit. Co-hosted by the Government of Nunavut, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. and a group of ArcticNet researchers, the workshop brings together key stakeholders to discuss and develop a roadmap for the creation of a university in Inuit Nunangat.

Although discussions about developing a northern university have been taking place for decades, in recent years there has been renewed interest in the idea by government, Inuit organizations, grass-roots organizations, and academics. These stakeholders recognize the potential social and economic benefits that creating a university could have across Inuit Nunangat. Although access to post-secondary education in Inuit Nunangat has improved, it is still limited.

Nature and Role of Universities

Universities serve a number of important functions in society. They provide access to teaching and learning in a variety of disciplines; facilitate the creation and sharing of knowledge; serve as independent sites of inquiry and critical engagement; act as engines of economic growth; and function as sites of social, linguistic, and cultural continuity and development.

There are several circumpolar and Indigenous examples that might be considered in developing a university in Inuit Nunangat. The international examples include but are by no means limited to: [Iisimatusarfik/University of Greenland](#), [University of Alaska Fairbanks \(UAF\)](#), and [the Sami University-College in Norway](#). [There are also a number of Canadian precedents that may provide inspiration for decision-makers:](#) [University of Northern British Columbia \(UNBC\)](#) and [First Nations University of Canada \(FNUiv\)](#), among others. Perhaps one of the most important lessons from many of these universities and others is the critical role that Indigenous political leaders had in calling for and supporting the development of a university for their people.

Key Questions and Issues for Consideration

There are important philosophical/foundational questions as well as more practical elements that require consideration by stakeholders and northern citizens, as the dialogue continues.

<i>Philosophical/Foundational Considerations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Who is the university designed to serve and what are the desires and needs of this population?▪ Will the university be an Inuit Nunangat University, a University of Nunavut, or a (Pan) Territorial University (College)?▪ Is there a desire to see a university grow out of existing institutions?▪ What will be the place of Inuit knowledge and language?▪ How will the university be governed?▪ What status will it have? Will it be private or public?
<i>Practical Considerations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Where will the university be located?▪ How will the university be funded?▪ What facilities are needed?▪ What programs will it offer at first?▪ What partnership opportunities exist within and beyond Inuit Nunangat?

Summary Table:

	Inuit Nunangat	Nunavut	Nunavut University College
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private and public funding from all Inuit Nunangat and beyond 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private and public funding from Nunavut and Canada 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public funding from the Nunavut Government
Administration and governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New structure of governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New structure of governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing but based on college needs and experience
Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent of the governments. University can serve as critical spaces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent of the Government of Nunavut. University can serve as critical spaces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little independence from the political realm
Jurisdiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs an enabling legislation and recognition from different jurisdictions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs a Nunavut enabling legislation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs only an amendment
Inuit Knowledge and Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possibility to place Inuit knowledge and language at core of institution. Focus on Inuit knowledge, language and culture of Importance to all Inuit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possibility to place Inuit knowledge and language at core of institution. Focus on Inuit knowledge, language and culture specific to Inuit in Nunavut. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible but changes to mission of college may be required. Inuit knowledge, language and culture fits into the existing college framework, including the Inuit Language and Culture Centre of Excellence which is a very new initiative at this time.
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inuit Nunangat and beyond 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mostly Nunavummiut 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only Nunavummiut
Location & Visibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Could have campuses in all territories and provinces in Inuit Nunangat Higher visibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Could be highly decentralised within Nunavut 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly decentralised within Nunavut

Next Steps

In December 2014, Minister Quassa suggested that a working group be established to look into creating a university. The March 2015 workshop bringing together a wide range of stakeholders to discussion the vision for a university, and to begin thinking about how to implement that vision represents a first step towards creating such a group.

If it is decided that an independent university will be created in Inuit Nunangat, an independent commission, with dedicated staff and funding could be mandated to design an Inuit Nunangat University, in collaboration with a multi-stakeholder committee made up of representatives from the four regions, government, and industry-funders.

NORTHERN UNIVERSITY FUTURES: WORKING TOGETHER TO CREATE A UNIVERSITY IN INUIT NUNANGAT

I. Introduction

The purpose of this background paper is to help inform and support the discussions that will take place at the Inuit Nunangat University Workshop in Iqaluit on March 18-19, 2015. This two-day workshop, co-hosted by the Government of Nunavut, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. and a group of ArcticNet researchers, brings together key stakeholders to discuss and develop a roadmap for the creation of a university in Inuit Nunangat. The meeting will include representatives from the four Inuit regions, a facilitator, members of the organizing committee, and other stakeholders.

The discussion paper will:

- Provide an overview of the recent discussions regarding a university in the Canadian arctic;
- Highlight the roles that universities play in society, drawing on circumpolar and Indigenous examples;
- Identify key issues and questions facing decision-makers; and
- Make some suggestions for ways to move forward with the process of developing a university.

II. Background/Context

We often hear that Canada is the only circumpolar nation without a university in the Arctic. Although discussions about developing a northern university have been taking place for decades, in recent years there has been renewed interest in the idea. For example, in 2010 the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation published a document outlining the different visions for a northern university in Canada based on interviews with dozens of stakeholders, and a roundtable held in the NWT (WDGF 2010). In 2011, the National Committee on Inuit Education (NCIE) published *First Canadians, Canadians First: National Strategy on Inuit Education 2011*, which recommends that a university be established in Inuit Nunangat to “build research capacity, expand post-secondary opportunities relevant to northerners, foster a more robust civil society...and act as an economic and cultural engine.” (NCIE 2011: 87) That same year, the three territorial governments signed a memorandum of understanding regarding university development. This non-binding but politically important agreement states that the three northern governments will commit, “to working collaboratively and cooperatively to explore options for Northern university development” (MOU 2011) through the establishment of a tri-territorial committee.¹

In April 2014, Agnico Eagle announced it would commit \$5 million dollars in support of a university in Nunavut. This past December at the Arctic Change conference in Ottawa, Mary Simon, former Chair of the National Committee on Inuit Education, called an Arctic university the “next chapter” in education for Inuit Nunangat. At that same session, Nunavut Education Minister Paul Quassa declared that the Government of Nunavut was prepared to move forward in developing a university

¹ This committee has not yet been established.

in the territory. In his remarks Minister Quassa suggested that “a committee or some other structure” be established to look into the ways and means of establishing a university.

In light of these developments, the Government of Nunavut, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., and a group of university researchers came together to plan and co-host a workshop to facilitate further discussion among key stakeholders about creating an Inuit Nunangat university.

Although it is clear that there is great interest in moving forward with creating a university in the Arctic, there are different, sometimes competing, visions for how such an institution might look. Currently, there are three main visions for a University in Northern Canada:

1. An Inuit Nunangat University
2. A University of Nunavut
3. A Territorial or Pan-Territorial University College

The first two: an Inuit Nunangat university, and a University of Nunavut, would most likely result in the development of a new, independent institution, while the third could see a university grow out of the existing college systems in Nunavut or across the three territories. A fourth option might be to develop a pan-territorial university in parallel to the existing college system.²

Given that Yukon College has already indicated its plans to create a university in the Yukon, it seems a pan territorial institution has already fallen by the wayside. However, the development of institutions in each territory certainly should not preclude collaboration and credit transfer agreements.

At the root of any decisions about which option(s) to pursue are the questions:

- What values, purposes, and goals a university might aspire to?
- What place Inuit knowledge, language, culture and values will have in the university?

The creation of a university in Inuit Nunangat offers an opportunity to think about how to design and operate bilingual and bicultural institutions in the 21st century. It offers an opportunity to move beyond the so-called “cultural inclusion model”, in which Inuit knowledge and language is incorporated into the dominant Euro-centric framework, and to move toward situating Inuit knowledge and language within the very foundations of the institution. Creating a university that “embeds and validates Inuit knowledge and values, and reflects the political, economic and social realities of Inuit Nunangat” (NCIE 2011: 87) is no small task. Recognizing the challenges inherent in creating something new, President of University of the Arctic, Lars Kullerud encouraged Inuit Nunangat decision-makers and university planners to first “know what you’re **not** going to be.”

The next three sections include: an overview of the existing postsecondary programs in Inuit

² In Canadian history, universities have been established in three basic ways: 1. By a religious institution; 2. By a provincial government for the purposes of province-building, alongside the college system (i.e. Université du Québec, University of Saskatchewan; University of Northern British Columbia); 3. By a provincial government mandating a community college to become a university (i.e. Mount Royal in Calgary; Grant McEwan in Edmonton).

Nunangat, a discussion of the nature and role of universities;, and examples of circumpolar and Indigenous universities that might serve as sources of inspiration. These are followed by a section outlining both philosophical and concrete questions for consideration and discussion by participants at the workshop. The discussion paper concludes with suggestions for next steps, and three key questions for consideration at the March 2015 workshop.

III. Existing Programs

Access to post-secondary education (PSE) varies across Inuit Nunangat. In Nunavut and the Northwest Territories, PSE is offered through Nunavut Arctic College and Aurora College, respectively. Each college has a network of regional campuses and community learning centres. The colleges offer a wide range of programming, including some undergraduate programs, through formal transfer agreements with southern degree-granting institutions.³ In Nunatsiavut, students have access to post-secondary education through the College of the North Atlantic and the Labrador Institute (Memorial University). Currently, there are no college campuses in Nunavik – students must travel to CEGEP colleges and universities in the southern part of Quebec to access post-secondary education.

In addition to these more conventional programs and institutions, a number of innovative programs were developed specifically for Inuit/Nunavut students: Nunavut Sivuniksavut, the Akitsiraq Law School (University of Victoria), the Nunavut Master’s in Education (University of PEI), and the Nunavut Public Service Certificate program (Carleton University). Students also have access to the Piquusilirivvik cultural school, based in Clyde River. Piquusilirivvik was originally created as an independent institution but it has recently joined with the Nunavut Arctic College. In addition, Pirurvik offers Inuktitut language and Inuit knowledge and cultural programs in Nunavut. In Nunatsiavut, there is a teacher education program, as well as a social work program as well.

The University of the Arctic (UARctic) is a unique example of collaborative circumpolar efforts to overcome distance in the provision of post-secondary education online. (Poelzer 2007; Johnson 1999). UARctic is a cooperative network of universities, colleges, research institutes and other organizations concerned with education and research in and about the circumpolar regions. UARctic builds and strengthens collective resources and collaborative infrastructure that enables member institutions to better serve their constituents and their regions. Through cooperation in education, research and outreach this “university without walls” strives to enhance human capacity in the North, promote viable communities and sustainable economies, and forge global partnerships. (<http://www.uarctic.org>). In 2011, the federal government cut Canadian funding to UARctic, forcing the university to scale down its Canadian operations. (CBC 2011)

IV. The Nature and Role of Universities

³ Including agreements with the University of New Brunswick, University of Regina, Dalhousie University, Athabasca University, University of Lethbridge, McGill University, and the University of Manitoba. As well, there are a number of program transfer agreements between postsecondary institutions in Alberta, the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut.

A survey of Canadian university mission statements reveals that the words 'community,' 'knowledge,' 'teaching,' 'learning,' 'research,' and 'society' continue to guide university philosophies and objectives. Nevertheless, at universities in Canada the commercialization of university education and research is a growing concern. A reproduction of the southern university model may not be appropriate or desirable in Inuit Nunangat, particularly in Nunavut where Inuit constitute the majority population, but it may be useful to observe and analyze the contemporary direction of PSE in Canada to decide what elements to include and which ones to exclude. For example, southern universities have developed a variety of innovative student support programs to assist with health and wellbeing, enrollment, academic needs, and retention. Yet, southern universities also face issues of governance, internationalization, and funding, representing an opportunity for Northerners, for Inuit, to innovate and re-imagine what the University can do to meet their specific purposes and needs. (Pennock et. al. 2012)

As stated previously, universities serve a number of important functions in society. They provide access to teaching and learning in a variety of disciplines; facilitate the creation and sharing of knowledge; serve as independent sites of inquiry and critical engagement; act as engines of economic growth; and function as sites of social, linguistic, and cultural continuity and development.

*"Each Indigenous society
needs to build its own
scientific capacity, educate
its experts and evolve on
level with the majority
society."
~ Sami University College*

1. Access to teaching and learning in a variety of disciplines

It is well documented that access to higher education in the North is limited. The National Committee on Inuit Education, the Illituvik University Society, and others see an Inuit Nunangat-based university as an opportunity to improve access to postsecondary education built on Inuit knowledge, language, and social values that reflects the political, social and economic priorities of the regions. (NCIE 2011; Illituvik 2014)

Recent research into the post-secondary education experiences of Inuit students suggests that a large proportion of Inuit students would prefer to attend university in the North, if it were an option (Rodon, Lévesque & Kennedy Dalseg, forthcoming). A survey conducted amongst 362 Nunavut Inuit with post-secondary education shows that 89% would like to go back to school (Rodon and Lévesque, 2014). There is some evidence to suggest that building universities in geographically remote regions enhances access to postsecondary education for local populations. For example, in the case of the University of Northern British Columbia, regional participation rates doubled in the first year of operation as a result of having a university close by (Weller 1998).

2. Communities of learners and teachers

Unlike institutions dedicated to vocational or technical training, which tend to be aligned directly with labour market demands, the university has its origins in retrieving (sometimes problematically in terms of southern access to Inuit knowledge), creating, critiquing, and disseminating knowledge. As communities of learners and teachers, universities act as gathering places for people with diverse ideas and perspectives. James Arvaluk envisioned such an institution

for Nunavut in the 1970s, for example – an institution that would be separate from the college, and would preserve and engage Inuit knowledge for the purposes of interacting, sharing, and learning. (Arvaluk 2007)

A university could also serve as a place for knowledge exchange and knowledge translation between communities and researchers (both Inuit and non-Inuit), and for needed developments in northern research methods. (NCIE 2013; Cameron and Mearns 2014; McGrath 2013; H. McGregor forthcoming; Gladstone and Kennedy Dalseg 2015)

One of the effects of having the University in Nunavut would be to create a policy discussion forum. The University would create a space where data could be collected and analyzed and issues could be studied and discussed. Independent data and research done by the University would contribute greatly socially and politically in Nunavut.
~Illituvik University Society

3. Independent centres of inquiry and critical engagement

As independent centres of inquiry, universities can serve as critical spaces, helping to foster a more “robust civil society.” Without independence – from government (public and/or Indigenous) and from industry – universities, especially in the early stages of development, cannot fulfill their purpose. Combined with education and research that validates Inuit knowledge, languages, and social values, and reflects northern priorities; critical engagement with civil society that originates from the North, for the North, and is led by the people of the North could be a powerful feature of a northern university.

Yet, a university is not only a place to look inward. Universities are also sites of engagement with national and global communities. With increased global interest in the North due to climate change and resource extraction, we would ask:

What might an Inuit University look like if it has a mandate to engage, not only with Inuit identities and northern realities, but also with multiple systems of knowledge on a national and global scale?

Universities provide the space for reflection, debate, deliberation, investigation and analysis, by housing such activities and by educating citizens whose capacities for these activities are highly developed. In this way a northern university can support the growth of healthy northern democracies that can take their place in Canada and in the circumpolar world. (Abele 2015)

4. Engines of economic growth and development

Universities can also be linked directly to the development of regional and national economies (Weller 1998; Weller and Nord 2002). Two examples of provincial Northern universities having a significant impact on regional economies are the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) in Prince George, BC and Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario. In Alaska and the Nordic

countries, too, universities have proved to be important drivers of economic development for the region.

a. Employment

Universities offer a range of jobs from cleaning and maintenance staff and cafeteria employees, to administrative staff and faculty. These employment opportunities also represent business opportunities for Inuit Nunangat-based businesses, such as catering, cleaning and maintenance, and construction, among others. There is a role here for the existing colleges in helping prepare Inuit Nunangat residents to participate in all aspects of building and operating a university from construction and maintenance to accounting and administration.

b. Research and Development

Research units, faculty and graduate students are often engaged in projects with direct impacts on regional social and economic development. Through partnerships with other circumpolar universities, colleges, and research institutes, solutions to a wide range of challenges (for example: architecture and construction; telecommunications and transportation infrastructure) could be 'made in the North.' Ultimately, these solutions could be marketed to other circumpolar and northern regions, making Canada a leader in Arctic technological or architectural innovation, for example. A university would need to develop programs at both an undergraduate and graduate level in order to address research and development needs and prepare Inuit to take on roles as university faculty, scholars, and researchers

c. Innovation and Entrepreneurship

The creation of a university also presents opportunities for innovation and fosters local entrepreneurship (both social and economic). In the future, it is possible to imagine a Northern Master in Business Administration program, for example, that could inspire and facilitate multi-sector collaboration within and outside Inuit Nunangat.

d. Reducing "Brain Drain"

One of the possible outcomes of a university is a reduction in the phenomenon known as "brain drain", in which highly skilled individuals leave a region because they cannot find opportunities matched to their professional aspirations. In the longer-term, a university that not only provides employment but also stimulates innovation through research and development could provide the professional environment desired by these individuals and their families.

In southern Canada, increasingly, there is a tendency to view universities as a central pillar of developing the labour market and commercial enterprise, ignoring the other important functions they serve. This tendency is one that should be debated and analyzed in any discussion of a Northern university.

5. Sites for Social, Linguistic, and Cultural Continuity and Development

Universities are recognized as important sites of social and cultural continuity and development. In some cases, universities can trace their origins to cultural and linguistic institutes. For example, the University of Greenland started as the Inuit Institute, and one of the founding organizations of the Sami University was the Nordic Sami Institute.

A university serving Inuit Nunangat needs to consider how it might maintain, strengthen, develop and create Inuit socio-cultural and historical knowledge and languages. A university might be committed to archiving as well as developing future legacies related to a variety of Inuit knowledge fields, including those previously mentioned but extending through the natural and social sciences and into the professions. In particular, the role of Inuit Elders in the university requires dialogue.

All over the world, universities are focal points for local, regional, and national cultural and artistic life. Universities engage communities with research on an as-it-happens basis through the hosting of cultural and public affairs events including lectures and speaking engagements, performances and concerts, and art shows (Kakwi & Simon 2015). They are also a natural home for key civic institutions like public archives and libraries.

V. Models of Universities in Circumpolar and Indigenous Contexts

There are several circumpolar and Indigenous examples that might be considered in developing a university in Inuit Nunangat. These include but by no means are limited to:

- [Ilisimatusarfik/University of Greenland](#)
- [University of Alaska Fairbanks \(UAF\)](#)
- [Sami University College](#)
- [University of British Columbia \(UNBC\)](#)
- [First Nations University of Canada \(FNUiv\)](#)

Brief descriptions of the origins and current status of these universities appear in Appendix A. These universities were selected because they represent models or approaches that may serve as inspiration. As discussions about an Inuit Nunangat university progress, it will be worthwhile to meet with representatives from these institutions and others to learn more about their experiences.

Although there is much to be learned from each case, there are a number of lessons from the experiences of the five universities listed above that may be particularly useful for the purposes of the workshop:

1. Indigenous political leaders actively led demands for the creation of a university that would serve the needs of their peoples for accessible, bilingual/bicultural post-secondary education;
2. Northern/regional universities have proved to be central to economic development.
3. Sustained and substantial public funding was instrumental in maintaining viable universities appropriate to northern or regional conditions;
4. The creation of a university does not necessitate a trade-off between adult literacy and vocational education. It is possible, and indeed preferable, to have both.
5. Bilingual and bicultural post-secondary education requires more than curriculum reform – it requires a comprehensive reconsideration of how a university might be organized. (For further discussion of these observations see: Abele and Graham 2010; Dunnegan 2006; Poelzer 2009; Weller and Nord 2002)

VI. Issues and Questions for Consideration

There are important philosophical/foundational questions that require consideration by stakeholders and northern citizens. There are also more general questions that also must be asked as the dialogue continues. Based on the experiences of other universities, and from the discussions that have taken place already in Canada about a northern university, we provide here some of the key questions and general issues that might be engaged with in an effort to move forward with developing a university in Inuit Nunangat.

The key issues can be divided into two main categories:

- Philosophical elements such as the nature, scope and guiding principles of the university and;
- Practical elements, such as legislation, academic programming, funding, infrastructure and facilities requirements, and partnerships both within and beyond Inuit Nunangat.

1. Philosophical Foundations of an Inuit Nunangat University

The philosophical foundations of an Inuit Nunangat University deserve close consideration. It will be important to ground the university in a strong vision and mission. However, flexibility and a willingness to develop structures for change over time will also be important.

What will the nature and scope of the University be?

One of the first decisions to make will be about the nature of the university:

- Who is the university designed to serve and what are the desires and needs of this population?
- Is there a desire to have the university teach Inuit knowledge, languages and culture?

In terms of the institutional structure and scope of the university:

- Will the university be an Inuit Nunangat University, a University of Nunavut, or a (Pan) Territorial University College?
- Is there a desire to see a university grow out of existing institutions? If so, how might this be done?

The universities mentioned in Section V and described in Appendix A fall along a spectrum. On one end of the spectrum are what we might call the Indigenous universities (i.e. Sami University College and First Nations University of Canada) and on the other the regional or geographically-oriented universities (i.e. UNBC or UAF). The University of Greenland falls somewhere in the middle.

One aspect that differentiates these models is the place of Indigenous knowledge, culture and language in the philosophical foundations of the university – that is, in the institutions' guiding principles, structure, and pedagogical practices. Universities tend to reflect the dominant

demographic, cultural, and socio-economic characteristics of their geographic locations (for example, in Quebec the universities are open to anyone but because of the French majority they tend to incorporate francophone culture and values). It makes sense that a university in Inuit Nunangat would, therefore, tend to reflect Inuit culture, language and values. However, given the European origins of universities and the historical (and ongoing) experiences of Indigenous peoples with colonial institutional intervention, including by universities and researchers, it cannot be assumed that Inuit knowledge and language will have a prominent place in the university simply because the population is predominantly Inuit. Careful and purposeful positioning of Inuit knowledge, language, culture and values will be important. With this in mind:

- What will be the place of Inuktitut⁴?
- How will language impact enrolment and hiring?
- What can be done to foster Inuit training at a PhD level in order to fill research and teaching positions?
- Thinking to both the short term and long term, how can the language and employment goals of the university be best planned for and managed?

There are both Canadian and international experiences to draw on. One of the guiding principles of the Sami University, FNUNiv of Canada and the University of Greenland is to be inclusive of all learners, Indigenous and non-Indigenous. The University of Greenland faced challenges with language. Changing the scope of their curriculum between 1981 and 1989 led to an increase in the number of non-Greenlandic speaking professors, for example.

University Status (Private or Public)

In Canada, most universities are publicly created institutions that derive an increasing amount of their funding from private sources such as donations and tuition fees. Québec has created fully publicly funded universities through the Université du Québec network. This network has been created to improve access to postsecondary education, both by the democratisation of education and also by the creation of regional universities (UQ Rimouski, UQ Abitibi-Témiscamingue, UQ Chicoutimi). In both Québec and the rest of Canada, universities are insulated from direct government influence, although, in the Québec system, the government appoints the board of governors. In short, the main difference between the two is that outside of Québec both public and private dollars make up the funding while within Québec these universities receive only public funding.

How will the University be governed?

Good leadership and independence from government and the private sector are critical to the success of any university. A university in Inuit Nunangat will have many stakeholders, including public governments, land claims bodies, research units, industry players, faculty and staff, Elders, and students, and the people living within the geographical boundaries served by the university. Designing systems of internal and external governance for the university that are inclusive of these voices while also maintaining the integrity of the university's independence will be important. There are many examples from existing universities about how to do this.

⁴ Here we are using the term "Inuktitut" to refer to all Inuit languages.

A majority of southern Canadian universities have a Chancellor, President, various Vice-Presidents, a Board of Governors and a Senate. The Chancellor is a figurehead and carries symbolic power but can also be a person who brings significant knowledge and financial supports to the university. The President is typically chosen by the members of the Board of Governors. The composition of a Board of Governors varies depending on the province and/or governing legislation.⁵ For example, in British Columbia, some members are elected from various constituencies (i.e.: students, faculty) while others are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. The board is usually a mixture of administrators, community members, faculty, students, and staff. Appointed or community members of the board tend to be drawn from the elites of business, industry, and philanthropy. At the First Nations University of Canada, the Board of Governors is appointed by a selection committee formed by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Education and Training Commission, and it includes elders and students, although they are non-voting members.

The Senate, which deals with academic matters, program creation, and evaluation generally consists of faculty, staff, students, and university administrators such as the president and faculty deans. Primarily, university Senates and Boards of Governors are meant to serve as a check and balance for one another. The Board of Governors deals primarily with financial matters, while the Senate is tasked with academic governance. Despite these differences in purpose and mandate, overlap and cooperation, facilitated by the senior university administration (presidents, vice presidents, and others), is expected. A fundamental characteristic of universities is the independence of their academic governance bodies. Under current legislation, the northern colleges do not have independent academic governance.

While there is some flexibility in governance structures, the universities highlighted above can serve as models for how to organize a university in Inuit Nunangat.

Enabling Legislation and Accreditation

Like colleges, universities are created by an Act of provincial or territorial government. The Acts set out the mandate, guiding principles, and governance structure of the institution. It is possible to review the enabling legislation for all the universities listed in Section V, to see how they incorporated their respective visions and guiding principles into the mandate and governance structure into the different universities. By way of example, the First Nations University of Canada Act is appended to this document.

As mentioned above, institutional independence is an essential characteristic of universities. In order to achieve this, the enabling legislation must create an arms-length relationship between the university and government and identify mechanisms for protecting this relationship. Whereas, the presidents of the northern colleges have the rank of deputy minister and report directly to their respective ministers, a university president would not be directly accountable to any minister. In order to ensure independence, politicians do not have the power to appoint university presidents – they are chosen by the Board of Governors. Elsewhere in Canada, provinces have a variety of

⁵ It is important to note that universities do have the ability to change elements of their governance structures without a change of legislation.

institutions that protect the independence of the university system. It will be important to study these different mechanisms and institutions as plans for developing a university in Inuit Nunangat proceed.

Universities in Canada are accredited through provincial legislation and membership with the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada.

2. Practical Aspects of creating an Inuit Nunangat University

Alongside the philosophical elements of designing a university, are questions related to the more practical aspects of creating and running a university. Underlying these questions are the following considerations: what is required to get started? What must be done in the short-term? In the longer-term? And who should take the lead?

Where will it be located?

There are both political and practical considerations in choosing a location for a university. The experience of the northern colleges shows that a multi-campus system is feasible but comes with its own set of challenges. The University of Alaska comprises multiple campuses, each with particular academic and research focuses. UNBC also has a network of regional campuses, in addition to its main campus in Prince George, BC. The First Nations University of Canada has three campuses in the larger Saskatchewan cities and also offers courses directly to First Nations communities. The University of Greenland and the Sami University College, both of which are very small, have one main campus.

Advancements in interactive digital technology and distance-learning techniques will make it possible for students and teaching staff to access the university and one another remotely but recent research has shown that distance learning is best seen as a supplement to, rather than a replacement for on-site education. (UPEI 2015; Rodon, Levesque and Kennedy Dalseg, in press) In Northern Canada, current bandwidth restrictions limit the use of web-based learning.

How will the university be funded?

Most universities, and all those mentioned in Section V, are publicly funded. In Canada, universities are funded by provincial governments supplemented by federal grants, tuition fees, and fundraising. An Inuit Nunangat University would likely be funded by the federal government, Inuit organizations, foundations, and the private sector, particularly the non-renewable resource development sector.

[A university in the Arctic] is a forward thinking investment by Inuit leaders who are at the helm of revenue sharing from resource development and who are elected to promote the participation of Inuit in the growth and development of the Arctic.
~Mary Simon

Federal and provincial/territorial northern development strategies identify non-renewable resource development as the primary driver of economic development in the North. The profits and royalties from these extractive activities can be used to

invest in university education and northern research. In April 2014, Agnico Eagle became the first mining company to commit funds towards building a university in Nunavut.

However the university is funded, it will be important for the institution to maintain independence. In addition to the methods listed above (see *University Governance* and *Enabling Legislation*), another way to safeguard institutional independence is to establish an Inuit Nunangat University Foundation through which government, Inuit organizations, private sector funders, other foundations, and private donors could provide endowments to the university.

It will also be important to consider funding for students. Currently, Inuit post-secondary students have access to funding from territorial/provincial governments (e.g. Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students), as well as from the regional Inuit associations. The National Strategy envisions an Inuit Education Trust to sponsor post-secondary scholarship, drawing from public and private sources and partnering with existing Aboriginal scholarship sources. An Inuit Education Trust could be an arm of the Inuit Nunangat University Foundation.

What facility requirements are needed?

In the short-term, classrooms, a small number of administrative offices, and housing for students and faculty will be needed. Finding space for classrooms and offices will likely be easier than securing university housing in most northern centres. Online learning offers some geographic flexibility for students and teaching staff; however, current bandwidth restrictions and high costs in the North mean that this may not be a viable option for all students.



In the longer term, the construction of a dedicated university building must be considered. Diehtosiida, the building that houses the Sami University College as well as other important Sami institutions, is recognized as an architectural triumph in the region, reflecting

Sami culture and traditions. The building is equipped with modern conference technology and communication possibilities. Diehtosiida is suitable for conferences and meetings with up to 340 participants.

In 2007, the University of Greenland expanded into a new building in Nuuk, called Ilimmarfik. Like Diehtosiida in Norway, Ilimmarfik houses Greenland's national library and archives, the university, and the languages secretariat.

What programs to offer first?

In all university examples listed above each began with a small number of programs and gradually expanded over time. In some cases, it took decades while in others they were able to expand relatively quickly.

There are already a number of undergraduate and graduate programs operating in Inuit Nunangat, all of which could form the basis for a university. While it is important to build on existing strengths, it will also be important to identify areas where research and expertise are urgently needed. The types of departments or programs to initially focus on are also dependent on the availability of faculty and instructors.

As discussions move forward, it may be useful to gather input from government departments (territorial, provincial and municipal), Inuit organizations, industry, and citizens about what their needs and priorities are with respect to post-secondary education in Inuit Nunangat.

What partnership opportunities exist within Inuit Nunangat?

Developing a university in Inuit Nunangat will require considerable investment of financial and human capital, and one of the risks is that a university could take needed resources away from other organizations or initiatives. Developing strategic partnerships within Inuit Nunangat to share resources is one way to ensure that the university does not become a burden. There are many partnership opportunities for a university within Inuit Nunangat, particularly with existing education and research entities, as well as the land claims organizations and governments.

Potential Inuit Nunangat partners might include existing educational initiatives such as Pirurvik⁶ and Piqqusilirivvik in Nunavut, or Avataq in Nunavik; research organizations like the territorial research institutes, the Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre in Iqaluit, or the Nain Research Centre. There are also many opportunities for partnerships with the Inuit organizations, regional governments, and Inuit Nunangat businesses.

In southern Canada, collaborative programs between universities and colleges are growing in number (for example: <http://bitdegree.ca/>). As discussions move forward, it might be useful to look into these further to see how they work, as well.

What partnership opportunities exist beyond Inuit Nunangat?

It is possible to imagine an Inuit Nunangat University developing partnerships with a wide range of academic and non-academic partners in Canada and internationally, especially in the circumpolar world. The Alaska Native Knowledge Network and UArctic are examples of how to do this.

The list of potential partners for an Inuit Nunangat University is endless, and partnerships will develop organically over time. In the short-term, there may be opportunities to build on existing partnerships with southern universities (for example, the universities that currently have transfer agreements with the colleges as a start), as well as universities in circumpolar countries that already have strong relationships with Inuit Nunangat, such as Greenland and Alaska (through the ICC, for example).

⁶ Pirurvik has been working to develop a PhD program in Inuit Knowledge for several years. The program is called, Ingalangaittukuurvik. During the week of March 16th, Pirurvik will be hosting a lecture series in Igloodik.

In southern Canada, there are a number of post-secondary education associations that provide support and other benefits to members. These include but are not limited to: the Association of Universities and Colleges Canada, the Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies, Canadian Association of University Teachers, and the Canadian Federation of Students.

Potential partners also include public and Indigenous governments, non-government organizations and foundations, and industry players.

VII. Next Steps

In his remarks at the Arctic Change conference in December, Minister Quassa suggested that a working group be established to look into creating a university. The March 2015 workshop bringing together a wide range of stakeholders to discuss the vision for a university, and to begin thinking about how to implement that vision represents a first step towards creating such a group.

If it is decided that an independent university will be created in Inuit Nunangat, then it will be important to develop an arms-length relationship early on through the establishment of an independent commission with dedicated staff and funding. This commission could be mandated to design an Inuit Nunangat University, in collaboration with a multi-stakeholder committee made up of representatives from the four regions, government, and industry-funders.

Regardless of which model is ultimately chosen, it might be useful to meet with representatives from some of the existing universities, such as the ones highlighted in this discussion paper to learn from their experiences with the development phase.

Suggested Discussion Questions for the March 2015 Workshop

The following questions are suggestions for getting the conversation started at the March workshop. Many other issues and questions will be raised and discussed. Please bring your own questions and ideas to the workshop for discussion with the other participants.

- (1) Why a university in the North? What has motivated stakeholders to be here?
- (2) What is the preferred model?
- (3) What areas of research and expertise are urgently needed in the North?
- (4) How to ensure that Inuit knowledge, language, culture, and values are at the core of the university?
- (5) What is/are the next step(s) when the workshop ends?

Bibliography and Further Reading

Abele, F. (2015). "Education and Northern Democratic Development" Keynote Speech, *Conference on Aboriginal Citizenship in the 21st Century: A Time of Challenge and Possibility*. Gwich'in Tribal Council and Memorial University. St. John's, March 27, 2015.

Abele, F., & Seidle, L. (2010, October 15). Canada needs a university in the North. *Nunatsiaq Online*. Retrieved from http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/98789_canada_needs_a_university_in_the_north/

Abele, F., & Graham, K. (2010). The Literature on Building Post-Secondary Success. Retrieved from <http://www.itk.ca/publication/documentation-national-strategy-inuit-education>

Amagoalik, J. (2007). *Changing the Face of Canada*. Louis McComber (Ed.). Iqaluit, Nunavut: Nunavut Arctic College.

Arnaquq, Naullaq. (2008). *Uqaujjuusiat - gifts of Words of Advice: Schooling, Education and Leadership in Baffin Island*. MA Thesis: University of Prince Edward Island.

Arvaluk, J. (2007). *That's My Vision: The Life Story of James Arvaluk*. Noel McDermott (Ed.). Iqaluit, Nunavut: Nunavut Arctic College.

Ballantyne, E. F. (2014). "Dechinta Bush University: Mobilizing a knowledge economy of reciprocity, resurgence and decolonization," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 3.3, 67-85.

Barnhardt, R. (2008). "Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Higher Education: Preparing Alaska Native PhDs for Leadership Roles in Research." *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 31.2: 154.

Barnhardt, R. (1991). "Higher Education in the Fourth World: Indigenous People Take Control." *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 18.2.

Cameron, Emilie, Rebecca Mearns and Tamalik McGrath. (2015). "Translating Climate Change: Adaptation, Resilience, and Climate Change Politics in Nunavut, Canada." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 1-10.

Castellano, M. B., Davis, L. & Lahache, L. (2000). *Aboriginal Education: Fulfilling the Promise*. Vancouver & Toronto: UBC Press.

Coates, K. (2007). "Founding the University of Northern British Columbia." *The Northern Review* 27, 20-27.

Darnell, F. & Hoëm, A. (1996). *Taken to Extremes: Education in the Far North*. Oslo: Scandinavian University Press.

Interior University Society. (1989). "Building a Future of Excellence: a University for Northern British Columbia.

Fuzessy, C (1998). "Biculturalism in Postsecondary Inuit Education." *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 22.2 : 201-9.

Gamble, J.. (2010). *Higher Learning: Balancing theory and action at Canada's first northern university*. Retrieved from <http://walrusmagazine.com/articles/2010.04-frontier-higher-learning/>

Gaviria, Olga Patricia. (2013). *Inuit Self-Determination and Post-Secondary Education: The Case of Nunavut and Greenland*. PhD Thesis (Toronto, ON: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto).

Gladstone, Joshua and Sheena Kennedy Dalseg. (2015). "Strengthening the voices of Northerners in Arctic science." *Northern Public Affairs* 3.2 (March): 5-7.

Government of the Northwest Territories, Government of the Yukon, & Government of Nunavut. (2011, April 7). University Development in the North Memorandum of Understanding.

Grant, A. (1995). "The Challenge for Universities" In *First Nations Education in Canada: The Circle Unfolds*, edited by M. Battiste and J. Barman. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Harris, R.S. (1976). *A History of Higher Education in Canada 1663-1960*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Heal, O.W., Langlais, R., Snellman, O. (1997). *A University of the Arctic: Turning Concept into Reality*. Retrieved from www.uarctic.org/genpub01_-28sL.pdf

Hitchins, D.M. (2002). "The Role of the University of Alaska" in D. Nord & G. Weller, eds. *Higher Education Across the Circumpolar North. A Circle of Learning*. (Eds.). Palgrave Macmillan. Palgrave Connect. Palgrave Macmillan.

Kennedy Dalseg, Sheena. (2015). "Creating Citizens, Building Societies? Adult Education in the Eastern Arctic as if Community Mattered." *Historical Studies in Education* Special Issue (forthcoming).

Kennedy Dalseg, Sheena and Kelly Black. (2014). "Northern University Futures." Presentation at Arctic Change Conference, Ottawa, ON, December 10, 2014. Available at: http://youtu.be/w_QISyX_TtU

Koenig, D.M., & Caillol, M. (1975). *Northern People and Higher Education: Realities and Possibilities: Phase 2 of the University and the Canadian North*. Ottawa: Association of Universities and Colleges Canada.

Kovach, M. (2009). "Being Indigenous in the Academy: Creating Space for Indigenous Scholars." Annis May Timpson, ed. *First Nations, First Thoughts: The Impact of Indigenous Thought in Canada*. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Kuoakken, R. (2007). *Reshaping the University: Responsibility, Indigenous Epistemes, and the Logic of the Gift*. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Kupsch, W.O., & Caillol, M. (1973). *The University and the Canadian North*. Ottawa: Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada.

Langgard, P. (2002). "Greenland and the University Greenland." Douglas Nord and Geoffrey Weller, eds. *Higher Education Across the Circumpolar North: A Circle of Learning*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

McCaffray, C.J. (1995). *UNBC - A Northern Crusade. The how and who of B.C.'s Northern U*. Victoria: Morris Printing Company.

McGregor, H. E. (2010). *Inuit Education and Schools in the Eastern Arctic*. Vancouver: UBC Press.

McGregor, H. E. (2013).. "Situating Nunavut Education with Indigenous Education in Canada." *Canadian Journal of Education* 36.2, 87-118.

McGregor, H.E. (2015). "North of 60: Some Methodological Considerations for Educational Historians," *Historical Studies in Education* (forthcoming).

McGrath, J. T. (2011). *Isumaksaqsiaurutigijakka: Conversations with Aupilaarjuk Towards a Theory of Inuktitut Knowledge Renewal*. PhD Thesis (Ottawa, ON: Carleton University Department of Canadian Studies).

National Committee on Inuit Education. (2011). *First Canadians, Canadians First A National Strategy for Inuit Education* (Ottawa: Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami).

Nord, D. & Weller, G. (2002). *Higher Education Across the Circumpolar North. A Circle of Learning*. (Eds.). Palgrave Macmillan. Palgrave Connect. Palgrave Macmillan. 08 Feb 2010 <http://www.palgraveconnect.com/pc/doi/10.1057/9780230504585>

Okpik, Abraham. (2005). *We Call it Survival: Life Stories of Northern Leaders*. Louis McComber, (Ed.). Iqaluit, Nunavut: Nunavut Arctic College.

Pennock, L., Jones, G.A., Leclerc, J.M., & Li, S.X. (2012). "Academic Senates and University Governance in Canada: Changes in Structure and Perceptions of Senate Members." *Annual Meeting of the Consortium of Higher Education Researchers*. Belgrade, Serbia, September 10-12, 2012.

Poelzer, Greg. (2007). The University of the Arctic: From Vision to Reality. *The Northern Review*, 27 (Fall): 28–37.

Poelzer, G. (2009). "Education: A Critical Foundation for a Sustainable North." in Frances Abele, Thomas J. Courchene, F. Leslie Seidle & France St-Hilaire, eds. *Northern Exposure: Peoples, Powers and Prospects in Canada's North* (Institute for Research on Public Policy), 427-465.

Pulpan, A., & M. Rumbolt. (2008). "Stories of Resurfacing: The University and Aboriginal Knowledge." *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 31.1: 214.

Quassa, Paul Aarulaaq. (2008). *We Have to Know Who We Are: The Life Story of Paul Quassa*, ed. Louis McComber (Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College).

Rodon T., Lévesque, F. and Kennedy-Dalseg S.(2015). Qallunaaliaqtut: Inuit Students' Experiences of Postsecondary Education in the South, *McGill Journal of Education* (forthcoming).

Rodon T., Walton F., Abele F., Lévesque F., Kennedy-Dalseg, S. and O'Leary, D. (2014). "Improving Access to University Education in the Canadian Arctic. Learning from Past Experiences and Listening to the Inuit Students' Experiences," *Northern Public Affairs* Vol. 2, Special Issue: 70-75.

Roland, G. (1993). "A university in the Fourth World': the self-determination of the Norwegian Saami" In *Dialectical Anthropology* Volume 18, No. 1.

Senkpiel, A. (2007). Post-Secondary Education in the Yukon: The Last Thirty Years. *The Northern Review*, 27, 6–19.

Smith, L.T. (1999). *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London & New York: Zed Books, Ltd.

Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation. (2010). *Dialogue Toward a University in Northern Canada: Preliminary survey results*. Yellowknife, Northwest Territories.

Walton, Fiona and Darlene O’Leary, eds. (2015). *Sivumut: Towards the Future Together* (Toronto: Canadian Scholar’s Press).

Walton, Fiona & Darlene O’leary, Lena Metuq, Jukeepa Hainnu, Saa Pitsiulak, Elisapee Flaherty, Nikki Eejeesiak, Jeeteetah Merkosak, Kerri Wheatley. (2014). “This School Feels Like Ours Now; it Belongs to the Community: Engaging Parents and Inuit Educational Leaders in Policy Change in Nunavut,” *Northern Public Affairs, Vol. 2, Special Issue.*: 49-52. Available at: www.northernpublicaffairs.ca

Watt-Cloutier, S. (2000). “Honouring Our Past, Creating Our Future: Education in Northern and Remote Communities,” in *Aboriginal Education: Fulfilling the Promise*, edited by Marlene Brant Castellano, Lynne Davis, and Louise Lahache (Vancouver: UBC Press), 114–128.

Weller, G. (1998). “The impact of a new university in a developing region: the case of the University of Northern British Columbia.” *Higher Education Policy* 11, 281-290.

Wheatley, Kerri, Shelley Tulloch & Fiona Walton. (2015.) *We are Building a Critical Voice Together”: The Second Nunavut Master of Education Program 2010- 2013*, A research report submitted to the Department of Education, Government of Nunavut.

Wright Cardinal, S. (2010). *A Northern Perspective on Northern University Initiatives* [PowerPoint slides]. Retrieved from <http://acuns.ca/website/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/Presentation-Wright-Cardinal.pdf>.

Zettl, N.M. (2010). *The Impact of Devolution on Capacity Building Through Post-Secondary Education in the North: A Case Study of UArctic*. (Unpublished Masters thesis). University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Models of Universities

*Ilisimatusarfik/University of Greenland*⁷

Ilisimatusarfik, located in Nuuk, Greenland was founded in 1989. The university grew out of a “university-like institution” called the Inuit Institute, which was founded in 1981 for the purposes of providing “top-level Greenlandic advice on questions such as the development of Greenlandic society, culture, language as well as the environmental protection associated with the mining industries.” (Langgard 2002: 86) The Inuit Institute was established on the recommendation of an independent three-person commission. The *Inuit Institute Act* received unanimous approval by Greenland’s new Home Rule Government and in 1983 the Inuit Institute was up and running with one administrator and four associate professors (two Greenlanders, one Greenlandic-speaking Dane and one Dane).

Only Greenlandic-speaking students who passed a standardized examination were admitted. The primary subjects of the Inuit Institute were: Greenlandic grammar, literature and history, and a Greenlandic framework for political science. (Langgard 2002: 88) The intention was that students would complete two years of a Bachelor of Arts-level degree in Greenland before transferring to a Danish university to complete their studies. The vision was for an innovative approach to post-secondary education that did not adhere to conventional discipline-by-discipline courses but rather one that provided a comprehensive curriculum grounded in Greenlandic culture and language. Very quickly, however, the faculty realized they were facing two main challenges. The first was a conflict between academic independence and local political aims which made it difficult for the faculty to carry out research for fear of losing support and funding; and the second was that many of the students did not possess the academic skills to succeed in the university-level courses offered, despite the innovative curriculum. It was clear that the curriculum needed to be re-worked.

These revisions led to the creation of a new Act, the *Ilisimatusarfik [University of Greenland] Act*, which passed in 1989, that established an entirely new institution with a new curriculum and mandate. The Act states that the university will “carry out research and offer academic education. *Ilisimatusarfik* is to promote knowledge regarding scientific methods and results.” (Langgard 2002: 89). The University of Greenland is funded entirely by the Greenlandic government. Nevertheless, the 1989 Act took into account the previous conflicts arising from political interference and established a governance system consisting of an elected administration and an elected Board.

Today, the University has about 650 students across four institutes (departments):

- Institute of Learning
- Institute of Nursing and Health Research
- Institute of Society, Economics and Journalism
- Institute of Culture, Language and History

The University offers courses in a wide range of subjects including: teaching, nursing, health

⁷ The historical account of the University of Greenland presented here is taken largely from Per Langgard’s chapter in Douglas Nord and Geoffrey Weller, *Higher Education Across the Circumpolar North: A Circle of Learning* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

sciences, social science, journalism, social work, business economics, language, literature and media, cultural and social history, theology, and translation and interpretation (<http://uk.uni.gl/about.aspx>). The University has also developed a large number of partnerships with universities all over the world, and is a member of several university networks, such as the University of the Arctic, and Erasmus+ (a network of European Union universities). These relationships make it possible for University of Greenland students to study abroad, and for international students to attend the University of Greenland as “guest students”.

Today, the university is governed by an independent Board of Governors, a university Rector and a Director, along with an Academic Council. The university is located in the same building as the Greenland’s national research library and public archives, the national languages secretariat and Greenland Statistics. There is limited information available in English on Ilisimatusarfik’s website, however, it would be advisable to get more information about the university’s governance, mission statement, and course offerings as this process moves forward.

University of Alaska Fairbanks

The University of Alaska is a network of four regional campuses, the first of which (University of Alaska Fairbanks or UAF) was founded in 1922. The University grew considerably in the period following World War Two, expanding its undergraduate and graduate programming as well as the number of research units it housed. Funding for the University of Alaska comes primarily from the state, which is tied to oil and gas revenue. Faced with significant financial constraints in the 1980s when the price of oil dropped, the University decided to focus on meeting local demands, specializing its programming, and becoming a leader in distance course delivery (Hitchens 2002: 134). Although it is one of the circumpolar world’s leading universities, UAF was not, historically, inclusive of the Alaska Native population. In 1975, the Alaska Natives of the North Slope Borough created their own university, the Inuit Ilisagviat-Inupiaq University of the Arctic to break with the western university model. Today, Ilisagvik College located in Barrow, Alaska offers a range of post-secondary programs similar to the ones offered through Nunavut Arctic College, rooted in Inupiaq cultural traditions. In 2006, it became Alaska’s first accredited “tribal college” (<http://www.ilisagvik.edu/about-us/>).

Despite its origins as a predominantly non-Indigenous university, since the mid-1970s, a number of Alaska Native-focused education and training initiatives, including the Alaska Native Language Centre, Alaska Native Human Resource Development Program, and a state-led rural development program for small communities, have become formally entrenched in the UAF. Today, UAF houses an innovative initiative called the Alaska Native Knowledge Network, through which seven academic programs are offered:

- Bachelor of Arts in Alaska Native Studies (undergraduate major and minor)
- Bachelor of Arts. in Alaska Native Languages (undergraduate major and minor)
- Bachelor of Arts. and Master of Arts in Rural Development
- Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics
- Master of Arts in Cross-Cultural Studies
- PhD in Indigenous Studies

<http://www.uaf.edu/cxcs/indigenousphd/>

The ANKN also serves as a “resource for compiling and exchanging information related to Alaska Native knowledge systems and ways of knowing. It was established to assist Native people, government agencies, educators and the general public in gaining access to the knowledge base that Alaska Natives have acquired through cumulative experience over millennia” (<http://ankn.uaf.edu/About.html>).

Since 1970, UAF has graduated 70 Alaska Native PhDs in a wide range of research areas from Indigenous studies, education, anthropology, and linguistics to marine sciences, physics, psychology, and information science.

Sami University College

The Sami University College, located in Kautokeino in the heart of Sápmi (or Lapland as it is known in English) was founded in 2005. The Sami University, as it exists today, grew out of two previous institutions, the original Sami University College founded in 1989, and the Nordic Sami Institute founded in 1973. As such, the Sami University brings together the higher education and training functions of the University College with the research and knowledge sharing functions of the Nordic Sami Institute.

The decision to develop a Sami University out of these two institutions in 2005 was considered ground-breaking and is rooted in a commitment by the Sami people to “strengthen [their] intellectual self-determination and transformation of Sami society.” (Kuokkanen 2008: 281). Although the university is open to anyone, the majority of its 200 students are Sami, and the primary language of instruction is Sami. The university employs approximately 100 people.

The university offers courses in three main academic fields: Language, Social Sciences and Natural Science (which includes traditional arts and economy). Both bachelor and master’s programs are offered in Sami language and literature and Sami traditional and applied arts (*duodji*), and undergraduate programs in teacher education, journalism, and reindeer herding are also offered. A variety of shorter courses are also offered, which can be counted towards bachelor degrees.

The main research fields of the university are: linguistics, history (including legal history and the history of religions), traditional arts, reindeer husbandry, pedagogy, cultural anthropology, and journalism. Sámi University College reports that it is one of the leading institutions in the fields of research on traditional knowledge and legal rights. The university publishes *Diedut* (scientific publication) and *Sámi dieđalaš áigečála* (a Sami scientific magazine) (<http://sammas.no/sites/sammas.no/files/sa-folder-eng-new.pdf>).

The building that houses the university and other important Sámi institutions is considered not only to be architecturally beautiful but serves as a central social and cultural gathering place for Sami and those interested in learning more about Sami society.⁸ Diehtosiida (literally, the house of knowledge) “is an international knowledge center for the Sámi and indigenous peoples, that gathers Sámi science and Sámi language tasks to a bigger scientific environment. Diehtosiida is a modern information and communication center, where traditional knowledge and science meet.”

⁸ It brings together the functions of the Sámi Parliament's language and training division, Sámi Archives, International Center for Reindeer Husbandry and Competence Center for Indigenous Rights Gáldu.

Many Sami scholars were educated in conventional universities, both in their home countries and abroad. The Sami University is seen by many of these scholars as an opportunity to reshape the university by challenging its “narrow intellectual foundations” and to make the university a more inclusive and decolonizing space (Kuokkanen 2007).

University of Northern British Columbia

The University of Northern British Columbia in Prince George is just one example among many in Canada of a regional university based in the provincial North. 2015 marks UNBC’s 25th anniversary, but discussions around starting a university in Northern BC began among a small but dedicated group of people in the mid-1980s.

In the earliest of these discussions, the group expressed several concerns. One of the main concerns was that College of New Caledonia (CNC) supporters may object to having both a college and university in Prince George (McCaffray 1995: 37). After meeting with CNC officials and other stakeholders, it was decided that the university and college would compliment rather than duplicate each other. The group was also concerned that Prince George did not have an adequate population base to sustain a university. However, the group agreed that efforts to link the university with the entire northern half of the province would overcome this demographic dilemma (38).

The Prince George University Action Group’s first paper on a university in Prince George looked at a range of questions including potential models and patterns of activity for lobbying for a university in the region (for more, see McCaffray 1995).

Following these first informal meetings, the group evolved into the Interior University Society and a campaign for public support began. The new society also decided to hire a consultant for a major study of the “what,” “who,” and “how” of the university (73). The society decided that the consultant should be familiar with higher education in a northern context and should be from outside the province. Swedish scholar Dr. Urban Dahllöf was brought on to develop this comprehensive study and his 1988 report outlined several key elements for a northern university in BC. (114-115)

By 1989, the provincial government had begun to pay serious attention to the work being done by the university society. In 1990, the BC government passed legislation creating the university and in 1994 UNBC was officially opened. Today, UNBC has approximately 4,100 students (68% of whom are from Northern BC), nearly 400 faculty and almost 400 non-academic staff. Its network includes campuses in Fort St. John, Terrace, Quesnel and it is affiliated with the Wilp Wilxo’oskwahl Nisga’a Institute. (for more information see www.wwni.bc.ca). UNBC offers a wide array of graduate (Masters and PhD), undergraduate, diploma, and certificate programs, many of which have a particular focus on the northern context.

One of UNBC’s most innovative programs is the Northern Medical Program (NMP) which is a part of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of British Columbia. The NMP follows a model of distributed (multi method) education and was created in response to the need to address a critical shortage of physicians and healthcare professionals in BC’s North. Through its association with

UBC's Faculty of Medicine, UNBC offers the UBC curriculum within a northern and rural context (<http://www.unbc.ca/northern-medical-program/about>).

First Nations University of Canada

The First Nations University of Canada (FNUUniv) is a First Nations' controlled university-college, which provides educational opportunities to both First Nations and non-First Nations university students selected from a provincial, national and international base. It has three campuses in Saskatchewan (Regina, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert). In 1976, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations entered into an agreement with the University of Regina to create the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College (SIFC). The independently administered university-college's mission was to "serve the academic, cultural and spiritual needs of First Nation's students." When SIFC opened it had just nine students and offered courses in Indian Studies and Languages, Indian Teacher Education, social work, fine arts (Indian art and art history), and social sciences.

In 2003, the SIFC became FNUUniv and today the university has an average yearly enrollment of 3000 students. Through partnerships with universities across Canada, more than 25,000 students have taken courses at FNUUniv. In addition its academic partnerships, which include agreements with universities in Siberia, Mongolia and Tanzania, the university also has formal agreements with more than two dozen Indigenous institutions in Canada, South and Central America and Asia. A first year bridging program is provided for Aboriginal students. The University's Elders' Office is instrumental in offering guidance and support to students and faculty in carrying out the university's mission.

The mission of the First Nations University of Canada is "to enhance the quality of life, and to preserve, protect and interpret the history, language, culture and artistic heritage of First Nations. The First Nations University of Canada will acquire and expand its base of knowledge and understanding in the best interests of First Nations and for the benefit of society by providing opportunities of quality bi-lingual and bi-cultural education under the mandate and control of the First Nations of Saskatchewan" (<http://fnuniv.ca/overview>).

FNUUniv's Act may be useful as an example of how to integrate Indigenous values into the enacting legislation for a university. The Act is appended. FNUUniv is governed by a nine member Board; members are appointed by a Selection Committee formed by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Education and Training Commission. The Board also has several non-voting members, including two Elders and one student. The university is publicly funded by the province of Saskatchewan, and in 2010 the federal government also provided funding to the University during a period of financial troubles.

APPENDIX B: Sample Enabling Legislation

First Nations University of Canada Act [see USB key for complete document]
Preamble and Guiding Principles

AN ACT RESPECTING THE FIRST NATIONS UNIVERSITY OF CANADA

PREAMBLE

- WHEREAS** the First Nation governments assert that we have the Inherent and Treaty right to govern ourselves according to our laws, traditions, customs, protocols and governance processes in our ancestral lands; and
- WHEREAS** Treaty is a sacred covenant that was entered into to secure a positive future for generations to come, ensuring the means of survival and stability; and
- WHEREAS** Treaty reinforces our ongoing Inherent right to self-determination and the preservation and protection of all First Nation *ways of life*; and
- WHEREAS** the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* asserts Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination and states that "Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural characteristics, while retaining their rights to participate fully, if they so chose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State"¹; and
- WHEREAS** the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* further states that "Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning"²; and
- WHEREAS** the *Saskatchewan Indian Federated College*, now the First Nations University of Canada, was established in 1976 under the authority of Saskatchewan First Nations, as an academically integrated and independently administered institution to serve the academic, cultural and spiritual needs of First Nations and society in general; and
- WHEREAS** it is the responsibility of First Nations, through our organizations, to articulate the basis upon which we will collectively work together to ensure our Inherent and Treaty rights to education are honoured, implemented and sustained; and
- WHEREAS** the First Nations signatory to the *Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Convention, April 16, 1982* agreed to join and unite in a common front to protect and preserve First Nations' Treaty rights and their political, economic, social and cultural characteristics; and
- WHEREAS** the Chiefs-in-Assembly adopted the Treaty Implementation Principles on May 29, 2007 to guide the First Nations University of Canada in discussions with the federal and provincial governments on Indian control of Indian Education and the accreditation of First Nation university degrees.

PRINCIPLES

The Board of Governors of the First Nations University of Canada shall base all decisions on the following principles:

- i. Honour and Integrity, knowing that sound adherence to Indigenous principles and values are critical to the decisions that impact future generations;
- ii. Respect, knowing that ancestral knowledge is an integral part of the decision making process;
- iii. Responsibility, knowing that full participation, communication and collective decision-making promote transparency and inclusivity among our Nations;
- iv. Humility, knowing that self-evaluation and self-reflection promote commitment to effective individual performance and collective accountability; and
- v. Understanding, knowing that collaborative relationships and the practice of due diligence promote peace, order and good governance.

University of Northern British Columbia Act

Available online at:

http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_96468_01
http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_96468_01
http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_96468_01

University of Greenland Act [see USB key]

APPENDIX C: Sample University Organization

University of Greenland Organizational Chart [see USB Key]

Sami University College Organizational Chart

