

First Nations University
of Canada,
Saskatchewan



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First Nations Post-Secondary Education:
A Costing Analysis on the Establishment
and Advancement of First Nations
Institutions.

Full summary report available at www.afn.ca





First Nations University of Canada, Saskatchewan

First Nations University of Canada (FNUUniv) was originally established in 1976 as the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College (SIFC) through a federation agreement between the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) and the University of Regina. SIFC was an independently administered university college established to serve the academic, cultural, and spiritual needs of First Nations students through high quality post-secondary education. SIFC became the FNUUniv in 2003. Its vision, mission, and values are set out in the FNUUniv Strategic Plan 2019-2024:

Vision: The First Nations University of Canada is a First Nations owned post-secondary institution that aspires to have a transformative impact by bridging our ceremonies, knowledge keepers, languages, and traditions with the delivery of high-quality education that will lead to the pride and success of all students, First Nations communities, and Canada.

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 for quality bi-lingual and bi-cultural education under the mandate and control of the First Nations of Saskatchewan.

The First Nations University of Canada 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.

Values and Principles: As First Nations, we treasure our collective values of wisdom, respect, humility, generosity, honesty, bravery and caring. They have preserved and passed down our traditions through countless generations. The Elders teach us to respect the beliefs and values of all nations. Under the Treaties, our leaders bade us to work in cooperation and equal partnership with other nations.

The First Nations University of Canada provides an opportunity for students of all nations to learn in an environment of First Nations cultures and values. The university is a special place of learning where we recognize the spiritual power of knowledge and where knowledge is respected and promoted. In following the paths given to us by the Creator, the First Nations have a unique vision to contribute to higher education. With the diversity and scope of the First Nations degree programs, the university occupies a unique role in Canadian higher education. The university promotes a high quality of education, research and publication.

The university strives to play a leadership role in post-secondary education across Canada and to meet the education needs of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students for accredited programming. FNUUniv is guided by strategic processes in teaching and learning, student success, communications, and collaboration, all of which are regularly examined and modified in a cycle of measurement, review, and reconfiguration.



FNUUniv is the only Indigenous-controlled member of Universities Canada and of the Canadian Association of University Business Officers. It offers credentials through its federated agreement with the University of Regina.

FNUUniv delivers programs and services on three campuses (Regina, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert) as well as through community-based programming (Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Alberta) and online programming. FNUUniv collaborates with Indigenous communities, local and regional educators, and tribal councils to offer community-based programming and to respond to emerging needs for post-secondary education. About 60% of programming is delivered in community. Locations vary in response to community needs. In 2020, the University also purchased 22 acres of land on the shores of the North Saskatchewan River to create a permanent Traditional/Land-based learning campus. That campus holds its Social Work and Education Culture Camps (4- to 10-day camps), sweat lodge ceremonies, and land-based teachings. The traditional campus provides opportunities for teaching, living, and learning on land under the guidance of Elders and faculty.

FNUUniv has graduated more than 5600 students since its founding, including 195 in 2020. The majority of credentials awarded are Bachelors degrees in Indigenous Social Work, Arts, and Indigenous Education. 86% of students and 70% of faculty are Indigenous (2019-20 Annual Report).

Programming

FNUUniv's approach to the process of teaching and learning includes a focus on the use of traditional Indigenous methodologies, building on its unique Indigenous programming and services, and enhancing pedagogical practices for academic programs and delivery options. Within the programming, students explore their spiritual, cultural, and community identity and connections. The programming also blends Indigenous and Western expertise and creates opportunities for students to move into the labour market. Programming includes certificates, diplomas, undergraduate, and graduate degrees.

Table 1. First Nations University of Canada Programs

Program Area	Current Programs (2021-22)
Indigenous Business & Public Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Bachelor of Administration - Faculty of Business Administration (Majors available in Accounting; Entrepreneurship; Finance; Human Resources Management; International Business; Marketing and Management)



Program Area	Current Programs (2021-22)
Indigenous Communication & Fine Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diploma of Indigenous Communications Arts • Certificate in Indigenous Fine Arts - Faculty of Media, Art and Performance Section • Bachelor of Arts (Indigenous Art) - Faculty of Media, Art and Performance Section • Bachelor of Arts (Indigenous Art History) - Faculty of Media, Art and Performance Section • Bachelor of Arts (Indigenous Art): Three-Year Special - Faculty of Media, Art and Performance Section • Bachelor of Fine Arts (Indigenous Art) - Faculty of Media, Art and Performance Section • Minor in Indigenous Art - Faculty of Media, Art and Performance Section • Minor in Indigenous Art History - Faculty of Media, Art and Performance Section
Indigenous Education Undergraduate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four Year Elementary Bachelor of Indigenous Education Program • Four Year Elementary Bachelor of Indigenous Education Cree Immersion Program • Four Year Elementary Bachelor of Indigenous Education Cree Immersion Program (nīhithow kiskinwāmākiwin masinahikan) • Four Year Elementary Bachelor of Indigenous Education Dene Immersion Program • Elementary Bachelor of Indigenous Education After Degree (BEAD) Program • Four Year Secondary Bachelor of Indigenous Education Program • Secondary Bachelor of Indigenous Education Program Indigenous Studies Major • Secondary Bachelor of Indigenous Education After Degree (BEAD) • Bachelor of Indigenous Education After Degree (BEAD) Secondary Program Indigenous Studies Major • Bachelor of Indigenous Education After Degree (BEAD) Secondary Program Visual Arts Major • Bachelor of Indigenous Education, Indigenous Studies Major Secondary Program • Bachelor of Indigenous Education, Indigenous Studies Minor Secondary Program • Certificate of Extended Studies in Aboriginal Education • Certificate of Extended Studies in First Nations Language (post B.Ed. program) • First Nations Language Instructors' Certificate
Indigenous Education Graduate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master in Indigenous Education (MIED), Graduate Studies and Research • Master in Indigenous Language Education (MILED), Graduate Studies and Research



Program Area	Current Programs (2021-22)
Indigenous Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Health Studies • Diploma in Health Studies • Certificate of Health Studies • Concentration in Indigenous Health and Well-Being (Optional) • Minor in Indigenous Health Studies (non-BHS students) • Certificate in Indigenous Health Practice (CIHP)
Indigenous Languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Arts Cree Language Literacy • Bachelor of Arts Saulteaux Language Literacy • Minor in Cree Language Studies • Minor in Dakota Language Studies • Minor in Dene Language Studies • Minor in Nakota Language Studies • Minor in Saulteaux Language Studies

FNUiv’s degrees in Indigenous Social Work exemplify the institution’s approach to building programs grounded in Indigenous spirituality, philosophies, ideologies, knowledge systems, and methodologies. The programs prepare students to work in social work across Canada, with a focus on enhancing the strengths of First Nations individuals, families, groups, and communities, and supporting the self-determination of First Nations. The Master’s program prepares students to work as clinical practitioners with skills in First Nations approaches to therapy and sensitivity to First Nations and Métis community contexts. The programs include a mandatory 10-day land-based Indigenous cultural camp. These Department of Social Work programs are nationally accredited through the Canadian Association for Social Work Education. Graduates are eligible for provincial registration and licensure in social work.

Student Services

Students are at the centre of the university’s mission. FNUiv supports students and their post-secondary education in the context of the heritage, culture, and knowledge systems of Indigenous peoples. Students are nurtured holistically with the support of cultural advisors, student success navigators, retention specialists, academic advisors, wellness counselling, and Elders. For instance, academic advisors work with all students to help them navigate the academic environment, providing insight in programming, policy, academic success skills, and providing referrals to additional resources and supports. Group or individual tutoring is available to all students. Staff form relationships with students and engage with them regularly. This relationship allows them to identify student challenges early and provide services and referrals to support student well-being, retention, and success. Elders, an integral part of the FNUiv community, support students with their presence (in and out of classes), wisdom, and knowledge of First Nations tradition, culture, and spirituality.



Growth and Development

Indigenous research is one of FNUniv's strategic actions to support the process of teaching and learning, and all faculty have research responsibilities. The institution is the home of the National Centre for Collaboration in Indigenous Education, its most significant research project to date. The centre connects communities with one another to share stories of Indigenous education across Canada and across the world, maintaining a library of teaching and education resources and hosting national gatherings.

FNUniv is pursuing continued growth in the enhancement of Indigenous methodologies, pedagogy, programming, delivery options, services, and research; increasing student enrollment, engagement, retention, and success; collaborating with communities, Indigenous organizations, institutions, and government to provide community-based programming and initiatives; and strengthening its internal and external communications.



To learn more, please visit: www.afn.ca/policy-sectors/education



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