



## ARTICLE

### Design and pedagogical practices of an Inuit-focused Bachelor of Education program in Labrador

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## Design and pedagogical practices of an Inuit-focused Bachelor of Education program in Labrador

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### Abstract

Memorial University's 2009 Presidential Task Force on Aboriginal Initiatives called for the establishment of a community-based teacher education program for Labrador. The Faculty of Education at Memorial and the Nunatsiavut Government (NG) subsequently worked together to develop an Inuit-focused primary-elementary pre-service program for Goose Bay, a community adjacent to Nunatsiavut. For NG, the training of local Inuit teachers in the Inuit Bachelor of Education (IBED) is an important step towards taking control of the K-12 education system in their land claim area. In this paper we explore the design and pedagogical practices of that program. The macro-level program design pays attention to context-relevant factors such as academic and cultural supports, program sequence and schedule, workload-family balance, and the selection of instructors. The curriculum design is guided by "Two-Eyed Seeing," a model that respects the differences in Western and Indigenous ways of understanding the world and draws on the strengths of both (Marshall, Marshall & Iwama, 2010). Inuit culture is infused, in all aspects of the IBED, through land-based experiences, Inutittut language training, the inclusion of Inuit Elders, and the use of Inuit specific resources. The pre-service teachers are developing pedagogical practices that: reflect Inuit ways of teaching and learning, embrace culturally relevant Inuit education within the context of provincial curricula, and align with the goals of The National Inuit Education Strategy (2011).

**Keywords:** teachers, education, Inuit, community-based, culturally-relevant

## Introduction

When the Labrador Inuit achieved self-governance in 2005 they undertook formal responsibility for the protection and enhancement of the unique cultural heritage of the Labrador Inuit, a set of cultural and linguistic traditions to be nurtured and developed through education. Among the long-standing educational goals of the Nunatsiavut Inuit is the establishment of purposeful and progressive stewardship over education that will, in the fullness of time, lead to full jurisdictional responsibility for all aspects of K-12 education (Nunatsiavut Government, 2018a). One of the recognized challenges to the creation of an Inuit-administered school system is capacity building so that the instructional leaders will be certified Inuit educators who are skilled in culturally relevant and responsive pedagogies and curriculum, and who can continue to strengthen and nurture the use of the Inuktitut language.

In its 2009 report, Memorial University's Presidential Task Force on Aboriginal Initiatives identified several education-related strategies to help improve access to education for Aboriginal people. One of these was to establish a community-based teacher education program for Labrador's Indigenous peoples. In 2012, the Nunatsiavut Government initiated discussions with Memorial University to explore options for the development and delivery of a primary-elementary teacher education program in Labrador (Cook, 2015). A new Inuit Bachelor of Education (Primary-Elementary) Program (IBED) was established and is now in its final year of implementation. The program represents an important means through which to begin to address the education needs and values of the Inuit in northern Labrador. The *Accord on Indigenous Education* notes the importance of such collaborative approaches between universities and Indigenous communities (Association of Canadian Deans of Education, 2010).

We are positioned as two university researchers/practitioners with attachments to the program – a professor and curriculum developer (Moore) and a university dean with responsibility for program administration and delivery (Galway). As such, we have both been intimately involved in the program since its inception and write from this situated perspective. We use narrative to examine how Memorial University collaboratively worked with the Nunatsiavut Government to Indigenize a teacher education program. Narrative, or story, is part of “the fundamental nature of humanity” (Huber, Caine, Huber & Steeves, 2013) and is expressed by Indigenous writer Thomas King who writes: “The truth about stories is that's all we are” (p. 153). Our writing is descriptive narrative based on our own notes, reflections, written accounts and personal communications. The writing is also informed by internal planning documents, minutes of meetings, briefing materials, course syllabi, term schedules, e-mails and other documentation. We share this story of the teacher education program because, in the telling and retelling of narratives, we learn from one another's lived experiences (Clandinin and Connelly, 2008).

The narrative draws on the work of Indigenous scholars who write about the work of Indigenizing the academy (Ottman, 2013; Mihesuah and Wilson, 2003; Battiste, 2013; Kovach, Carriere, Montgomery, Barrett & Gilles, 2015). We situate the IBED as an example of decolonizing teacher education and describe the program both from a development and delivery perspective, as well as from a curriculum perspective. In the first section of the paper, we describe the creation of a teacher education program that could support Inuit students and into which Inuit culture could be infused. This includes the principles and goals for the project and its conceptualization as an entirely community-based degree program. The second section is written from a curriculum perspective. We describe the ways non-Inuit instructors adapted their courses, the dynamics of integrating Inuit and Euro-Canadian curricula and pedagogies, and the sources that were tapped to bring Inuit culture into the program. Finally we offer some concluding thoughts on the project, its successes, challenges and probable outcomes and describe potential opportunities to apply this model of community-based teacher education in other Indigenous contexts.

### **Inuit Bachelor of Education Program**

#### *Context of K-12 education in Nunatsiavut*

Following three decades of negotiations with the federal government, in 2005 the Inuit on the north coast of Labrador (population 2,330) settled their long-standing land claim and established the Nunatsiavut Government, the first Inuit government in Canada (Nunatsiavut Government, 2018b). Although it is their right to establish independent schools, the Nunatsiavut Government has not yet exercised that right. At present, Inuit students attend public schools in five Nunatsiavut communities situated on the Northeast coast of Labrador; these schools operate under the jurisdiction of the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District (NLESD). Through our collaborative work with officials of the Department of Education and Economic Development (EED), we have observed that the Nunatsiavut Government seems to have adopted a formative and iterative approach to the transfer of administrative responsibility for K-12 schools that may be characterized by partnership development and significant capacity building within the present educational governance structure. The official position of the government on independent schools is that “EED is actively examining the current school curricula to determine its strengths and areas requiring change as a first step towards assuming these responsibilities.” (Nunatsiavut Government, 2018a, ¶5)

#### *Program inception*

The IBED program is commensurate with the Bachelor of Education (Primary-Elementary) program offered at Memorial University’s St. John’s campus in terms of academic standards and pedagogy, but open to the infusion of Inuit culture (Cook, 2015). During the engagement phase of the partnership Memorial University and NG representatives held a series of

planning sessions and working meetings to reach consensus on the various elements of the program, including admission standards, scheduling, financial considerations, resources and staffing. In addition, the University held consultations with members of the Nunatsiavut community, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association and the NLESD, as well as other academic units within the university community and the Special Advisor to the (University) President on Aboriginal Affairs (Galway, Moore & Lane, 2015).

*Principles of the IBED program design*

The IBED centres Inuit culture, history, language, and identity within the context of the Labrador Inuit. The National Inuit Education Strategy clearly states: "Inuit need a school system whose objective is the mastery of core subjects, including language and math, as well as 21st century subjects, such as global awareness and civic literacy" (National Committee on Inuit Education, 2011, p. 70). The Strategy outlines 10 recommendations as "core investments" for Inuit education. These include the development of an Inuit-centered curriculum, nurturing Inuit education leaders, measuring and assessing success, and bilingual education (p. 10). These recommendations are foundational considerations in preparing pre-service teachers to play a role in the Nunatsiavut Government's self-determined education system. The curriculum and pedagogical practices both promote and support self-governed Inuit education.

The following principles, developed collaboratively between the Faculty of Education and the Nunatsiavut Government, underscore the planning and implementation of the IBED:

- Respect for individual, community and Inuit perspectives;
- Integration of both Aboriginal pedagogy and Euro-Canadian educational practices to provide teacher candidates with a culturally relevant education;
- Inclusion of curricular and program experiences that are significantly influenced by local knowledge, traditional ways of knowing and Indigenous culture and philosophy;
- Inclusion of learning experiences on the land and in the communities;
- Inclusion of a parallel Inuktitut language instruction component as a complement to the program of university studies;
- General adherence to the program structure of the 150 credit hour Faculty of Education Bachelor of Education as a First Degree Program with adaptations to enable the integration of Inuit and other Indigenous content and themes;
- Collaborative planning and decision-making in program administration between the Memorial University and the Nunatsiavut Government, and;

- Provision for program adjustments to accommodate local community circumstances and conditions.

These principles reflect a vision for Indigenous teacher education that respects both Indigenous and Western ways of knowing. The program design also recognizes and accounts for certain pragmatic considerations associated with university degree programs, such as consistency in admission standards and other academic and regulatory requirements, and the unique challenges of offering a full, regular degree program in a remote community (Memorial University Faculty of Education, 2014).

#### *Program admission*

Students admitted to the IBED Bachelor of Education are required to meet the general admission regulations of Memorial University and the specific regulations for the degree, including 30 credit hours in pre-requisite courses with an average of at least 65%. For the first cohort, the Faculty of Education established a special selections committee with representation from University and the Nunatsiavut Government. Through a competitive process, nineteen (19) students were admitted from those who had just completed a pre-requisite year or other Nunatsiavut applicants who had already met the entrance requirements. Following admission students are required to obtain a semester average of at least 65% in order to remain in clear standing in the Faculty. Students also have certain obligations to the Nunatsiavut Government regarding funding, language instruction and other arrangements.

#### *Design and structure*

The IBED is a 153 credit-hour (approximately 300 ECTS credit) program that qualifies graduates for a Level V Newfoundland and Labrador teaching certificate.<sup>1</sup> The credit hour length for the program is slightly longer than for the regular degree (153 vs.150 credit hours) to account for the addition of a methodology course in the teaching of Inuktitut. The program sequence and schedule is modified for delivery in the Labrador context. For example, whereas the Faculty of Education normally accepts students after two years of prerequisite study (60 credit hours), students are accepted into the IBED program after only one year of pre-requisite study (30 credit hours), with the balance of non-education course credits integrated into their program of study. Students complete both education courses and non-education courses appropriate to the degree over the duration of the program including an Interdisciplinary Focus Area consisting of 21 credit hours in courses with a concentration in Aboriginal and Northern Studies. The program also includes two internships (an early and an extended internship) in Labrador schools, at least one of which is in a coastal Nunatsiavut community.

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<sup>1</sup> Level V is the normal certification level for graduates entering the profession; higher certification levels (Level VI and VII) are acquired through advanced study, such as graduate certificates or degrees.

Table 1 (See Appendix) outlines the pre-requisites, course sequence and program of study for the IBED degree. The design of the IBED program aligns with Memorial University's primary-elementary teacher education program with additional and/or parallel curriculum content intended to increase the relevance of the curriculum and program delivery for Inuit students. The program of instruction also includes a ten-semester modular, non-university credit Inuktitut language component, developed and delivered by the Nunatsiavut Government (Memorial University Faculty of Education, 2018). While the 'regular' Bachelor of Education program follows a three-year sequence with five courses per semester and no classes in the Spring/Summer semester, the number of credit courses is reduced to four per semester in the IBED to accommodate the non-credit Inuktitut language study modules.

### *Instruction*

Program headquarters and classroom facilities are located at Memorial University's campus in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, a remote town of approximately 8000 people, located in northeastern Canada in the central part of [Labrador](#). Instruction is through a combination of courses taught by a Faculty of Education professor resident at the Labrador Institute (Moore), itinerant professors from Memorial University's St. John's or Grenfell campuses, faculty and per-course instructors affiliated with the Labrador Institute, and other per-course instructors.

Scheduling, length and frequency of classes are modified as required to facilitate course delivery, for example, to enable students to participate in culturally relevant activities, for land-based courses, or for courses taught by itinerant faculty members. Where education courses are offered by itinerant faculty members from the St. John's or Grenfell campuses, faculty members travel to Goose Bay two or three times a semester for an approximate one week stay during which time classes are offered in an accelerated format. Similarly, to accommodate students with family responsibilities every reasonable effort is made to schedule education courses during the regular school day (not evenings). In almost all semesters to date, course work was scheduled between 9:00am and 3:00pm to enable teacher candidates – most of whom are mature learners with school-aged children – to better manage child care, especially drop-off and pick-up of children from school.

### *Student and program supports*

Students and faculty have access to support from a cultural consultant and program coordinator. The cultural consultant acts as an advocate for students and liaison with the University and officials in the Nunatsiavut Government on program-related issues. The cultural consultant is also available to assist faculty members in adapting course material or providing other instructional supports. The program coordinator has responsibility for the local organization and on-site management of the program. This includes scheduling, liaison with faculty and internship supervisors, academic advising, and other management functions.

S/he coordinates these activities with the cultural coordinator, Nunatsiavut education staff, the Labrador Institute and the St. John's campus. Students also have access to a tutor whose role is to work with students, faculty and staff in developing student language, research and writing skills. Library monitors are available throughout the program to facilitate extended library hours during the on-campus semesters.

#### *Program oversight*

An advisory committee for the IBED is composed of senior administrators from the University and the Nunatsiavut Government, a faculty member and representatives of other program partners. The advisory committee oversees and monitors program delivery and implementation, manages program issues and addresses other administrative and instructional issues as they may arise.

#### **Culturally Relevant Curricula**

One of the challenges for the IBED is ensuring collaboration in the development and delivery of a culturally relevant curriculum practices and pedagogy and in mobilizing the collaborative model in the formation of students' future teaching. Many of the teacher educators involved in the program are not Inuit and have not previously taught in an Indigenous teacher education program. Throughout the program we sought ways for education course instructors to participate in formal and informal discussions about the ways in which Inuit culture can be infused into the program, using two-eyed seeing as a model of interweaving different worldviews, and preparing teachers to work in a Nunatsiavut governed education system. Each instructor considers how his/her course can be open to Inuit ways of knowing, doing and being, what Inuit-relevant resources can support the teaching, and what culturally responsive pedagogies can be used to promote learning.

The IBED Curriculum Committee is a sub-committee of the programs' Advisory Committee and is composed of one member each of MUN and Nunatsiavut education staff as well a faculty member. Initially the committee advised on the non-education courses that could be offered as part of the program. These were selected on the basis of how they fit an Indigenous focus and included courses such as Indigenous history, anthropology, and folklore. The Curriculum Committee also supports instructors with suggestions for Inuit-focused resources, the involvement of Elders and knowledge holders in courses, and cultural activities for students. Instructors variously meet with Moore to discuss their course syllabi, consult with the Nunatsiavut Government education staff on K- 6 Inuit education priorities, and pursue their own learning about Inuit culture and education. The committee is an example of a collaborative approach to Indigenizing teacher education (Kitchen & Raynor, 2013).

Curriculum is an important consideration not only for the IBED courses but also in terms of the professional knowledge and pedagogic skills of our students as future teachers. Schools in Nunatsiavut will continue to use the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education curricula at least until the Nunatsiavut Government assumes jurisdiction over K-12 education. Therefore, the provincial curriculum documents are used in the teacher education courses and the students critically consider ways in which the provincial curriculum outcomes can be reached in culturally relevant ways. Nunavut, one of four Inuit regions in Canada, has jurisdiction for education and has developed many foundational documents. The Nunavut curriculum documents are also used as an additional resource for the IBED program as they demonstrate an Inuit-centred curriculum reflecting Inuit knowledge, values, and approaches to teaching and learning.

Students receive explicit teaching on how they can interweave Inuit ways of knowing, doing and being within a framework of the current school curricula. This combining or interweaving of pedagogies and knowledge is founded on the respectful valuing of both Indigenous and Euro-Canadian ways of teaching and learning, as promoted by two-eyed seeing. In a curriculum course, Moore and the students discuss ways to bring Inuit knowledge into the curricula. They consider this both in terms of how this infusion is being modelled in the IBED program as well as how the pre-service teachers might, in the future, implement the curriculum in culturally relevant ways. They collaboratively conceptualize and explore various pedagogies to support Inuit-centred education in Nunatsiavut schools. These include: incorporating the Inuktitut language, connecting ways of teaching and ways of learning to the land, using Inuit specific resources, and inviting Elders, local knowledge holders, and traditional teachers to participate in the learning activities (Moore & IBED Students, 2017).

### *Language*

The National Inuit Education Strategy has prioritized bilingual education and the Nunatsiavut Government has developed a language rejuvenation strategy to increase the numbers of Inuktitut speakers. The Labrador Inuktitut Training Program (LITP) was developed for adult language learners who learned English as their first language. The program, offered by Nunatsiavut, is offered in parallel to the IBED. Through their commitment to learning their own language, they are positioning themselves to help preserve the Inuktitut language through classroom instruction. Teacher educators have welcomed the inclusion of Inuktitut into the lesson plans prepared by students. Examples include common greetings and traditional songs, as well as the incorporation of cultural knowledge and lifeways embedded in the language.

An Elder (cited in Watt-Cloutier, 2000) explains, "Children do not learn language writing words on a blackboard. They learn it by watching someone do something, like skin a seal." (p. 127).

Considering their roles as future teachers, we believe that providing this Inuktitut learning to the IBED students, as part of a language rejuvenation strategy, will have ripple effects through the K-12 education system. Even if the students do not further their language learning to become Inuktitut language teachers, they have the pedagogical skills, knowledge of curriculum, and personal passion to find many ways of incorporating Inuktitut, and thus the culture it reflects, in their teaching.

### *Land*

Land has a deep cultural significance and it has a “central role in Indigenous constructions of knowledge” (Madden, 2015, p. 2). The IBED integrates several concepts of land including (1) the Nunatsiavut / Labrador region as a site of personal and cultural identity; (2) land as a place of human habitation situating particular knowledge, and; (3) land as an ecosystem within which all life is interconnected. Thus, these collective notions of land give a context to teaching and learning that connects place, Indigenous worldview, and cultural values.

The IBED students experience many opportunities for land-centred learning. For example, one of the authors (Moore) developed and taught a course specific to land-based learning that took place at a local camp. The focus of the course is on interweaving place-based experiences, K-6 curriculum, and Inuit culture. Elders, local knowledge holders, and traditional teachers enhance students’ learning experiences and the course instructor guides the learning of cross-curricular teaching. Several other IBED courses include land-based activities, such as dogsledding and ice fishing, as a component of student learning. Van der Wey (2001) asserts that students must be actively and critically engaged with their place-based experiences in order for meaningful learning to occur (p. 51). All of the IBED land-based experiences are followed by critical reflections about the ways in which their own learning experiences contribute to their growing understanding of curriculum and pedagogy. The Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) forum on re-visioning Inuit education success notes the exemplary work of IBED students who have developed lesson plans using land-based knowledge and activities to reach curricular outcomes (ITK, 2017, p. 14).

### *Elders, local knowledge holders and traditional teachers*

Elders are the cultural knowledge keepers and including them in the IBED program is a way to bring Inuit teachings directly into the pre-service teachers’ learning. The Inuit term, Qaujimagatuqangit (IQ) translates to “that which Inuit have always known to be true,” and is the knowledge that is passed on by Elders (Karetak, Tester & Tagalik, 2017). Engaging Elders in schools and collaborating with them on education planning are two strategies included in the ITK education standards (Silta Associates, 2007, p. 3-5). Learning from Elders, local knowledge holders, and traditional teachers in the IBED include things such as building boats, making snowshoes, and harnessing and mushing sled dogs. This learning comes from listening to, watching, and being in the presence of Elders who share these skills.

Students also learn from listening to the experiences of many Elders who share stories of schooling, trapping, wayfinding, child rearing, art, Inuktitut language, and family life. Others share local knowledge about Labrador plants, storytelling, birds, education, and theatre. They also share their lived experiences as Inuit, crafters, artists, storytellers, Labradorians, and educators, expressing their values and understandings of what is important to living a good life. Students also consult Elders as sources of knowledge for their learning projects, as language speakers, and as mentors.

#### *Local and culturally relevant resources*

In addition to Elders bringing Inuit knowledge to the IBED, the course instructors also use print resources, artifacts, and teacher or student created materials. There are many more Inuit specific print materials such as children's literature, biographies, history, and other non-fiction materials available now than in the past and such materials are used in almost all courses. Artifacts, such as photos, not only enrich student learning but also bring an Inuit presence to the program.

The IBED students also create products of their own learning that can, in turn, be used as learning resources. In a course on teaching in Indigenous and northern communities, the instructor uses an arts-based approach for students to explore Inuit values. These cultural values are available in the *National Strategy on Inuit Education* and include such things as: maintaining harmony, working for the common good, and decision-making by consensus (p. 72). In one activity students create an Inuit values wall hanging, on which each value is visually represented using appliqué with wool cloth. In a course on children's literature, students co-author a children's book focusing on these values. The book is composed of individual stories related to each value and is complemented by photographs of the appliqué. The book demonstrates how the products of student learning can also become Inuit-specific teaching resources. Moore was the course instructor during the creation of both the wall hanging and the book. In reflecting on the discussions, she facilitated during these activities, she concluded these conversations were an opportunity for students to critically reflect on several key learnings: how Inuit values can inform their pedagogy; the importance of curriculum that reflects these values, and; the ways in which cultural learning can be interwoven with curriculum outcomes. The IBED students passionately seek Inuit relevant teaching resources and collaboratively build their professional resource collections.

#### **Culturally Responsive Pedagogy**

Who the IBED students are as learners and what they bring to the program is fundamentally important in being a culturally responsive teacher educator. Students make meaning of their teacher education learning experiences through their cultural schemata (Battiste, 2002). Therefore, teacher educators must approach their teaching, first and foremost, with the cultural background of their students in mind. As expressed by a participant in a study on

Indigenous presence in post-secondary institutions, "it's not that I really engage with Indigenous knowledge, it's who I am when I engage" (Kovach, et al, p. 37).

Recognizing and responding to how Inuit students engage with their learning is at the foundation of culturally responsive pedagogy. Instructors are encouraged to take a student-centered approach to teaching and learning and respectfully acknowledge the wealth of knowledge and lived experience that students themselves bring to the learning. Some of the teacher educators make a practice of asking students how a particular concept or technique resonates with their own experiences and knowledge. These are opportunities for students to bring an Inuit understanding to the teaching and for instructors to learn from the students. The result is relationships of reciprocity where the role of teacher and the role of learner change as an activity progresses.

Instructors also provide opportunities for students to be independent learners and then to share what they learn with one another. In one course, rather than teaching about the history of education in Labrador, the instructor creates a framework for research projects within which students present their findings first as independent learners and then as teachers.

In another course, while learning the education history of the local region students became conscious of the residential school system in Labrador and its continuing legacy. They developed insights into why some former residential school students do not talk about their schooling experiences and they began to recognize the intergenerational impacts of residential education that are still evident. This learning had an emotional impact on the students, so they requested a healing circle that was organized and facilitated by two staff members from the National Healing Foundation. Their deeper understanding of the history of education in Labrador was an opportunity for students to consider the role of formal education in colonization, the place of schooling in promoting healthy Indigenous communities, and the opportunities for teachers to transform education. This is one example of the way in which the IBED program exemplifies the assertion of the Association of Canadian Deans of Education (2010, p. 2) that, "[t]he time is right for a concerted and cooperative effort that creates transformational education by rejecting the 'status quo,' moving beyond 'closing the gap' discourse, and contributing to the well-being of Indigenous peoples and their communities."

## **Concluding Thoughts**

The design, organization and delivery of a community-based, Indigenous teacher education degree program is not for the faint of heart. Despite decades of experimentation in designing teacher education programs for Indigenous learners, there appears to be no definitive approach or template that has been categorically applied by faculties of education in Canada. Both from a program design/delivery perspective and a curriculum perspective, ideas about community-based teacher education are still evolving and there are stark differences among

community-based Indigenous teacher education programs in Canada (e.g., Queens University, University of Winnipeg, University of Ottawa or the University of Alberta). This is not surprising. Whitinui, Rodriguez de France and McIvor (2018) observe that Indigenous teacher education programming is complex in nature – characterized by multiple realities, methods and pathways. This diversity of approach necessitates different (greater) levels of communication, collaboration, and cooperation. Our experience suggests that the establishment and delivery of a site-based Indigenous education program like the IBED is a highly collaborative process, involving substantial negotiation with academic and administrative units within the university, external partners, educational authorities, learners, instructors and other individuals and agencies on a litany of details. This work involves many moving parts and these variables seem to be heavily context-dependent, possibly contributing to this diversity of program designs.

In the introduction to this paper, we invoked Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) idea that in the telling and retelling of lived experience there is a reflective relationship of growing and changing. Our experiences as program/curriculum developers have been both instructive and insightful. This is important work; improving access to community-based, culturally relevant Indigenous teacher education programming is a step in the long path towards decolonization. In this section we present some of our reflections, observations and concluding thoughts in the hope that they may resonate with colleagues working in the field of Indigenous education, especially those involved in the design and delivery of teacher education programs.

#### *Pragmatic Considerations*

Community-based programs are vastly different from regular, campus-based offerings, where services and supports are readily available and spread over a significantly larger student population. Enrolment in specialized off-campus programs in northern regions is likely to be relatively low with few opportunities to find financial economies such as shared services. Consequently, such programs can be very costly to operate in comparison to campus-based programs. For example, in our particular context – in central Labrador – broadband Internet access is less reliable and more expensive. In addition, most program delivery structures, library resources and other necessary instructional supports must be brought to the site. In addition, instructors must be recruited well in advance and given time to adapt or augment their courses for the Indigenous context. The program must bear the costs of instructor travel and accommodations, and there are other incremental costs that are well beyond the cost of supporting conventional pre-service programs. In short, the establishment of such programs run counter to some of the generally accepted principles of higher education management, for example, cost effectiveness and sustainability.

Majone (1989) makes the argument that policy change cannot be undertaken in a surgical or linear manner, where decisions about programing are slave to the strict comparative analysis

of costs and benefits. If we are to evoke positive educational change for Indigenous communities, we believe that university leaders must see program delivery through a different lens and become situated as passionate and persistent advocates. Programs like the IBED require that we accept a different set of program delivery mechanisms, potentially with different governance processes and new partnerships, and that these arrangements be nourished so they become resilient enough to withstand program delivery challenges. We argue that advocates for community-based programs must also be creative in convincing others – senior decision makers, other education partners, Indigenous leaders and faculty communities – to consider alternative models for teacher education characterized by flexible and accessible program options.

### *Learner Supports*

The pool of potential teacher candidates in Memorial's IBED program is also different than is typical of a regular university setting. The pre-service teacher candidates are older than most first-degree students and, in some cases, need some re-orientation to university-level study, including customized pre-requisite programs of study. Students also come with greater family responsibilities; more than half of the students are parents of school-aged children, who made the courageous decision to relocate their families away from their homes in more remote coastal communities and away from their extended family supports. These special conditions bear on the kinds of cultural and academic supports we believe to be prudent and necessary in designing and delivering site-based Indigenous teacher education.

In our program design we employ both an on-site program coordinator (who deals primarily with academic and administrative management) and a cultural consultant/counsellor whose job is to liaise with students and instructors on issues related to the fit between course content and delivery and the cultural and social context of Nunatsiavut students. Students also have access to an English language skills tutor, teaching assistants/tutors and, given their family responsibilities, extended library hours during the evenings and on weekends. In addition to academic programming, students in the IBED participate in on-campus IBED orientation meetings and experiences including orientation and preparatory sessions at the beginning of each semester and in advance of the early internship and the extended internship. Students also participate in seminars on a range of education topics including teacher professionalism, stress management, substitute teaching, emergency procedures, and other topics.

Finally, and importantly, there is a full-time faculty member-in-residence throughout the program while students are in attendance (Moore). In addition to teaching in the program she is a trusted student mentor and community liaison. In addition, primary administrative responsibility for the program is through an associate dean (Galway) with enough authority within the university structure to head off administrative snags and to liaise with instructors to

address academic issues as soon as they come to light. This level of program support might be considered to be relatively high, perhaps even unwarranted; however, on reflection and given its unique context, we believe that support mechanisms, such as the ones we have articulated above, to be instrumental to the success of programs such as the IBED.

### *Program Philosophy*

The IBED's philosophical underpinning of two-eyed seeing promotes the respectful co-existence of both Indigenous and Euro-Canadian knowledge systems in education. This necessitates that teacher educators working in the IBED find opportunities to interweave Inuit knowledge and values in their courses. However, the inexperience of some instructors in Indigenous teacher education, the need for them to use culturally relevant curriculum through the infusion of Inuit culture into their courses, and the importance of using culturally responsive pedagogy were all challenges to the principles of the program's design, especially in a higher education context, where issues of academic freedom come into play. Four primary strategies to Indigenize the program, which supported instructors to integrate Inuit worldview were: Inuktitut language training, land as both a place and a central focus of learning, the use of Inuit relevant teaching resources, and the involvement of Elders, local knowledge holders and traditional teachers in the teacher training. The culturally responsive pedagogy of the program recognizes that Inuit students bring a cultural lens to their learning experiences and embraces reciprocal teaching and learning relationships where instructors and students learn from one another.

### *Indigenous Teacher Education as a Response to Calls for Action*

The IBED program has been successful in numerous ways. First, the degree is a direct response to a recommendation from Memorial University's Presidential Task Force on Aboriginal Initiatives that being the establishment of a community-based teacher education program for Labrador's Indigenous peoples. The program reflects the exemplary collaboration that can exist between a university and an Indigenous government in establishing a program to prepare teachers for an Indigenous governed education system. Second, the IBED parallels Memorial University's primary/ elementary Bachelor of Education degree program, with the same course requirements and academic standards. The program gives graduates the same quality of professional knowledge and skills as for non-Indigenous pre-service teachers. Third, the IBED program is aligned with priorities of the National Inuit Education Strategy; it integrates Inuit knowledge to make the curriculum culturally relevant for the Inuit pre-service teachers, and the culturally responsive teaching approaches are modelled for students. Finally, the greatest success of the program will be in the graduation of the teacher candidates in the spring of 2019.

As developers of an Indigenous teacher education program, our focus on culturally relevant curriculum and culturally responsive pedagogy also corresponds with the vision, principles, and goals of the *Accord on Indigenous Education* (Association of Canadian Deans of Education, 2010). And the program responds to the *Calls to Action* (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015) that emphasize educating teachers “on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms” (p. 7). The program design, philosophical underpinnings, and pedagogical approach represent one example of a university and Indigenous government working collaboratively to develop Indigenous teacher education.

We close with a quote from *Trickster Chases the Tale of Education* regarding the various ways of interweaving Indigenous and Euro-Canadian worldviews in education:

*These are respectful, balanced views of knowledge that are based in the spirit of sharing the strengths of these two worldviews and create a place of balance and good and right relations between all people involved in the work of education.*

(Moore, 2017, p.115)

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## Appendix

Table 1: Inuit Bachelor of Education Program Plan

<b>Semester</b>	<b>Year One</b>	<b>Year Two</b>	<b>Year Three</b>	<b>Year Four</b>	<b>Year Five</b>
<b>Fall</b>	Arts 1500	Education 2040	Education 3312	Education 2022 –	Extended
	English 1080	(Communications)	(Language Arts	(Teaching of Inuktitut)	Teaching
	Math 1050	Education 2202 (Educ.	Methods I)	Education 3484	Internship
	Science 1150	Northern	Education 3940	(Comp/ Learning	(12 weeks)
	Math Skills	Communities).	(Mathematics	Resources)	
	Enhancement (non-credit)	English 2390 (Modern	Methods)	Education 3322	
		English Structures)	Education 3952 –	(Children’s Lit.)	
		Folklore 1000	(Curric.Instruction.	Communications 2000	
		Inuktitut	Assessment II)	Inuktitut	
			Folklore 3920		
		(Folklore in			
		Education)			
		Inuktitut			
<b>Winter</b>	Math 1051	Education 3618 (Child	Education 3273	Education 2038	
	English 1101	Development)	(Science Methods)	(Aboriginal Art/Music)	
	Psychology 1000	Education 3951	Education 3543 –	Human Kin/Rec.2001	
	Science 1151	(Curric. Instruction,	(Language Arts	(Physical Education)	
	Math Skills	Assessment I)	Methods II)	Archaeology 1005	
	Enhancement (non-credit)	English 2160	Education 4240 –	(Aboriginal and	
		(North American	(Exceptional	Indigenous Studies)	
		Aboriginal Lit.)	Learner)	Anthropology 4070	
		Anthropology 2220	Archaeology 3290	(Aboriginal Self-	
		(Labrador Society and	(First Peoples)	Governance)	
	Culture)	Inuktitut	Inuktitut		
	Inuktitut				
<b>Spring/ Summer</b>	Psychology 1001	Teaching Internship	Education 2039	Education 4381	
	University 1010	(2 weeks)	(Aboriginal Land-	(Perspectives on	
	Inuktitut	Education 3619	Based Learning)	Schooling)	
		(Learning and	Education 4425	Law & Society 3014	
		Cognition)	(Education	Sociology 2100	
		Education 3962	Administration)	(Social Inequality)	
		(Social Studies	Linguistics 2025	History 2800	
		Methods)	(Inuktitut I)	(Indigenous People	
		Anthropology 3050	Linguistics 2026	and Colonialism)	
		(Ecology and Culture)	(Inuktitut II)	Inuktitut	
	Inuktitut	Inuktitut			
<b>Credit Hours</b>	30	36	36	36	15

Note: Year One is a pre-requisite year. Students were formally admitted to the program in Year Two.

Source: Memorial University Faculty of Education