

Pathways for Aboriginal Learners: Collaborating across Aboriginal Institutes, Colleges and Universities

Phase One Year End Report
2014/15



By

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a summary of the activities undertaken in the initial year of the “Pathways for Aboriginal Learners: Collaborating across Aboriginal Institutes, Colleges and Universities” project as well as next steps. Key deliverables, financial expenditures and pathway development are reported on.

Commencing in August 2014, “Pathways for Aboriginal Learners: Collaborating across Aboriginal Institutes, Colleges and Universities” is a two-year project funded by the Ontario Council of Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT). Through a tripartite partnership between The Centre for Policy in Aboriginal Learning (CPAL), Confederation College (main proponent), First Nations Technical Institute (FNTI) and Trent University (Trent), the project seeks to create distinct academic and student support pathways that are rooted in Indigenous knowledges, for Aboriginal Learners, making it the first Indigenous-centered transition Pathways model for Aboriginal transfer students in Ontario.

To date knowledge exchange and the creation of a memorandum of understanding between the three institutions has occurred. A review and evaluation of curriculum alignment, and the creation of a draft articulation agreement are also complete. Alongside these efforts, work to support learner’s transitions have begun, through a process of asset mapping and support and recruitment focused discussions with Aboriginal learners.

An analysis of the content of Indigenous Studies, Environmental and Social Work programs at Trent, Confederation, and FNTI confirmed the feasibility of creating distinct pathways in Indigenous Studies, with the need for additional exploratory work in the areas of Environmental Studies and Social Work. A first cohort of transfer students (a soft launch) from the Confederation College Aboriginal Community Advocacy program to the Trent University Indigenous Studies program will take place in September 2015, which will see students entering the third year of study.

A corollary of the exercise of mapping transferability within Indigenous programs, and between Indigenous and non-Indigenous programs is the identified need for a culturally-informed strategy of alignment. Preliminary efforts to align curriculum utilizing Confederation College’s “Aboriginal Learning Outcomes” as a companion framework to the Learning Outcomes approach is underway.