

# UBC Okanagan Campus Aboriginal Access Studies

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Aboriginal Forestry Applicants

UBC Okanagan campus Aboriginal Programs and Services

7/5/2011



## I. INFORMATION

1. **Name:** Aboriginal Access Studies (AAS)
2. **Unit Responsible:** Aboriginal Programs and Services (APS)
3. **Name, Title and Phone Number of the Contact Person:**

Johanna Sam  
Aboriginal Student Advisor, Aboriginal Programs and Services  
Phone: 250.807.8787  
Fax: 250.807.8460  
Email: Johanna.sam@ubc.ca

## II. Admission Process

The UBC – Vancouver campus' Aboriginal Forestry Application review is part of a UBC's overarching commitment in promoting Aboriginal diversity on campus. A key component of this commitment is the Aboriginal Admission Policy in addition to the Aboriginal Access Studies (AAS) program. The AAS is an Okanagan campus delivered program, which can assist Aboriginal students in accessing UBC degree programs at either campus.

The 2011/12 Aboriginal Forestry Applications have been reviewed individually. The candidates have been categorized into one of three options:

1. Regular Admit – meets program competitive GPA. The student will be admitted to the Vancouver campus.
2. Aboriginal Admission Policy – GPA between 67% - 80%; conditional admit – additional tutorial support required. The student will have the choice between Vancouver and Okanagan campus. If the student chooses the Okanagan campus, they will do one year on campus, register into transferable courses based on the UBC-V Forestry Transfer Guide, and participate in the support services provided to all AAS students. Then, the student can transfer into Vancouver campus to complete their degree program.
3. Aboriginal Access Studies – GPA falls below 67%; does not meet all the program's pre-requisites; and/or additional tutorial support required. Continuation as an AAS student is normally contingent upon maintaining a passing grade on all courses attempted. If the student passes his/her courses, s/he will be admitted into a regular degree program. Then, the student can transfer to the Vancouver campus to complete their desired degree within the Faculty of Forestry.

### III. Description

The AAS program will include student support infrastructure to promote student retention and success as a way of promoting innovative and effective programs on campus while at the same time being responsive to the institutional context. The AAS includes the following components:

1. *Student recruitment* - Students are recruited from the refused Forestry applicants and provided with the opportunity to enroll into the AAS program.

2. *Financial Support* - Financial barriers have been decreased with support from staff and third party sponsorship. The majority of AAS students receive third party sponsorship from their respective First Nation bands. For those students that do not receive funding from a third party sponsor, AAS also qualifies under provincial and federal student loans programs. Also, AAS students are encouraged to apply as Aboriginal Peer Support Network mentors which will allow them to be employed.

3. *Peer Support Network (PSN)* - Students will have access to peer mentors. Mentors help students find solutions to their problems, help them connect to other supports on campus if needed, listen to students talk about their classes, friends, family, their community, etc. The PSN offers cultural and community support directed at promoting diversity and empowering individual and community wellness on campus.

4. *Academic Preparation* - To assist students with academic preparation, the maximum number of classes that AAS students can enroll in is three courses per term. Tutorials have been built into their Biology 117 and English 114 courses for academic support. Additionally, English 114 provides an Aboriginal perspective, which assists students in learning the material. Biology 117 and Biology 122 will be accepted as meeting the first year biology requirements for the Faculty of Forestry program. The majority of students will likely enroll into: Biology 117; Biology 122; English 114; Sociology 111/121; Sustainability 100.

5. *Family/Personal Barriers* - To reduce family and personal barriers, AAS students are in a course cohort. This arrangement allows the students to become familiar with each other and create a family like relationship amongst themselves. Furthermore, due to the importance of sharing food, AAS students have meals together throughout the semesters.

6. *Academic Workshop Sessions* - Students are encouraged to participate in academic workshops such as, Note Taking, Exam Writing, Study Tips, and other related sessions.

7. *Cultural Support* - Workshops honouring Aboriginal traditions, like tobacco giving or singing, also bring students together in positive way. An annual cultural tour, open to Aboriginal and

international students, helps visitors and locals appreciate the role of the Okanagan Nation in the valley.

Continuation as an AAS student is normally contingent upon maintaining a passing grade on all courses attempted. AAS is modeled to reflect the medicine wheel teachings and its four key themes: social, intellectual, physical and spiritual. As such, a number of support activities have been established to reduce and/or remove barriers that AAS students would encounter and included: financial, motivational, academic preparation, family and cultural. By removing these barriers and instituting courses with an Aboriginal perspective, and providing other support services like tutorials or peer mentors and social activities, the goal of AAS is to increase Aboriginal student participation and success at UBC Okanagan