

UBC Indigenous Undergraduate

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2027



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Okanagan Campus | Syilx Okanagan Nation Territory



UBC Indigenous Student
Recruitment & Advising

Welcome to UBC Okanagan

STORY POLES

sn̓ilíʔtn, a permanent installation by Syilx artist Les Louis and co-funded by the ONA and UBC, was erected in September of 2016 in the central courtyard on campus to commemorate the 10 year anniversary of UBC Okanagan and the UBC Centennial. Campus location: Arts Commons

All individuals who appear in this publication are Indigenous students, faculty, staff, and alumni from the UBC community. All information is correct at time of publishing. Please visit you.ubc.ca for the latest information and updates.

Introduction

UBC Okanagan is a close-knit campus where community connection and hands-on learning are part of everyday student life.

UBC Okanagan is situated on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Syilx Okanagan Nation. Since its founding in 2005, UBC Okanagan and the Okanagan Nation have worked together to enhance education and support Okanagan Indigenous culture, history, language, philosophy, and knowledge.

About the graphic identity

Artists Diamond Point, a Musqueam artist, and Taylor Baptiste, a Syilx artist, were selected to collaborate to create an icon concept that represents both the Musqueam and Syilx Okanagan Nations where the UBC campuses are located.

The goal of the icon and visual identity is to create a feeling of warmth, belonging, and support for Indigenous students, staff members, and parents.





Why choose UBC Okanagan

UBC Okanagan offers a smaller campus experience rooted in connection, community, and hands-on learning. Located in Kelowna and surrounded by mountains, lakes, and grasslands, the campus brings students together in an environment where support, relationships, and access to nature are part of everyday life.

Students who choose UBC Okanagan often value:

- A close-knit campus community with smaller class sizes
- A beautiful setting surrounded by mountains, grasslands, and nearby lakes
- Opportunities for hands-on learning and experiential education
- A robust Indigenous student community, supported by Indigenous Programs & Services
- Student services that support all aspects of student life

The campus is located just 20 minutes from downtown Kelowna, a welcoming community with many opportunities for outdoor adventures and urban experiences.

Explore more
you.ubc.ca/okanagan

Belonging

“ [At UBC] you will always have someone to lean on for guidance and there are a plethora of mental health initiatives for students. For those moving away from home it can be difficult at first, but creating a community early on truly does help with home sickness and the Indigenous Centre established that community and sense of belonging for me.”

RILEY B. H.
Horse Lake First Nation
Bachelor of Science in Nursing



Campus community

UBC Okanagan is designed as a compact, walkable campus where key spaces are only a few minutes apart:

UBC Okanagan courtyard

The central part of campus located between classrooms, labs, and study spaces where most lectures and coursework take place.

Indigenous Centre

The Indigenous Centre at UBC Okanagan is a home away from home that includes a kitchen, study and social space, and regular events and programming.

Residence neighbourhoods

On-campus housing communities where many first-year students live.

Recreation & athletics building

Gym facilities, athletic fields, intramural sports, and spaces for recreation and wellness.

University Centre

Dining, student services offices, UBC Students' Union Okanagan (SUO), and gathering spaces where students meet between classes.

“ I am very community oriented and UBCO has a lot of community spaces, specifically Indigenous Programs and Services (IPS), that offer support, mentorship, employment, and community connections, which was essential in ensuring my academic and lifestyle success.”

MEADOW A. S.

Upper Similkameen Indian Band, Syilx Okanagan Nation
BA, Indigenous Studies ('26),
MA, Interdisciplinary Studies in Indigenous Knowledges





Contact us

Connect with one of our Indigenous Recruiter Advisors for any questions you may have – we’re here to help:

indigenous.recruitment@ubc.ca



Annelie Wells
Red River Métis, MNBC
Recruiter Admissions Advisor,
Indigenous Students



Chloe Badr
Red River Métis, MMF
Recruiter Advisor,
Indigenous Students



Devin Owpaluk
Inuk, ᓴᓕᓐ/Salliᓴ
Recruiter-Advisor,
Indigenous Students



Kelsi Desjarlais
Cree, Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation
Community Liaison Manager,
Indigenous Students

At UBC, we use the term “Indigenous” to refer inclusively to status and non-status First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples of Canada, in accordance with the BC Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA). “Aboriginal” also appears in the names of existing UBC policies or programs, many of which are in the process of being changed to “Indigenous.”

Pathways to UBC Okanagan

UBC Okanagan’s community includes Indigenous students from across Canada who have arrived here in a variety of ways. Most Indigenous students are admitted based on their competitive average. However, UBC offers a number of pathways to a post-secondary degree.

Aboriginal Admission Policy

If you have satisfied UBC’s general admission and degree-specific requirements but have not met the competitive average for your degree of choice, UBC will consider your academic history, educational goals, and other achievements to find the best admission pathway for you.

Aboriginal Access Studies Program

This full-time entrance program prepares and supports students in strengthening academic readiness while becoming familiar with university learning expectations. By combining university-level academic courses with non-academic activities in a supportive university setting, Indigenous learners prepare for degrees on UBC’s Okanagan campus. Students who complete the requirements are considered for admission into their intended degree program.

Learn more about pathways to UBC for Indigenous students
you.ubc.ca/indigenous-admissions

“ In the Aboriginal Access Studies Program, I was in cohort classes with other students, thus providing space for us to establish relationships with each other...I feel like the program gave me time to get oriented with university life while I was still figuring out what I wanted to do. ”

MEADOW A. S.
Upper Similkameen Indian Band, Syilx Okanagan Nation
BA, Indigenous Studies (‘26),
MA, Interdisciplinary Studies in Indigenous Knowledges

10,523 undergraduate students from 99 countries

755 Indigenous students





Your campus resources, spaces, and network

Indigenous Programs and Services (IPS)

Through culturally grounded academic, personal, and wellness services, IPS supports Indigenous students as they navigate university life, build connections, and thrive throughout their time at UBC.

Services include:

- Holistic advising and academic planning supports
- Weekly workshops on academic, health, wellbeing, and career topics
- A strong team of Indigenous peer mentors and tutors
- Social and cultural events throughout the year

Indigenous Centre

The Indigenous Centre is a welcoming gathering space where students study, socialize, and receive academic support from Indigenous peer mentors and tutors. Peer mentors are upper-year students who can help you navigate your first year with confidence. This space creates opportunities for connection through activities, events, and shared learning that celebrate Indigenous knowledge, culture, traditions, and community.

Learn more about Indigenous Programs and Services

students.ok.ubc.ca/indigenous-students/



“
Beading nights at the Indigenous Centre is such good medicine. The endless laughter, the homemade snacks, and being surrounded by other Indigenous students is good for the soul and in my experience, has powered me through midterms and finals season “

BRIANNA Y,
English River First Nation
BA, Political Science ('26)

Aspirations

“My UBC experience extended far beyond academics and because of all the supports that UBC has to offer for Indigenous students, I not only discovered my own aspirations, but I also found lifelong community and endless opportunity. You could make UBC uniquely yours!”

BRIANNA Y.
English River First Nation
BA, Political Science ('26)

Academics

Indigenous academic programs

UBC Okanagan continues to expand Indigenous-focused academic offerings across faculties, spanning many disciplines across Health Sciences, Sustainability, Language Revitalization, and more.

INDIGENOUS STUDIES

At UBC Okanagan, you can complete a Bachelor of Arts (BA) with a major or a minor in Indigenous Studies. Indigenous Studies provides perspectives of Indigenous peoples from the Okanagan, Canada, and world communities, and introduces you to methodology and research applications.

NURSING

Earn a Bachelor of Nursing through the direct-entry Nursing program on UBC's Okanagan campus. The curriculum incorporates Indigenous-specific modules developed with community Elders and is co-taught with Indigenous knowledge-keepers from the local community.

INTERIOR SALISH LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

Language is deeply intertwined in Indigenous communities' culture. Interior Salish language Bachelor's degrees are an innovative collaboration between communities, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT), En'owkin Centre, and UBC Okanagan to sustain and revitalize language traditions, restore language competence, and protect the knowledge of our communities. Through this partnership, students complete two years of study in community through NVIT and then transfer to UBC Okanagan to finish a Bachelor of Language Fluency in Nsyilxcn, N̓e:kepmx, St'át'imc, or Secwépemc.



I am grateful to all the professors and mentors that supported and encouraged my gifts and dreams in my undergrad. Because of them I was able to pursue many opportunities in research and mentorship as well as career and academic development."

MEADOW A. S.,
Upper Similkameen Indian
Band, Syilx Okanagan Nation BA,
Indigenous Studies ('26), MA,
Interdisciplinary Studies
in Indigenous Knowledges



Faculty supports

Professors and advisors work closely with students to support academic success and planning.

Indigenous student advising

Indigenous Student Advisors can help you navigate your academic journey throughout your time as a student, from admission to graduation. Through a holistic advising approach, advisors support students with course registration, degree planning, and other academic, cultural, social, and financial considerations.

Indigenous peer tutors

Whether you are looking to practice math equations or brainstorm a research essay outline, your peers are here to help.



Shape your experience

Student clubs

Join clubs to build friendships, grow leadership skills, and strengthen cultural connections while supporting and engaging with like-minded community members on the Okanagan campus.

Varsity

With 209 national championship titles under our belt, UBC is a powerful contender in university athletics. Join the UBC Heat and you could be competing internationally with thousands of fans cheering you on.

WOMEN'S AND MEN'S SPORTS

- Basketball
- Cross Country/ Track
- Golf
- Soccer
- Volleyball

COMPETITIVE SPORT CLUBS

- Men's Rugby
- Women's Softball



Athletics and recreation

Stay active through intramurals, fitness classes, and outdoor recreation.

During the academic year, Indigenous Programs and Services (IPS) has a weekly timeslot in the gym for drop-in basketball, pickleball, and more. The Indigenous Peer Mentor team also organizes free intramural teams for various sports, and studio space for Pow Wow Dancing.

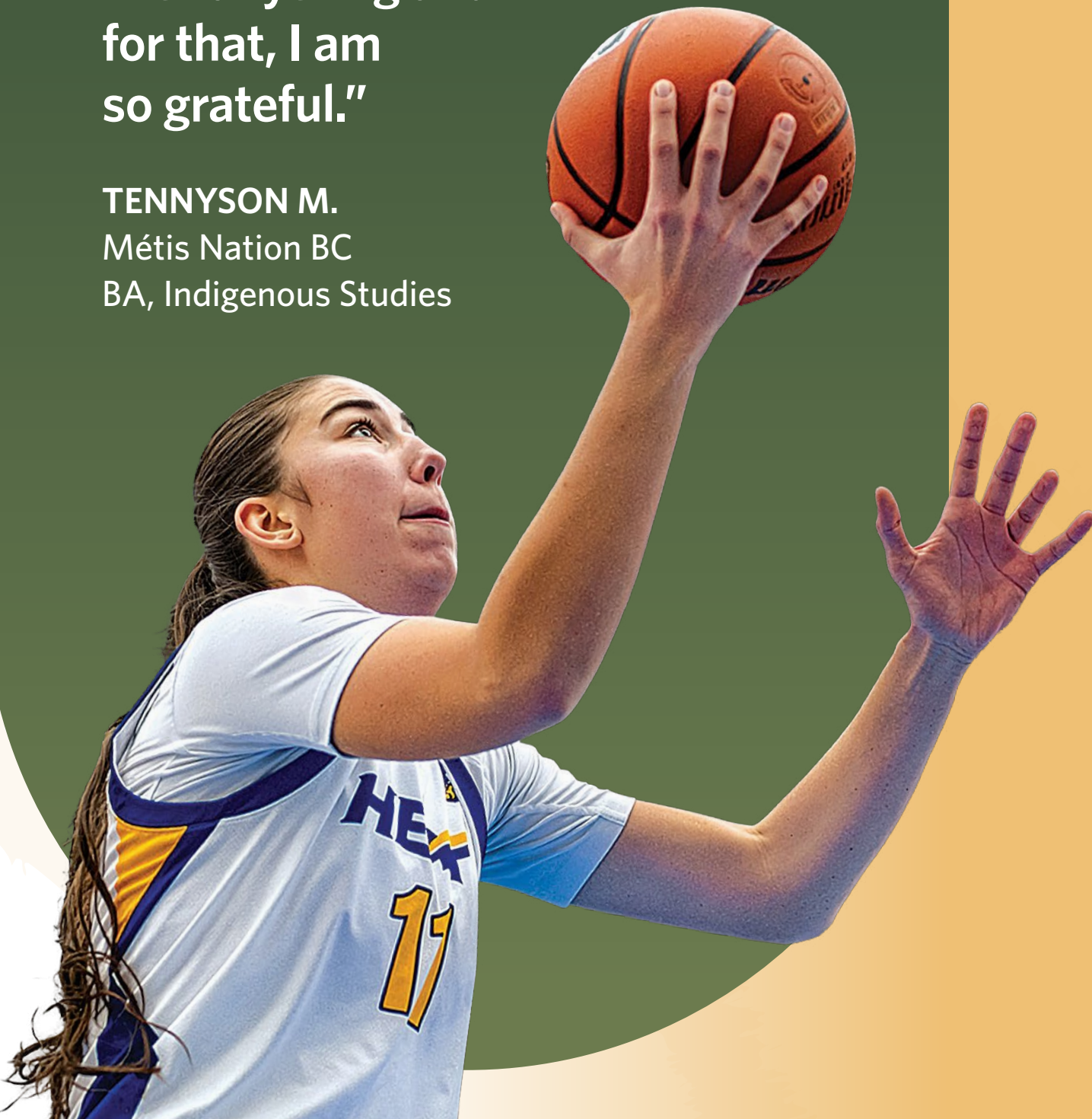
The gymnasium is a great place to take a fitness class, get a workout in, or catch a UBCO Heat game to cheer on our varsity athletes.

Explore More
you.ubc.ca/ubc-life/getting-involved/clubs/



Being a part of athletics at UBCO has impacted me in every possible way. I met friends for life playing basketball. My teammates are my biggest source of support and have become a second family to me helping me through anything. It was not always easy but the staff at UBCO have been willing to help and support me and all the other athletes with anything and for that, I am so grateful."

TENNYSON M.
Métis Nation BC
BA, Indigenous Studies





Indigenous research mentorship

This program provides opportunities for Indigenous undergraduate students across all degrees to gain research experience as you learn from a dedicated faculty member or postdoctoral research fellow.

Go Global

Go Global is a post-secondary academic exchange program. This program allows students to take courses at specific partner institutions around the world. Courses completed on exchange are counted towards your degree requirements at UBC.

The UBC-Monash University Indigenous Leaders program offers students the opportunity to immerse themselves in rich cultural and community experiences in Australia in a shared learning environment to explore their own leadership and reflect on their goals and aspirations. The program creates cross-cultural connections and celebrates Indigenous culture on a global scale.

Student employment

During your studies, there are numerous on-campus student employment opportunities which offer meaningful leadership experience and the opportunity to gain relevant skills towards your future career goals.

Each year, Indigenous Programs and Services offers paid opportunities such as Indigenous Peer Mentor, Peer Tutor, and Summer Camp Leader roles. Students can also get involved in employment opportunities across other departments including roles like Research Assistants, Campus Tour Ambassadors, and so much more!

Co-op

Through Co-op, students gain practical workplace experience, build professional connections, and develop the confidence and skills needed to launch your career.

“

If you go into [your program] with the drive and passion to do your best, you will be miles ahead of the game. Also do plenty of research, and, if possible, speak to people who have been through the program and you will get plenty of insight.”



NOAH K.
Stellat'en
First Nations
BASC,
Civil Engineering

What happens from here

Your journey to UBC can begin whenever you're ready.

Next steps:

- Explore programs
- Connect with an Indigenous recruiter
- Book a campus tour
- Start your application

Contact us:

you.ubc.ca/applying-ubc/indigenous-admissions

Where to live

Priority access

Indigenous students are eligible for priority housing consideration.

How to secure a spot in residence

Apply early and indicate your interest in residence when completing your application. Indigenous advisors can help guide you through the process.

Off-campus living

Many upper-year students choose to live in nearby neighbourhoods. UBC provides tools and resources to help you find safe, affordable housing.

Explore More

okanagan.housing.ubc.ca

After you've been admitted:

DESTINATION UBC

Destination UBC has dedicated programming for you to connect with other Indigenous students, meet your Indigenous Student Advisor and help prepare you for university life.

Alumni

Graduation ceremony

UBC Okanagan's annual Indigenous Graduation Celebration honours Indigenous graduates during wwa meaningful celebration that recognizes academic achievement.

Career outcomes

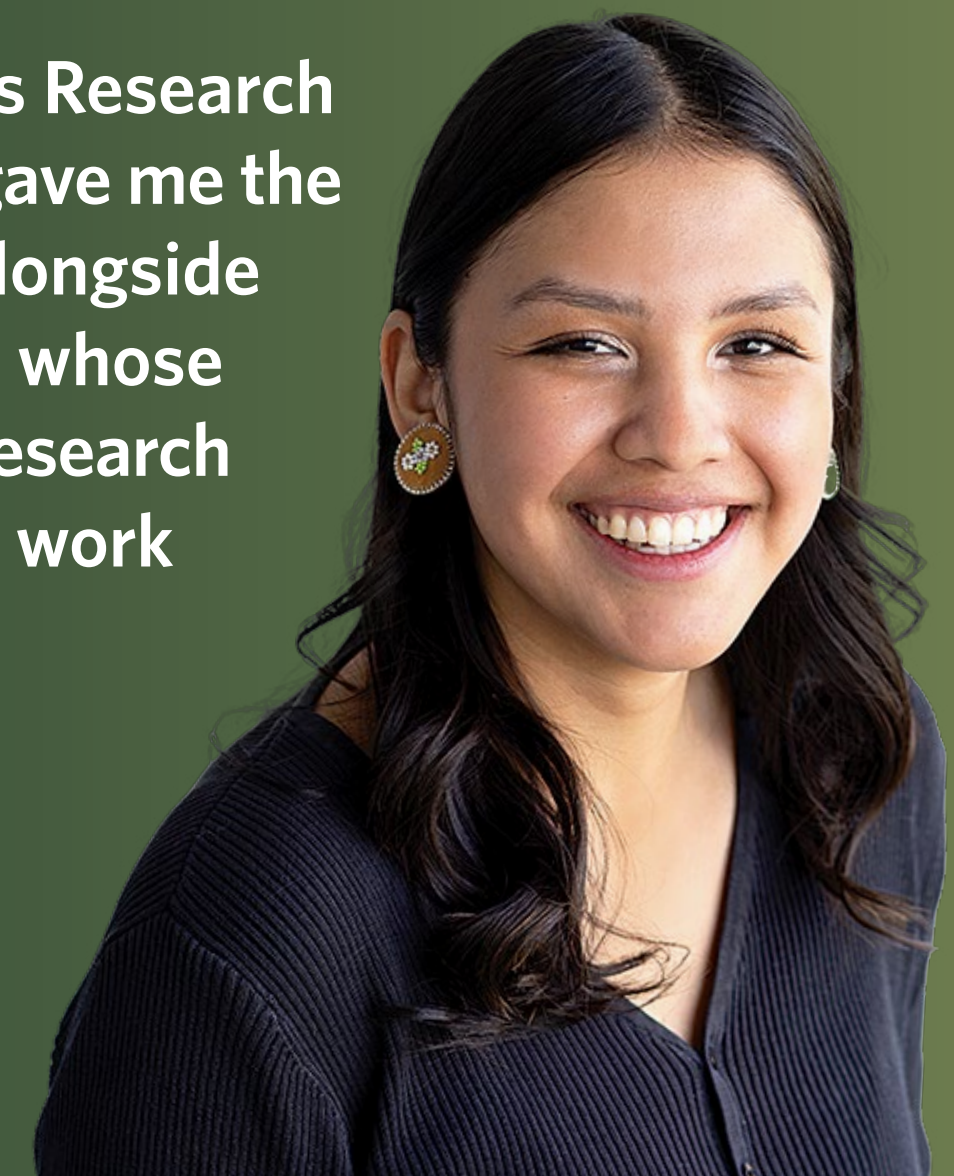
UBC's reputation for excellence opens doors for our students and alumni, creating a workforce that makes an impact across communities.



For me, the Indigenous Research Mentorship program gave me the opportunity to work alongside a wonderful professor whose community-engaged research greatly resembled the work I hope to do one day."

BRIANNA Y.

English River First Nation
BA, Political Science ('26)



Applying to UBC

- 1 Choose your degree and campus**
When you complete your application, you may select up to two choices (first and second choice). For each choice, you will choose a degree and a campus. The degrees you choose can be in different faculties and on different campuses.
- 2 Review the requirements**
Make sure you meet UBC's general admission requirements and degree-specific requirements.
- 3 Complete your application and pay the fee**
Give yourself plenty of time to complete the personal profile section. It plays an important role in our admission and awards decisions. If finances are a barrier to submitting your application, contact us to discuss your options.
- 4 Apply for housing**
Applying as an Indigenous student gives you priority access to housing. Review timelines carefully when submitting your application.

you.ubc.ca/applying-ubc/how-to-apply

Important dates

DEC. 1ST

Application deadline to be eligible for major **entrance awards**.

JAN. 15TH

Final application deadline.

MAY 1ST

Deadline to submit your **housing application** for **housing guarantee**.

Questions about the application process?
indigenous.recruitment@ubc.ca

Funding your education

UBC is committed to helping Indigenous students access financial support through:

- Entrance awards
- Needs-based funding
- Band sponsorship coordination
- Emergency funding supports
- Financial advising and support for planning, budgeting, and loan applications

Online cost estimator
you.ubc.ca/financial-planning/cost

Learn more
students.ubc.ca/finances/financial-support-options/financial-support-indigenous/

Scholarships and awards

Applying early and completing your awards profile increases your opportunities.

Entrance awards

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students at UBC are eligible for dedicated awards for Indigenous students and general entrance scholarship funding totalling over \$3.2 million.

UBC CENTENNIAL SCHOLARS ENTRANCE AWARDS

UBC Centennial Scholars Entrance Awards assist students who are transitioning to UBC from secondary school or another post-secondary institution, and demonstrate financial need. A separate award application is required. Your award application is due by December 1 to be considered.

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS AWARDS

UBC has over \$400,000 in Presidential Scholars Awards for Indigenous secondary school students across both campuses, including renewable and one-time scholarships. Your UBC application is due by December 1 to be considered.

UBC Indigenous Awards Program

UBC's Indigenous Awards Program includes bursaries, scholarships, and awards and is open to Canadian Indigenous students across years of study and faculties. The value, criteria, and deadlines vary by award and campus.

Indigenous awards
you.ubc.ca/indigenous-awards

All scholarships and awards
you.ubc.ca/canadian-awards

//

I was scared to go to university because I had no experience with it, but so much good has come from facing my fears, and nothing I have accomplished or experienced so far would have been possible unless I applied. I find it very empowering to study in my Nation’s territory because my family is never far away, and our land and the water are always supportive. “

MEADOW A. S.
Upper Similkameen
Indian Band, Syilx
Okanagan Nation
BA, Indigenous
Studies ('26),
MA, Interdisciplinary
Studies in Indigenous
Knowledges

Budgeting for first year

\$6,200+

TUITION

depending on your area of study



\$16,000+

LIVING COSTS

including rent or on-campus housing, utilities, cell phone, laptop, meals, health insurance, personal care, etc.



\$3,580+

OTHER EDUCATIONAL COSTS

including books, supplies, student fees, etc.



FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

including scholarships, awards, bursaries, student loans, sponsorship funding, and family and community support

* All figures are estimated in Canadian dollars and based on a full first-year course load in the 2026/27 academic year. Living costs cover an eight-month period and are based on a typical student’s experience in residence. Goods and services are subject to inflation. Tuition fees are reviewed annually by the Board of Governors, in consultation with students. Most UBC bachelor’s degrees take four years of full-time study to complete, and some programs have different tuition rates after first year.

//

UBC was my first choice for university. I couldn’t imagine going anywhere else for my undergrad.”

KYLIE M.
Ojibwe
BA, Sociology



Programs

Browse all of our undergraduate programs using the online search tool.

Explore Programs
you.ubc.ca/programs