



“WE ARE BUILDING A CRITICAL VOICE TOGETHER”

THE SECOND NUNAVUT MASTER OF EDUCATION PROGRAM 2010 – 2013

A final research report presented to the
Department of Education, Government of Nunavut

Kerri Wheatley, Research Manager
Editors: Shelley Tulloch, Adjunct Professor & Fiona Walton, Associate Professor

Faculty of Education, University of Prince Edward Island:
Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, 2015

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For more information about this program, please contact:

Dr. Fiona Walton,

Faculty of Education, UPEI.

Email: fwalton@upei.ca



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Building Nunavut Together
Nunavut liuqatigiingniq
Bâtir le Nunavut ensemble


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WORDS FROM A GRADUATE

"I have an important role to play in helping to shape the future of Nunavut's education system [...] We hope to teach the students of Nunavut with an Inuit perspective and worldview. I used to think that I was just a minor, minuscule speck in a major operation which is the education system in Nunavut but now I realize that every role no matter how big or how small has an effect on the whole. Therefore, I need to push myself a little further to 'be the change I want to see in the world.'"



October 2010. Class photo with guest John Amagoalik

November 2012. Class photo with guests Mary Ann Tattuinee & Louis Angalik



Table of Contents

Executive Summaries	xi
Part 1- Overview of Program and Evaluation	1
Welcome.....	2
Program Documentation and Evaluation	4
Program Overview.....	10
Part 2- Program Outcomes.....	18
Academic Outcomes.....	19
Non-Academic Outcomes.....	34
Part 3- Success Factors and Challenges.....	43
Introduction to Success Factors.....	44
Key Success Factors I – <i>Piliriqatigiinni</i> & <i>Inuuqatigiitsiarniq</i> (Partnership, Relationship, and Respect)	45
Key Success Factors II – Decolonizing Approach	61
Key Success Factors III - Importance of Place	73
Key Success Factors IV - <i>Parnangniq</i> & <i>Aapiliqtailiniq</i> (Preparation, Hard Work, and Perseverance)	85
Ongoing Challenges	94
Part 4- Key Pieces of Advice	103
Lessons Learned	104
Conclusion	108
Postlogue – Student Gratitude.....	110
References	112
List of Acronyms and Abbreviations.....	114
Appendices.....	115

Detailed Table of Contents

List of Figures.....	vii
List of Appendices.....	viii
ᐃᐅᑕ ᑕᓯᐱᑕ ᐅᑖᑲᑲᑭᑭᑕ ᐃᐃᑲᑭᑭᑕ ᓴᓴᑕᓴᑕᓴᑕ.....	xi
Executive Summary - English.....	xiii
Part 1- Overview of Program and Evaluation.....	1
Welcome	2
Program Background	2
Program Vision, Goals, and Objectives	3
Learning From the 2006-2009 Pilot Applied in the 2010-2013 Program.....	4
Program Documentation and Evaluation.....	4
Rationale for Research.....	4
Research Objectives.....	4
Research and Evaluation Manager.....	5
Permissions for Research	5
Data Collection.....	5
Student interviews	6
Surveys	7
Student Opinion of Teaching Surveys (SOTS)	8
Student Advisory Committee.....	8
Stakeholder Conversations – Instructors, Administrators, and Partners.....	8
Participant observation.....	8
Document Analysis.....	9
Quantity of Data.....	9
Analysis of Data	9
Limitations of Research	10
Program Overview	10
Partners and Organizational Team.....	10
Participants.....	10
Instructors.....	11
Delivery Methods and Course Locations.....	12
Format and Timeline	13
Content	15
Instructional Materials	15
Technologies and Learning	16
Activities	17
Languages of Instruction	17
Student Evaluation Methods	17
Accreditation	18
Part 2- Program Outcomes	19
Academic Outomes	20
Critical Thinking	20
Transformative Knowledge.....	23
Decolonization of education.....	23
Activating prior knowledge.....	25
<i>Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit</i>	26

Advanced Literacies	27
Accessing and processing knowledge	28
Willingness to communicate	28
Improving written English	29
Writing and speaking for public audiences	31
Research Capacity	32
Non-Academic Outcomes	35
Healing	36
Reclaiming Culture and Identity	37
Confidence	37
Community Leadership	40
Part 3- Success Factors and Challenges	43
Introduction to Success Factors	44
Key Success Factors I – Piliriatigiinniq & Inuuqatigiitsiarniq (Partnership, Relationship, And Respect)	45
Partnership	46
Shared intellectual direction	46
Funding	47
Co-teaching with Inuit Instructors	48
Effective teaching	48
Mentoring instructors	49
Negotiating Teaching roles	50
Caring and Knowledgeable Instructors	51
Cohort-Based Learning	53
Student Support	54
Family support	54
Cohort support	54
Instructional support	55
Balancing initiative and support	58
Support as a key element in retention of students	59
Key Success Factors II – Decolonizing Approach	61
Culturally Relevant Program	62
Inuit Elders	63
Students as Teachers	64
Creating a Safe Space through an Inuit-only Cohort	65
Inunnguiniq – Reaching the Whole Person through Counselling and Wellness	68
Key Success Factors III - Importance of Place	73
Nunavut-Based Program	74
Face-to-Face Learning	75
University campus courses	77
Courses in Iqaluit and Rankin Inlet, Nunavut	78
Distance Education	80
Teaching technologies	81
Key Success Factors IV – Parnangniq & Aapiliqtailiniq (Preparation, Hard Work, and Perseverance)	85
Balancing Extensive Preparation with Flexibility	86
Annual planning meetings	86
Planning with Elders	88
Pre-course readings	88
Hard Work	90
Perseverance	92

Ongoing Challenges	94
Communication between Partners	94
Academic and Professional Writing by English L2 Students.....	95
Student Retention	99
Part 4- Key Pieces of Advice	103
Lessons Learned.....	104
Conclusion	108
Postlogue – Student Gratitude.....	110
References.....	112
List of Acronyms and Abbreviations	114
Appendices.....	115

List of Figures

Figure 1. Timeline of Data Collection.	6
Figure 2. Timeline of Course Delivery.....	14
Figure 3. Improved Critical Thinking Skills.	21
Figure 4. Understanding the Process of Decolonization.	25
Figure 5. Student Satisfaction with Incorporation of Inuit Worldview.	26
Figure 6. Successful Blending of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit with Western Knowledge.....	27
Figure 7. Increased Comfort in Self-Expression (Orally and in Writing).....	29
Figure 8. Improved Personal Voice	39
Figure 9. Increased Community Leadership	41
Figure 10. Funding as a Factor in Program Completion.....	47
Figure 11. Satisfaction with Involvement of Inuit Instructors.	49
Figure 12. Satisfaction with Level of Personal Support in Program.	56
Figure 13. Perceived Relevance of MEd Program to Students' Work and Life.....	63
Figure 14. Perceived Likelihood of Completing MEd within Mixed Inuit-Non-Inuit Cohort.....	68
Figure 15. Importance of a Nunavut-Based Program.....	74
Figure 16. Value of Face-to-Face Learning.....	75
Figure 17. Perceived Effectiveness of Distance Education Classes.	80
Figure 18. Perceived Level of Difficulty.....	90
Figure 19. Program Met Graduates' Expectations	91

List of Appendices

Appendix A–IQ Principles.....	116
Appendix B–Sharing the Flame Award.....	118
Appendix C–Ethics Approvals.....	119
Appendix D–Informed Consent Form	120
Appendix E–Student Autobiographies.....	122
Appendix F–Course Syllabi	126
Appendix G–Course Readings and Resources	168
Appendix H–Student Research Abstracts.....	170
Appendix I–Graduates' suggested priorities for future Nunavut MEd programs.....	177

Summary of Recommendations

<u>Recommendation 1.</u> Teach formal writing skills in Inuktitut, as well as in English. Create opportunities for students to complete assignments in Inuit languages, including more lengthy papers.	17
<u>Recommendation 2.</u> Focus on supporting students to produce high quality assignments, rather than a high quantity of assignments. Adding more course assignments does not increase academic rigor. Provide students with time to process information prior to submitting work for evaluation.	18
<u>Recommendation 3.</u> Provide an option for course-based MEd students to choose to complete a thesis when that is possible.	18
<u>Recommendation 4.</u> Acknowledge students' prior knowledge as a valuable contribution to the course. Build on students' knowledge by teaching new theories and terminology. Students gain knowledge by reinterpreting their personal experiences.	26
<u>Recommendation 5.</u> Highlight and name how students may already be practicing concepts or leadership skills that are being taught.	41
<u>Recommendation 6.</u> Identify, within program partnerships, which aspects of the program can be compromised and which aspects of the program are non-negotiable.	46
<u>Recommendation 7.</u> Advanced learning programs in Nunavut should continue using the co-teaching approach. Hiring criteria for instructors should include instructors' willingness to team teach and work collaboratively.	51
<u>Recommendation 8.</u> Programs offered in Nunavut should continue to blend Inuit culture and knowledge with Western knowledge.	51
<u>Recommendation 9.</u> Co-teaching teams should include Inuit knowledgeable about Inuit language and culture, as well as experienced university-based professors.	51
<u>Recommendation 10.</u> Build in time for instructors to prepare for the unique challenges of bicultural team-teaching.	51
<u>Recommendation 11.</u> Hiring decisions should give priority to (1) instructors who have knowledge of the context, and (2) instructors who have established relationships with others in the program. Personal traits of instructors, including the ability to understand and empathize with students, should be considered in hiring.	52
<u>Recommendation 12.</u> Continue to use the cohort model for advanced learning opportunities in Nunavut.	54
<u>Recommendation 13.</u> Acknowledge that when a student is in a program it is also a family journey. Develop strategies to invite family members' support and involvement.	54
<u>Recommendation 14.</u> Maintain low student to teacher ratios, particularly in online courses, to promote high levels of student support.	56
<u>Recommendation 15.</u> Encourage instructors to maintain regular contact with students during distance education courses. Build in regular telephone conversations as a core element of online courses. Telephone conversations can create closer connections than emails and specific aspects of writing can be clarified.	57
<u>Recommendation 16.</u> Program coordinators and instructors should be made aware of how demanding it is to provide very high levels of support to Inuit students living in remote communities, pursuing a graduate-level program in their second language.	59
<u>Recommendation 17.</u> Include Inuit Elders as invited guest speakers.	64
<u>Recommendation 18.</u> Protect an effective learning environment for Inuit graduate students by offering the program to students with shared cultural and linguistic identities.	68
<u>Recommendation 19.</u> Consider embedding a full-time counsellor in the program.	69

<u>Recommendation 20.</u> Ensure instructors are clear on what role the counsellor will play, including how much time the counsellor will have teaching students daily, and how student crises will be addressed when they happen. Communication between instructors and the counsellor is key to supporting students.....	70
<u>Recommendation 21.</u> Create a separate space for the counsellor to work to provide one-on-one help with participants and also to lead group sessions on self-care and personal healing.	71
<u>Recommendation 22.</u> Timing of self-care sessions should be negotiated between students, instructors, and the counsellor to find the best time of day for these exercises.	71
<u>Recommendation 23.</u> Include an Inuit Elder or Inuit counsellor to support students through the educational journey.	71
<u>Recommendation 24.</u> Continue to develop and offer relevant advanced learning opportunities in Nunavut for teachers and educators who are Nunavummiut.	75
<u>Recommendation 25.</u> Programs offered in the North should continue to deliver the majority of courses face-to-face.....	77
<u>Recommendation 26.</u> Support face-to-face meetings of instructors and program contributors prior to courses.....	77
<u>Recommendation 27.</u> Incorporate on-campus learning opportunities at the host university to ensure students have the opportunity to experience a university campus during a Northern cohort program.....	78
<u>Recommendation 28.</u> The location of face-to-face courses in the North should move between communities, and include smaller communities, to share the benefits and disadvantages of having courses held in students' home community.....	79
<u>Recommendation 29.</u> Continue to incorporate distance learning into Nunavut-based advanced learning programs. Incorporate strategies to mitigate student isolation and increase student motivation.	81
<u>Recommendation 30.</u> Continue to use Knowledge Forum to create an interactive online learning community and to support student learning.	82
<u>Recommendation 31.</u> Make use of Knowledge Forum optional for instructors teaching only face-to-face courses in the program.....	83
<u>Recommendation 32.</u> Provide training for all instructors on how to use online tools such as Knowledge Forum before teaching a course.....	83
<u>Recommendation 33.</u> Incorporate strategies to provide additional assistance and connection to students in communities with slower, less reliable and more expensive Internet service.	83
<u>Recommendation 34.</u> Use telephone and Skype calls to connect students with instructors during online courses. Calls can also be used for instructor planning, but these calls should be in addition to face-to-face meetings not instead of meeting.....	83
<u>Recommendation 35.</u> Hold annual planning meetings to gather all teaching and co-ordination team members face-to-face to build relationships and plan courses for one year at a time.....	88
<u>Recommendation 36.</u> Instructors should spend time with Elders prior to Elders visiting the class to share priorities and focus topics.....	88
<u>Recommendation 37.</u> Be prepared that successful lessons may come in many different forms. Acknowledge that Inuit Elders will teach in their own way, sharing deep and insightful conversations and stories. The ways in which they choose to pass on wisdom cannot be evaluated using the standard university criteria.	88
<u>Recommendation 38.</u> Help prepare students for face-to-face courses by assigning readings and small assignments in advance. Allow adequate time for completion before the course (e.g. three weeks).	89
<u>Recommendation 39.</u> Use judgement and flexibility in assigning pre-course work. Quantity and timing of pre-course readings should be adapted on a course-by-course basis. They may not be as necessary or appropriate for all courses.....	90

<u>Recommendation 40.</u> Students should be given individualized support and instruction to help each person to reach their full potential and achieve the academic standards required for a course-based MEd level.	92
<u>Recommendation 41.</u> Coordinators and instructors need to keep in mind that students are challenged to maintain their family, working, and community lives while studying at the graduate level.	93
<u>Recommendation 42.</u> In programs where there is a desire for students' ideas and work to be shared publically, instructors and administrators should develop a strategy for such sharing prior to the program, and obtain student written approval of the plan.	95
<u>Recommendation 43.</u> Develop a strategy for communications between partner organizations, including respective contact persons.	95
<u>Recommendation 44.</u> Help guide students' writing by naming each of the steps in the process, and checking in on students' progress throughout the development of an assignment.	96
<u>Recommendation 45.</u> Keep in mind that many of the target participants for advanced learning opportunities in Nunavut use English as a second language. Extensive and specialized supports are necessary to enhance students' academic and professional voice in their second language.	97
<u>Recommendation 46.</u> Build on students' writing by editing and improving texts prepared in advance by the student.	97
<u>Recommendation 47.</u> Offer an additional writing intensive course, at the start of future programs, focused entirely on academic writing competencies but based on specific areas of education within the particular MEd program.	99
<u>Recommendation 48.</u> Support students and graduates to access further learning opportunities to develop their writing beyond the MEd program.	99
<u>Recommendation 49.</u> Incorporate a six-week window each year, within cohort programs, in which students may complete or repeat necessary courses.	101
<u>Recommendation 50.</u> A clear policy should be written regarding access to make-up course options. Students should be informed of these options and limitations before they enrol in the program. .	101

Executive Summary - English

The creation of Nunavut opened many possibilities for Inuit educators to take on leadership, but it also meant that a wide range of knowledge and skills were required to meet qualifications for leadership at the community, school, and territorial levels. This report summarizes the successes and challenges of one innovative higher learning program developed to fill this need, the Nunavut Master of Education (Nunavut MEd) program, first offered by the University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI) in 2006 to 2009, and offered again from 2010 to 2013.

The funding partner, the Nunavut Department of Education, commissioned this report on the program offered from 2010 to 2013 to evaluate how well it met the needs of students in a Northern context. Program research aimed to uncover what worked well and what could be improved for the Northern students' learning experiences and outcomes, and for program delivery. Data were collected from program participants, instructors, and partners at UPEI and the Nunavut Department of Education on multiple occasions and in various formats over the program's duration.

The Nunavut MEd 2010-2013 was a part-time, course-based program offered over three years using a combination of face-to-face and distance learning: two face-to-face courses were offered each summer, one face-to-face course each fall, along with a distance education course offered each winter. Four face-to-face courses took place in Iqaluit, one in Rankin Inlet, and two at UPEI in Charlottetown, PEI. Inuit instructors co-taught the courses alongside PhD-trained instructors in order to provide a top quality bilingual and bicultural learning experience that incorporated both Inuit and Western perspectives and content. A counsellor also provided support for students during face-to-face courses offered in the program.

Key findings indicate that program participants grew as scholars, researchers, and leaders. Students felt they had improved critical thinking skills. Students also indicated that they were empowered by knowledge about the process of decolonization and by the acquisition of deeper Inuit knowledge. They also reported personal transformation and experienced personal healing, as well as changes in their confidence levels and ability to voice their concerns.

Student experience was enhanced by the inclusion of Inuit knowledge delivered by Elders, guests, Inuit co-instructors, and by teaching one another. *Inuuqatigiitsiarniq* 'community, relationship, and respect', as fostered through the cohort model and careful hiring of instructors familiar with Northern contexts, laid the foundation for a safe learning space for the MEd students. Co-teaching teams enabled instructors to give intensive support to this special cohort of Indigenous women throughout their journey in graduate education.

Results also show that while students' acknowledge distance learning as a necessary component to learning in the North, they strongly preferred face-to-face classes. In commenting on specific teaching practices, instructors highlighted the need for extensive preparation by students and instructors in order to make the most of intensive face-to-face courses. They also advocated for an approach to courses that were designed with few, and very clear, assignments that provided substantial class time to reach in-depth insights. While students grew in all areas of self-expression, results indicated that more time and specialized strategies were needed to support the growth of English-as-second-language scholars in order to develop as academic writers both in English and in Inuktitut².

² The term Inuktitut is used to refer to Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun, as suggested by a Member of the Legislative Assembly in Nunavut, Joe Allen Evgagotailak, in 2007.

Graduates emphasized that the opportunity to study in Nunavut made it possible for them to graduate. Research indicated that graduates were unsure if they would have been successful if they had been required to study outside the territory, self-finance, or study without the support of a cohort of students who shared their cultural and linguistic background. The data gathered reveal effective teaching practices for Northern students, and highlight struggles that took place during this three-year program. A comprehensive summary of recommended practices for future programs offered in Nunavut is included in this report.

Research data enable readers to hear the unique perspective of Inuit graduate students, and provide insight into the significance of this program in the lives of Inuit educators who are also emerging scholars of Inuit education. Just as research on the 2006-2009 Nunavut MEd (Walton et al., 2010) provided a foundation for continuing to improve in the second offering of the program, and contributed to the literature on success factors in post-secondary Inuit education (Tompkins, McAuley & Walton, 2009), it is hoped that this report on the 2010-2013 Nunavut MEd program will continue to build the foundation upon which graduate level education may be offered in Nunavut and contribute to the ongoing story of decolonizing Inuit education in the post-Nunavut era



PART 1

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM AND EVALUATION

Welcome

Program Background

In 2006, the Nunavut Department of Education and University of Prince Edward Island partnered to offer graduate-level university education to experienced and qualified Inuit teachers in Nunavut. Initially offered as a three-year pilot project (2006-2009), and then again from 2010 to 2013, the Nunavut Master of Education program was designed to meet the particular learning aspirations and needs of graduate students in Nunavut. Such a program had been years in coming.

As early as 1994, almost half of the Inuit educators responding to a Nunavut wide survey (n = 294) indicated that they were interested in completing Master of Education degrees (Nunavut Boards of Education, 1995; O'Donoghue, 1998). However, they indicated that family and community commitments made it difficult to leave their homes and communities to enrol in graduate programs offered outside Nunavut (O'Donoghue et al., 2005). The report resulting from the survey, *Pauqatigiit: Professional Needs of Nunavut Educators—Analysis and Possibilities* (Nunavut Boards of Education, 1995), recommended that a long-term goal for professional learning in Nunavut should include access to a MEd degree in Inuit education offered in Nunavut (p. 45).

Though McGill University, which offered the undergraduate Nunavut Teacher Education Program (NTEP) Bachelor of Education degree until 2006, offered several graduate level courses in Nunavut over the years, Inuit teachers could not complete a MEd degree without attending the majority of courses on campus in Montreal. Although some started the program, no Inuit educators from Nunavut graduated from McGill with MEd degrees.

Fiona O'Donoghue³ dissertation, *The Hunger for Professional Learning in Nunavut Schools* (1998), Fiona explored the issues related to the lack of accessibility of graduate-level education to Inuit teachers in Nunavut. She found that limited opportunities to complete graduate-level qualifications affected Inuit educators' eligibility for leadership positions in the educational system, salary levels over their careers, pensions paid following retirement, and the overall socio-economic status of individuals, families, and Nunavut communities. Opportunities for ongoing, credit-based professional learning and development, taken for granted by educators in other jurisdictions, were largely inaccessible for teachers in Nunavut. Ultimately, the lack of access to higher educational programs and opportunities in the North was found to limit the growth, capacity, development, and potential of Inuit educators whose influence as leaders continues to be critically important in shaping education in a rapidly changing Inuit society. It also has affected children and youth in Nunavut who could be inspired by seeing Inuit role models who are completing graduate degrees, accepting leadership positions in education, and guiding young people within their home communities.

Following that research, in 2004, Fiona Walton led a team of researchers and Inuit collaborators from UPEI and St Francis Xavier University (StFX), in partnership with the Department of Education, Government of Nunavut, in a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Northern Development grant entitled *Pursuing a Dream: Inuit Education in the Qikiqtani Region of Nunavut from 1980–1999*. Co-researchers included Joanne Tompkins (School of Education, StFX) and Alexander McAuley (Faculty of Education, UPEI). Collaborators included Lena Metuq (Principal, Alookie School, Pangnirtung) and Nunia Qanatsiaq-Anoe (Inuktitut Language Arts Consultant, Department of Education, Government of Nunavut). The team was deeply anchored in lived realities of teaching professionals in Nunavut, each having over 15 years direct experience living, teaching, working, and leading educational initiatives in Inuit jurisdictions. Building on earlier research, they aimed to further develop partnerships; identify promising practices in decolonizing education; explore key factors involved in effective Inuit teacher education, educational leadership, and professional learning in Nunavut; develop a plan to build research capacity among Inuit educators; and support Inuit graduate students to complete MEd degrees. Through this project, the first two Inuit educators from Nunavut to complete on-campus MEd degrees, Jukeepa Hainnu and Naullaq Arnaquq, graduated from UPEI in 2007 and 2008,

³ Fiona O'Donoghue changed her name to Fiona Walton in January 2006

respectively. Still, findings from the *Pursuing a Dream* research emphasized, again, the need for Inuit teachers holding BEd degrees to have better access to attaining graduate-level qualifications.

As members of the *Pursuing a Dream* research team were leaving Iqaluit in May 2005, a long-term Inuit educational leader asked if there was any possibility of offering a MEd degree in Nunavut in the near future as she had waited many years to complete such a program. Research team members mentioned this request to the UPEI Faculty of Education in June 2005 and received enthusiastic encouragement to investigate the possibility of offering the UPEI MEd degree to a cohort of Inuit teachers. UPEI had a strong foundation upon which to build: the Faculty of Education had fostered strong expertise in Indigenous education through the Specialization in Aboriginal Education at the BEd level; three faculty members had long-term experience working and teaching in Nunavut; and the instructors advocating for the program had established a solid research base that could inform development of an effective program.

The Nunavut Department of Education and Nunavut Arctic College also lent their enthusiastic support. Walton and McAuley held discussions with the Assistant Deputy Minister of Education, Peter Geikie, and the Director of Curriculum and School Services for the Nunavut Department of Education, Cathy McGregor in January 2006. A formal request was then brought to the Dean of Education and faculty members to offer a pilot Master of Education in Leadership and Learning in Nunavut. The (former) Dean of Education, Graham Pike, the Faculty of Education, and the UPEI Academic Review and Program Committee strongly supported and ultimately endorsed the proposed Nunavut MEd degree in March 2006. Detailed planning commenced immediately.

In September 2006, students were accepted into the first Nunavut Master of Education program. For the first time, Inuit educators had the opportunity to complete a MEd degree without relocating to Southern Canada, something they had asked for since 1994 (Nunavut Boards of Education, 1995; O'Donoghue, 1998).

Program Vision, Goals, and Objectives

The Nunavut MEd was designed to be a course-based, academically challenging program at the graduate-level that would lead to personal and professional transformation for the benefit of education in the North. The vision guiding the three-year program, developed collaboratively with the Nunavut Department of Education, was for students to enhance their “academic knowledge, wisdom, critical understanding, and leadership skills [...and...] to articulate, document, develop, and implement a personal and collective vision of Inuit educational leadership founded on *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*” (Walton et al., 2010, p. 16). The program aimed to build the capacity of Inuit educators as researchers, emerging scholars, and leaders.

The Nunavut MEd program was designed to meet the needs of Inuit students who continued to live and work within their home communities. The program included many of UPEI's campus-based Master of Education courses. Still, program developers and instructors adapted aspects of the course content, sequence, and design to meet Inuit students' needs and to ensure the centrality of Inuit perspectives and language. The courses focused on topics that were relevant to education in Nunavut, including the history of colonialism and settlement of the Arctic, Inuit leadership within the educational system in Nunavut, bilingual literacy and curriculum, culturally-based curriculum, as well as research in Northern contexts. Developing critical thinking and academic writing skills in both English and Inuit languages were also priorities.

The program was developed to build upon the strengths of education in Nunavut. Students in the MEd were encouraged to develop and document visions of Inuit educational leadership founded on *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* (IQ), Inuit ways of knowing and being (Government of Nunavut, 2007). The Inuit principles of respect; harmony; resourcefulness; inclusion, equality, social justice and diversity; serving and sustainability; creativity, exploration, and aesthetic appreciation; and lifelong learning, developed by the Government of Nunavut, were used to shape the program (See Appendix A for detailed descriptions of each principle). The Nunavut MEd program offered Inuit educators a path to complete graduate level education, and to increase their skills and knowledge from within their home territory.

Learning From the 2006-2009 Pilot Applied in the 2010-2013 Program

On July 1, 2009, in Iqaluit, Nunavut, a UPEI convocation celebrated the first graduate level degree ever offered in the territory when 21 Inuit educational leaders graduated with a MEd in Leadership in Learning. Research and evaluation, supported by the Nunavut Department of Education and conducted over the three-years of the first program documented successes and challenges. The final report, *Lighting The Qulliq: The First Master of Education Program in Nunavut* (Walton et al., 2010) and a documentary video (Sandiford & Walton, 2009) detail the inception, vision, and organization of the program. They include feedback from the first Nunavut MEd cohort members and suggestions for future directions for the program. The success of the Nunavut MEd was recognized in 2009 when the program earned national recognition, receiving a *Sharing the Flame* award for Aboriginal Education from the Canadian Council on Learning for innovation in offering a graduate degree to Inuit educators in Nunavut (Appendix B). Based on the success of the pilot MEd program in Nunavut, the program was offered to a second cohort of students from September 2010 to June 2013. This report documents and evaluates the process and outcomes of that program.

Program Documentation and Evaluation

Rationale for Research

Research into the process and outcomes of the Nunavut Master of Education program has been a key component of both the 2006-2009 pilot and the 2010-2013 offering. Both iterations of the Nunavut MEd program were unique and ground-breaking, offering valuable opportunities to learn more about providing post-secondary education in the North. Increasing knowledge of what works in indigenous education is essential to achieving the high priority of supporting education of indigenous educators, researchers, and leaders, particularly supporting indigenous educators to achieve university credentials (Canadian Council on Learning, 2009; Council of Minister of Education, 2009; National Committee on Inuit Education, 2011). The Office of the Auditor General of Canada (2010) has also recommended systematic tracking of success factors in Government of Nunavut advanced training programs in order to achieve capacity building goals. The research and program evaluation within the MEd degree, mandated by the funder (Government of Nunavut), was conducted following rigorous research and ethical protocols, in order to serve the dual purpose of documenting the program's process, strengths, and challenges for the funder, and contributing to the knowledge of promising practices in graduate indigenous education. The research conducted within the two iterations of the Nunavut MEd provides valuable insight into one program offered to Inuit educators. The knowledge and evidence documented in this report can guide and encourage organizations in Nunavut and elsewhere to develop, improve, or adapt graduate programs designed to serve Indigenous students.

Research Objectives

Research on the Nunavut MEd program had two primary objectives:

1. To document the design, development, and delivery of the second offering of the Nunavut MEd program; and
2. To provide evidence of the successes, learning, and challenges encountered by participants of the program.

A representative from the Nunavut Department of Education suggested that the practice of research and program evaluation served additional functions of demonstrating respect, and modeling ongoing evaluation as a best practice:

I think it [research] also shows them that people really care about their opinions and want to meet their needs... They [the students] haven't had many opportunities to see that somebody was listening to them and wanted to know if things met their needs, so they're more likely to go out and do that now

in their own programs, in their own roles, than maybe they might have been before because they've had it happen to them. There's another reason for doing it besides just having the record on paper. This research gave participants an opportunity to reflect on their own development while in the program. While the current report presents a summative evaluation, the process was formative, in which feedback informed ongoing adjustments and improvements to the program.

Research and Evaluation Manager

To favour confidentiality, anonymity, and objectivity, a Research and Evaluation Manager was hired to prepare research submissions; design, develop, conduct, and analyse surveys and interviews; and write this final program report. Lisa MacDougall held the position from September 2010 to January 2011, followed by Kerri Wheatley from June 2011 until December 2013. The Research and Evaluation Manager maintained arms-length distance from instructors, the UPEI coordinator and the Dean of Education, as well as the administrators and coordinator in the GN Department of Education, in order to ensure the research conformed to ethical guidelines. Only the Research and Evaluation Manager collected, had access to, and worked with original data. Kerri Wheatley independently analysed the data and drafted the final report before it was edited or read by colleagues.

Permissions for Research

Research during the Nunavut MEd program met the ethical requirements for conducting research within an Aboriginal context in Canada (Canadian Institutes of Health Research et al., 2010, Chapter 9). The researcher was sensitive when following principles and approaches that support decolonizing methodologies (Smith, 1999; Wilson, 2008). The Nunavut Research Institute was well informed on the project, and approval to gather data was provided by the Research Ethics Board at UPEI (Appendix C). Students were advised of the purpose and plan for the program research and evaluation, and informed that their participation was entirely voluntary. Withdrawal from the research, or any part of the research, could take place at any time, and was in no way tied to continued participation in the MEd. Participants were also informed of the precautions that would be taken to ensure the confidentiality and safety of all the data. Participants were assured that information that might identify a particular individual would be removed from any reporting. This knowledge helped students to express candid opinions anonymously, without fear of any personal or professional repercussions. This was of the upmost importance within the close-knit community of Nunavut educators. Following careful consideration and discussion of the research and the ways in which it would be conducted, each student signed an Informed Consent Form (Appendix D). Additional permissions were obtained from students for course photographs to be taken and used within program reporting and other promotional materials.⁴ Photographs may be viewed at <http://projects.upei.ca/nunavut/>.

Data Collection

The Research Manager gathered data from program participants using one-on-one interviews, surveys, student advisory committee meetings, and with the written consent of instructors, university mandated Student Evaluation of Teaching Surveys. Figure 1 provides a summary of the data collection timeline. Instructors and representatives of the Nunavut Department of Education contributed in the form of short informal interviews either in person, on the telephone, or via email.

⁴ All images have been shared with students; only a small selection have been included in this report.

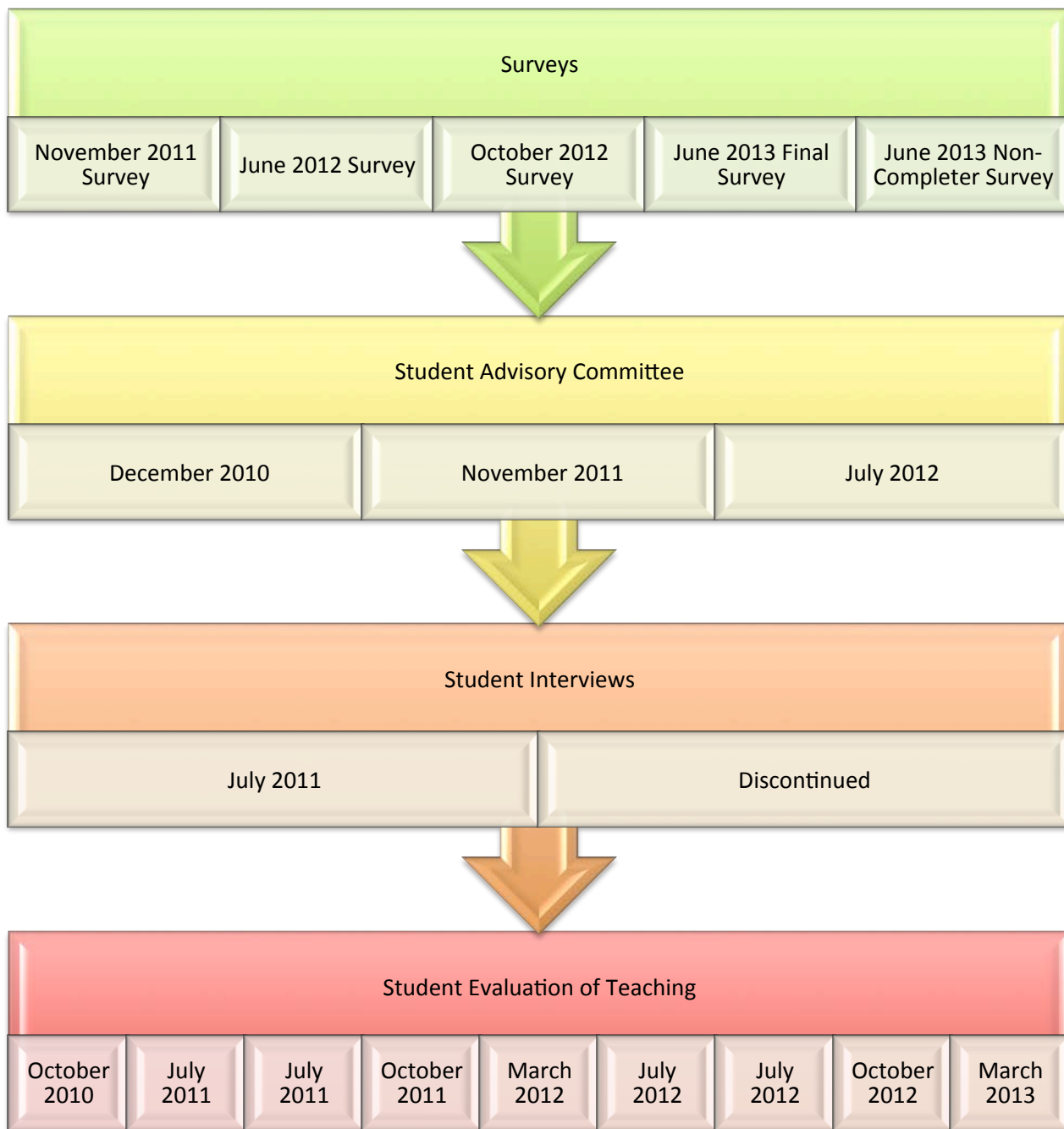


Figure 1. Timeline of Data Collection.

Student interviews

In-depth interviews were to be conducted with all Nunavut MEd students to determine their perspectives on the program. In July 2011, the first three interviews took place. The interviews were audio recorded, transcribed, and then verified by participants. These interviews provided an in-depth understanding of the opinions of these three participants with valuable data being shared about the program. Many of the themes referred to in the three interviews were similar: participants expressed how they were becoming more critical thinkers, how they were continuing to learn about decolonization, and also about how their confidence and ability to speak out were improving and changing with their growing knowledge. Though interviews were insightful, they also required a significant amount of students' time and energy during a demanding face-to-face course.

Face-to-face courses involved very intense days of focussed learning. Due to the reflective nature of the interviews, they proved to be mentally demanding for students. Before an interview one participant admitted, “I’m kind of tired, but I will [participate].” The participant clearly wanted to get it ‘over with’ promptly so she could get back to her schoolwork. Another participant similarly indicated the burden of interviews coupled with intensive courses, “I know there’s a lot more, but I’m tired and I can’t think right now.” It appeared that the evaluation process was being negatively viewed as an additional demand on students’ precious time, which was needed for learning. The researcher decided to discontinue one-on-one interviews, and to gather data in a way that was less stressful for program participants. Surveys were originally integrated as a component of research and they were modified to take on a more prominent role. In this way, the researcher adapted to participant feedback, supporting student well-being and ensuring that academic focus remained a priority over participation in research.

Surveys

The main method of data collection was surveys. All currently enrolled students were invited to complete surveys at four points during the program, and participants who did not complete the program were also invited to complete a final survey after the program had ended. The first three surveys were completed online in October 2011, July 2012, and October 2012. Online forms were generally easy to complete because all students were comfortable using computers. However, due to the inability to secure a reliable internet connection, the final survey for graduates in June 2013 was conducted using a paper and pen format. Responses from this paper-based survey were later added to the electronic database, transcribed, analyzed, and reported.

Surveys were administered in class. Students responded to a combination of open-ended and closed questions that required an average of 20 minutes to complete, though time limits were never set. The time for conducting the surveys was negotiated with the students and the instructors. When all students confirmed that they had completed the survey, instructors were invited back into the room and classes proceeded. Currently enrolled students who were not present when the survey was administered were given another option to complete the survey. This practice allowed all program participants an opportunity to provide feedback even if unforeseen circumstances prohibited them from attending a course. Due to this method of collecting data, on one occasion more students completed the online survey than were in physically attending the course.

Surveys were a dependable method of data collection that yielded high response rates. In each of the four student surveys, every person attending the course completed the survey (Table 1). In the first survey in November 2011, 19 students were enrolled as students in the program, 15 students were in attendance at the course, and a total of 16 students completed the online survey (Table 1). The uptake on this first survey confirmed that online surveys were a reliable method of collecting data, and they were used for the following surveys when possible.

Date	Survey Name	# of Students in Program	# of Students at Course	# of Survey Responses
November 2011	Mid-Point Survey	19	15	16
July 2012	Summer Reflection	14	14	14
October 2012	Fall Reflection	13	13	13
June 2013	Exit Survey	13	13	13

Table 1: Number of Responses by Survey

In June 2013, five individuals who had completed at least one course in the program but had not managed to complete the MEd were emailed a feedback survey, to gather their final opinions and suggestions about the program. Each person was emailed a link to the survey and was given the choice to have a phone conversation instead. Two responded to the survey. Respondents to this survey received a small token of appreciation, an Amazon.ca gift card, in recognition of the time they took to provide feedback. The data received from non-completing participants of the program has been included throughout this report.

Student Opinion of Teaching Surveys (SOTS)

At the end of each course students completed a Student Opinion of Teaching Survey (SOTS), required for every course at UPEI. The form includes questions about what students appreciated about the course and the instructor's teaching and also what could be improved. With the written consent of instructors, the students' anonymous written responses were used as research data. The SOTS thus provided feedback on the individual strengths and challenges encountered in each of nine courses.⁵

Student Advisory Committee

A Student Advisory Committee was formed at the beginning of the program to facilitate ongoing communication between students, the Nunavut Department of Education, and the Research Manager. During each of the three committee meetings, which took place on December 2010, November 2011, and July 2012, Advisory Committee members discussed aspects of the program that should continue, required improvement, or should be discontinued. Notes from these committee meetings were used for the ongoing program evaluation, to make changes throughout the program, and also as data within this report.

Stakeholder Conversations – Instructors, Administrators, and Partners

To gather a broad perspective on the program, interviews took place with 16 key participants involved in the decision-making and instructional processes that shaped the MEd program, including instructors and administrators from the UPEI Faculty of Education and the Nunavut Department of Education. Instructors shared opinions, observations, and teaching experiences within each course. When possible, data was collected through brief, in-person end-of-course interviews. In other cases, instructors were emailed online feedback forms, or were telephoned. The Research Manager asked instructors to briefly describe their course. They were also asked to comment on what “worked well” and what “did not work well” during the course.

Regular check-ins with the Director of Curriculum and School Services in Nunavut allowed the Research Manager to ensure an ongoing direct line of communication between the Government of Nunavut partners and the University of Prince Edward Island. At the end of the program more lengthy interviews took place with the three key players at the Department of Education in the Government of Nunavut: the Deputy Minister of Education, the Director of Curriculum and School Services, and the Educational Leadership Development Coordinator.

Informative conversations allowed for comments or concerns to be brought up within an open environment. Open-ended questions allowed instructors and partners to speak about important topics from their perspectives. Instructors, administrators and funding partners spoke openly about their observations of the program, students' development, opinions about current strengths, and recommendations for the future. These data are analyzed alongside student data to corroborate findings, and add nuance to student perceptions of strengths and challenges in program processes and outcomes.

Participant observation

In order to be immersed within the classroom environment, build rapport with students and stakeholders, and have sufficient time to understand all aspects of the program the Research Manager was

⁵ SOTS were not administered during the first distance education course, ED 611 Introduction to Research. The online SOTS forms had not yet been prepared by the university.

present during face-to-face courses. Building trust with participants was essential to ensure that opinions and information could be shared with comfort and confidence throughout the program, and is in keeping with indigenous methodologies based on dialogue, relationship, and respect (Smith, 1999).

Time spent with the Nunavut MEd cohort during face-to-face courses also allowed the Research Manager to experience the program. First-hand experiences with many of the situations written about in this report facilitated a deeper understanding of the context so that the program could be considered from a variety of perspectives. While the report is careful in quoting only perspectives and opinions shared during official feedback sessions, observations also informed the analysis, and were reflected in ongoing program adjustments and interpretations of data.

Document Analysis

The Research Manager also had access to documents created for the program: course syllabi, assignment instructions, reading lists, and handouts distributed during courses. Consultation of these documents supported analysis of learning targets as well as supports put in place to help students reach their goals.

Quantity of Data

The quantity and quality of data gathered over the ten-course program was substantial. The research data include feedback from the 13 course-based graduates in June 2013, and the one thesis-based student in May 2014, plus the two students who did not complete the program. Therefore the data represent 100% of all participants who completed the program, and 73% of the original group of 22 students who began in the program.

The number of opportunities a graduate had to provide data ranged from four to seventeen. Every graduate completed the minimum of four student surveys. The maximum input was received from one graduate who completed nine UPEI Student Opinions of Teaching Surveys, participated in three student advisory committee meetings and one student interview, in addition to the four student surveys, thus providing program research data on seventeen separate occasions.

Analysis of Data

Data analysis took place soon after it was gathered. This ongoing analysis facilitated use of the results for formative development of the program, as well as for the interim⁶ and final program reports. Preliminary analysis of the data also helped to guide and shape the data collection process during the program. The collection of data on multiple occasions over a three-year period from a number of sources (students, instructors, partners), using a variety of techniques (survey, conversation, observation), allowed for powerful triangulation of data, yielding robust research results.

Quantitative data were imported into Excel spreadsheets, and analyzed to show frequency of responses, and the average response.⁷ Qualitative data, including the responses to interviews and open-ended questions on surveys, were analyzed using the online software Dedoose®. The software was used as a tool to code the data, and to help organize themes across each question, each survey, and the overall program. Data was also tagged according to which of the two main research goals it addressed: documenting program design and delivery, or providing evidence of the successes, learning and challenges encountered. In presenting results within this report, every effort has been made to ensure that all voices have been heard, regardless of whether or not their perspective was shared by the other research participants. The report thus acknowledges and expresses the range of students', instructors' and administrators' perceptions and experiences.

⁶ An interim report was written in July 2011 and provided to the Department of Education, Government of Nunavut. This report is available at <http://projects.upei.ca/nunavut/files/2013/09/Interim-Report-Nunavut-MEd-2010-2013-copy.pdf>

⁷ Complex statistical calculations were not performed on the data due to the low sample size.

Limitations of Research

Limitations of this research include the inability to draw statistically significant comparisons between data collected from the first day of the program in comparison to the graduation. In keeping with indigenous methodologies privileging relationship and story, the focus of research rested more heavily on the qualitative experiences of students, instructors, and stakeholders, rather than formal comparisons between sets of data collected over the period of time. A trend within the program research was for students to be forthcoming when asked to comment positively, yet more hesitant when asked to share critical feedback about the program. Program challenges encountered do not lend themselves easily to solutions, but are raised as issues that future program administrators should consider when offering post-secondary education in the Canadian Arctic.

In summary, following rigorous and respectful data collection protocols, the Research Manager collected a substantial body of data to explore key characteristics of the Nunavut Master of Education program, document student outcomes, and evaluate factors which contributed to these outcomes. Research data in the following chapters enable readers to hear the unique perspectives of the Nunavut MEd students, and provide insight into the significance of this program in the lives of Inuit educators who are also emerging scholars of Inuit education.

Program Overview

The second iteration of the Nunavut MEd program is documented within this report. The current chapter gives an overview of the core components of the program. It describes key characteristics of the partners and organizational team; the participants; the instructors; location; format and timeline; content; instructional materials; technology; activities; languages of instruction; student evaluation methods; and accreditation. Each component of the program worked together to create an effective, challenging, and decolonizing learning experience for students.

Partners and Organizational Team

The Government of Nunavut (GN) Department of Education and the Faculty of Education at University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI) partnered to offer the Nunavut Master of Education Program. The GN fully funded the program. It also provided input into the program's design, desired outcomes, delivery, and content, particularly in the areas of ensuring cultural responsiveness and maximum impact in Nunavut. The respective Deans of Education, the MEd Coordinator, and instructors offering courses for the Faculty of Education at UPEI managed the program, developed course outlines, delivered, and staffed all courses, creating a Nunavut-specific version of the MEd in Leadership and Learning.

The partnership was grounded in collaboratively developed and shared values and goals. The main program developers at University of Prince Edward Island had previously served as long-term Northern educators. As a representative of the Department of Education explained:

It was a strength that the majority of the instructors did have experience in Nunavut prior. That was very important to us in designing the program, and that's the main reason why we used UPEI instead of somewhere else, because at least two of the instructors, the main UPEI instructors did have that [experience], and then we were able to find other people, even if they were from other institutions, who had Nunavut experience.

The MEd program thus grew out of first-hand experience and relationships in Nunavut.

Participants

The Nunavut Master of Education program was designed for experienced Inuit teachers living in Nunavut. Following interest in the program expressed by the Kativik School Board (KSB), five spaces were made available to Inuit educators from Nunavik (Northern Quebec). Of the 22 students who enrolled in the 2010-2013 cohort, all were women and one participant from the KSB joined the MEd program. Students spanned three generations, from under 30 to over 50. All but one spoke an Inuit language as their first

language, and English as a second language. The student whose first language was English was fluently bilingual and bi-literate, raised from birth in an Inuit community, and a graduate of the Nunavut Teacher Education program (NTEP). All other students were also graduates of the NTEP BEd program offered by McGill University and now offered by the Faculty of Education, University of Regina.

Students came from twelve communities across all three regions of Nunavut: Pond Inlet, Igloodik, Hall Beach, Pangnirtung, and Iqaluit (Qikiqtani/Baffin region); Rankin Inlet, Baker Lake and Arviat (Kivalliq region); and Cambridge Bay, Taloyoak, and Gjoa Haven (Kitikmeot region), as well as from Kuujuaq, Nunavik. About one third of the students were the sole students enrolled from their community. All students were certified teachers, with established careers including K-12 teachers, school administrators, adult educators, curriculum developers, civil servants, and an entrepreneur. Program participants were often community leaders, with full schedules that included family, work, cultural, and community commitments on top of their responsibilities within the program. Participant biographies are available on the project website at <http://projects.upei.ca/nunavut/student-biographies-2010-2013/> and included in Appendix E.

The 2010-2013 Nunavut MEd successfully recruited motivated and qualified individuals who would have had difficulty accessing a mainstream MEd program outside Nunavut. Bringing this group together to learn and achieve graduate level credentials is a core accomplishment of the program. The students' varied backgrounds, their geographic dispersion, and the sheer busyness of their lives introduced richness and depth, but also challenges to their program completion.

Instructors

Dynamic teams of instructors taught each course.⁸ Face-to-face courses were usually co-taught by a university-based educator and an Inuit MEd graduate.⁹ A counsellor was also present during face-to-face courses. Due to the time-intensive supports provided to participants, distance education courses were co-taught by three instructors so that individual time was provided to the students. All the university-based instructors brought to the team extensive university teaching experience and academic subject knowledge; and most had long-term experience living and working in Nunavut. Inuit MEd instructors brought into courses their ability to interact with students in an Inuit language, rich local knowledge, experience as teachers and educational leaders, as well as expertise gained from their recent MEd degrees. In at least one course, the Inuit instructor's role evolved into that of "cultural broker" (Stairs, 1995). A total of 15 instructors contributed to the program, chosen for their personal and professional experiences and areas of expertise.

As one example of the depth and breadth of the teaching teams, Dr. Jim Cummins and Naullaq Arnaquq (MEd) co-taught *Leadership in Languages and Literacies* (ED 632N). Jim Cummins is internationally renowned in the field of bilingual learning and literacy development and was at that time a Canada Research Chair (Tier 1), and a professor at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. Naullaq Arnaquq is the Assistant Deputy Minister, Department of Culture and Heritage, in the GN, and a very experienced educational leader who led the development of Nunavut's language legislation and policy. When the class met in Iqaluit, Jim Cummins introduced his well-known theories related to bilingual education, and Naullaq Arnaquq presented language issues and challenges in Nunavut, including the development of language legislation and policies in Nunavut over the past 30 years. As a team, they co-presented leading theories of bilingual education alongside the history of bilingual education in Nunavut, through the lenses of a respected researcher and the lived experiences of an Inuit educator and language expert. Bilingual education was thus

⁸ Exceptionally, during the first course, *Leadership in Postcolonial Education*, only one instructor was present for the face-to-face component due to a last minute scheduling conflict. The pre-course online component was co-taught, as were all other courses.

⁹ Program developers aimed to hire a graduate from the 2006-2009 MEd pilot program as a full-time Inuit instructor who would teach in all ten MEd courses. Due to career and personal obligations of the possible candidates, a full-time and three-year commitment of this sort was not possible. A GN representative regretted this stating, "This did not happen but I think it would have enabled one person to gain a great deal of experience." Instead, five Inuit MEd graduates were hired as sessional instructors.

explored from both a mainstream, as well as a Nunavut perspective, including the views of parents, educators, and policy-makers.

Similarly, when Fiona Walton, program coordinator, and Naullaq Arnaquq co-taught *Theories of Teaching and Learning* (ED 614N), Fiona Walton addressed theories from a Euro-Western perspective, and Naullaq Arnaquq considered Inuit theoretical frameworks in her teaching.

As another example, Joanne Tompkins and Lena Metuq (MEd) co-taught *Introduction to Educational Leadership* (ED 615N). Joanne Tompkins is an Associate Professor at StFX and Lena Metuq is a MEd graduate who served as principal in Inuit schools for 20 years. Tompkins and Metuq were a long-term co-teaching team, having worked together in Pangnirtung in the early eighties, and again on many other occasions, including the delivery of the Educational Leadership Program (ELP) in Nunavut. Their course exemplified how instructors with very different experiences, standpoints, and areas of expertise could draw strength from one another and model bilingual collaborative leadership.

The first online course, *Introduction to Research*, was co-taught by Sandy McAuley, Nunia Qanatsiaq (MEd), and Margaret Joyce (MEd). All three were long-term educational leaders in Nunavut. As a teaching team, they joined their experiences as a faculty member (McAuley), a teacher and an Inuktitut consultant (Qanatsiaq), and a Nunavut teacher, consultant, principal, and administrator (Joyce) to consider research processes and applications from multiple perspectives.

In addition to the co-teaching teams, Elders and other knowledgeable individuals were regularly invited into the classrooms. Elder visitors, including John Amagoalik (Iqaluit), Martha Michael (Iqaluit, now deceased), Louis Angalik (Arviat), and Mary Ann Tattuinee (Rankin Inlet), ensured that expert Inuit knowledge was taught within the program. During a two-day program orientation previous MEd graduates Naullaq Arnaquq, Saa Pitsiulak, and Maggie Kuniliusie shared their MEd research results, as well as their perspectives as recent graduates of a MEd program. Eva Aariak, then Premier of Nunavut, and Leena Evic, a previous principal, teacher, and consultant within the educational system and now a prominent business woman in Nunavut, both shared their journeys as Inuit educators who took on positions of leadership. Representatives from the GN Department of Education, Cathy McGregor and Darlene Nuqingaq, provided presentations and workshops related to the history and process of curriculum development and reform in Nunavut over the past thirty years. Guests were invited to ground the course content with personal stories and experiences about life in the North.

A guest lecture provided by Dr. Ian Mauro, then a Canada Research Chair (Tier 2) in Human Dimensions of Environmental Change at Mount Allison University, enhanced the content of students' learning. Guest speakers also delivered specialized skills workshops. For example, Melissa Belvadi, a UPEI librarian, offered a graduate-level workshop on how to use Library Resources, and Bonnie Stewart, (PhD candidate, UPEI) delivered two workshops related to academic writing at a graduate level.

As a whole, the program brought together a diverse team of respected, knowledgeable instructors, Elders, and guests who offered students the best of knowledge and ways of learning, knowing, and communicating from across cultures and disciplines relevant to both mainstream and Inuit contexts.

Delivery Methods and Course Locations

The MEd was offered as a blended delivery program that included face-to-face and distance learning options and courses. Students met in person for two intensive courses in the summer terms, and also for one week in each fall term. Five of the ten courses were held face-to-face in Iqaluit and Rankin Inlet, Nunavut, enabling students to stay closer to home and experience different regions of the territory. Students also travelled to Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island to complete two face-to-face courses on campus at UPEI in July 2011. This gave participants the opportunity to experience learning at a university campus. The remaining three courses were offered through distance education during the winter terms from January to April, allowing students to continue learning while working and taking care of families, and while winter weather conditions made getting together in person more challenging. In addition, many courses included an on-line introduction with readings and short pre-course assignments. By blending northern and southern locations, face-to-face and

distance learning, the Nunavut MEd offered a unique program that participants could complete without leaving home for extended periods of time.

Format and Timeline

The Nunavut MEd was offered as a ten-course, 30 credit part-time graduate program over a period of three years. Each face-to-face course lasted one week, generally offered with a two to six week distance component. During the pre-course distance component, students would complete readings, assignments, and discussions, preparing for the intensive days of face-to-face academic work. While together, students would attend class during the day and complete assignments in the evenings. For example, *Curriculum: Leadership in Learning* (ED 625) included a four week distance component, where students completed readings and assignments using Knowledge Forum from September 8 to October 8, 2012, followed by an intensive, face-to-face, six-day learning experience from October 8 to 14, 2012 in Rankin Inlet, with six hours of class time scheduled for each day and open study-hall available on most evenings of the week with instructors present to provide support. Distance courses were offered over 12 weeks with readings and assignments spread out over that time. A timeline of courses, dates, location, and instructors is shown in Figure 2.

Course Number & Name	Date	Instructor	Course Delivery Method	Location
Orientation	Nov., 2010	Fiona Walton & Invited Guests	Face-to-face	Iqaluit, NU
ED 631N Leadership in Postcolonial Education	Nov., 2010	Fiona Walton, (Nunia Qanatsiaq-Anoeë)	Face-to-face	Iqaluit, NU
ED 611N Introduction to Research	Jan. – April, 2011	Sandy McAuley, Nunia Qanatsiaq-Anoeë, Jessie Lees	Distance	
ED 614N Theories of Research and Learning	June – July, 2011	Fiona Walton, Naullaq Arnaquq	Distance and Face-to-face	Charlottetown, PE
ED 615N Educational Leadership	July 2011	Joanne Tompkins, Lena Metuq	Face-to-face	Charlottetown, PE
ED 619N Critical Pedagogy	Oct., 2011	Lynn Aylward, Monica Ittuasardjuat	Distance and Face-to-face	Iqaluit, NU
ED 616N Action Research	Jan. – April, 2012	Sandy McAuley, Marg Joyce, Shelley Tulloch (Monica Ittuasardjuat)	Distance	
ED 632N Leadership in Languages and Literacies	July, 2012	Jim Cummins, Naullaq Arnaquq	Distance and Face-to-face	Iqaluit, NU
ED 617N Issues in Leadership	July, 2012	Jukeepa Hainnu, Cathy Lee (Joanne Tompkins)	Face-to-face	Iqaluit, NU
ED 625N Curriculum: Leadership in Learning	Sept. – Dec., 2012	Fiona Walton, Nunia Qanatsiaq-Anoeë	Distance and Face-to-face	Rankin Inlet, NU
ED 618 Leadership and Reflective Practice	Jan.-April 2013	Fiona Walton, Sandy McAuley, Shelley Tulloch	Distance	
Convocation	June 1, 2013	N/A	Face-to-Face	Iqaluit, NU
Research Symposium	June 2, 2013	N/A	Face-to-Face	Iqaluit, NU

Figure 2. Timeline of Course Delivery.

Content

The Nunavut MEd program was designed to be meaningful for participants' professional lives in the North and to provide academic course content that specifically addressed the needs of Inuit students, as well as the expectations for a graduate program. A strong focus was placed on creating a balance between Inuit knowledge and Western knowledge, and ways of teaching and learning. Students were introduced to and gradually gained knowledge and skills as educational leaders, scholars, and researchers in areas such as:

- Theories and principles of education and learning
- Educational philosophies and perspectives
- Postcolonial history and postcolonial education
- Indigenous education
- Evaluating schooling practices within historical, economic, political, cultural, and social contexts
- Critical pedagogy
- Educational leadership
- Factors which impact educational leadership, including socio-economic trends, school restructuring, curriculum development, and educational technology
- Multilingualism
- Multiliteracies in education
- Indigenous language retention through education
- Integration, resource-based learning, and holistic learning
- Instructional strategies and students' learning
- Alternative assessment approaches
- Leading curriculum change
- Role of educational leaders in negotiating change
- Research design
- Literature reviews
- Qualitative and quantitative research methods
- Autoethnography
- Data collection, storage, and management
- Critical text analysis
- Analytic problem-solving
- Self-assessment and reflexivity
- Data analysis and interpretation
- Research reporting (oral and written)

Course syllabi, included as Appendix F, indicate specific learning objectives and content of each course. It is important to stress that the Nunavut MEd provided a course-based option for a graduate degree. While all students completed a final paper, only one student chose to transfer to the thesis stream of the MEd program (Palluq-Cloutier, 2013). The level of research skill acquired in a course-based MEd differs from that developed while completing a thesis.

Instructional Materials

Coursework included mandatory readings from a variety of perspectives and authors. Students learned from current, advanced textbooks including John Creswell's *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research* (2011), George Kamberelis and Greg Dimitriadis' *Theory for Education* (2006), Margaret Grogan and Charol Shakeshaft's *Women in Educational Leadership* (2010), Jeffrey Glanz' *What Every Principal Should Know About Cultural Leadership* (2006), and Craig Mertler's *Action Research: Improving Schools and Empowering Educators* (2011). Readings from leading indigenous authors and authors from minoritized groups were given prominence, including Linda Tuhiwai Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies:*

Research and Indigenous Peoples (1999), Shawn Wilson's *Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods* (2008), and bell hooks' *Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom* (2010). The knowledge in these textbooks was evaluated and understood alongside publications authored by and capturing the voices of Inuit, including John Amagoalik's biography, *Changing the Face of Canada: The life Story of John Amagoalik* (2007), *Arnait Nipingit: Voices of Inuit Women in Leadership and Governance* edited by Louis McComber and Sharron Partridge (2010), and M. Lynn Aylward's article "Discourses of Cultural Relevance in Nunavut Schooling" (2007). Resources from the Department of Education were utilized whenever possible including foundation and curriculum documents as well as DVDs. A list of course resources is included in Appendix G.

In addition to course-specific reading completed by all students, students self-selected additional readings in line with their specific interests and focus. In 2011 the program purchased a large special order of electronic books on relevant topics for Nunavut MEd students, such as Inuit culture, indigenous leadership, Inuit languages, and decolonizing research. Instructors helped to guide students towards the most relevant and up-to-date literature and resources. The program manager facilitated access to electronic resources by mailing topic-specific USB drives to individual students in communities where low bandwidths and high internet costs made local downloading prohibitive.

While the program relied heavily on reading, oral, and multimedia sources also provided important resources. For example, one course used a short CBC Northbeat production featuring Paul Quassa (Inuit leader, and current Member of Nunavut Legislative Assembly and Minister of Education) speaking about community input into research projects.¹⁰ Oral history presented by Elders in the classroom and collected by students as part of course work was considered part of the rich, advanced literature relevant to the program. In keeping with Inuit standards for the most credible knowledge based on first-hand local experience, students' and guests' personal testimonies were mobilized as course content. Instructors and guests also employed modelling, observation, and hands-on techniques as strategies for sharing course content. Students were exposed to a wide variety of high quality resources from a variety of genres and authors, with relevant Northern and indigenous content that respected credibility from both Inuit and academic perspectives.

Technologies and Learning

The Nunavut MEd used technologies workable in Northern contexts to enhance learning. Knowledge Forum (KF), a distance education platform, was used for both for the online courses and to enhance face-to-face learning. Knowledge Forum is an asynchronous web-based knowledge-building environment that worked well with the slow internet connections, and did not require high bandwidth. Knowledge Forum was quick and easy to set up, and allowed students as well as instructors to customize the environment.

Students received a training session on Knowledge Forum at the beginning of the program in October 2010. During this time they learned how to access readings posted online, how to post comments to one another, and to reply to comments from instructors and fellow students. Instructors also received an informal overview of Knowledge Forum as they joined the program. A strong community of learners was formed during face-to-face sessions, and Knowledge Forum provided a way for students and instructors to remain connected with one another during distance courses.

Students and instructors also used telephone calls to stay connected orally during distance learning courses. Phone calls supported and enhanced Knowledge Forum-based learning by providing a more direct and personal touch to maintaining connection and motivation, ensuring points of confusion were promptly addressed, providing individual feedback and setting personalized goals for the next steps in a course.

¹⁰ <http://www.cbc.ca/video/#/News/Canada/North/1305554399/ID=1798056074>

Activities

Activities within the MEd were designed to address the whole person, and equip students for the rigorous academic program. As previously stated, in addition to courses described above, students attended a two-day orientation prior to the first course. The orientation introduced students to the structure and flow of the MEd program. It acquainted students with Knowledge Forum, and outlined keys to success in online courses. Most importantly, the orientation session gave students a chance to build rapport with each other, to meet the GN representatives involved in program organization, and to hear from graduates from the 2006-2009 cohort who provided advice and suggestions for experiencing success in the MEd program. Students began to get to know one another through writing and presenting autobiographies, spending time together, and initiating dialogue with one another in the guided discussions and small-group activities. An introduction to academic reading and writing at a graduate levels was also provided. Starting with the orientation, the students began to strengthen connections with one another and build a community of learners.

Activities that nourished students' spirits and bodies as well as their minds were built into the program. A counsellor was engaged for the duration of the program; she attended face-to-face classes and was available to students during distance courses. During the face-to-face courses, the counsellor led students in short wellness activities each morning. Students also symbolically lit the *qulliq* (Inuit oil lamp carved out of stone) each morning in one face-to-face course. Students reconnected with *Nunavut*, 'our land', midway through the course when they enjoyed a visit with guest speaker Leena Evic at her 'tent' in the Sylvia Grinnell Park just outside Iqaluit. Students shared several feasts of country foods, often with Elders. They also experienced the local geography and foods of Prince Edward Island while attending two courses at UPEI. Students participated in a boat tour of Charlottetown to learn some history of the area. On another occasion, they travelled by bus to PEI's North Shore to explore the beach. Students relaxed and connected with one another outside of the classroom, then enjoyed a traditional lobster supper. These social activities created time and space to relax and rejuvenate during an academically and emotionally challenging program, and also allowed students to experience more of the program's diverse locations.

Languages of Instruction

English was the primary medium of instruction, although students and guest speakers were encouraged to use Inuit languages. In oral or informal communications, students, instructors, and guests addressed each other in their language of choice. Writing-in-progress sometimes occurred in Inuktitut (e.g. Knowledge Forum entries; journal entries). Sophisticated use of Inuktitut was heard and spoken when Elders addressed the students in particular courses. Nonetheless, 'language of choice' was limited when addressing non-Inuit instructors who were not fluent in Inuktitut. Almost all of the readings were in English. Written assignments were generally submitted and evaluated in English. While the program worked on students' English language writing skills, it was not designed to concurrently enhance students' Inuktitut writing skills, which would have had strong value for educators working in Inuktitut-first language contexts.

Recommendation 1. Teach formal writing skills in Inuktitut, as well as in English. Create opportunities for students to complete assignments in Inuit languages, including more lengthy papers.

Student Evaluation Methods

Courses were writing-intensive. Assignments varied depending on the course, but across the program they included daily journaling, critiques of readings, reflection papers, short autobiographies, language and literacy autobiographies, focused bibliographies, critiques of curriculum documents, research proposals, research ethics applications, and independent research papers. In the face-to-face courses it was typical for students to work on a 20-page paper, which was completed throughout the week and then formally presented to fellow participants towards the end of the course. Distance-learning courses included more individual assignments, whereas group assignments were common in face-to-face courses. Students were generally evaluated on their participation in courses and their grasp of course content as reflected in their assignments.

Some instructors introduced more ‘hands on’ evaluation methods. In *Issues In Educational Leadership* (ED 617N), for example, Cathy Lee (PhD candidate, OISE and experienced Nunavut principal) and Jukeepa Hainnu (MEd, UPEI and experienced Nunavut principal) used a sewing kit as a metaphor for the journey as an educational leader in Nunavut. It provided a ‘tool kit’ of strategies required by educational leaders guiding Inuit students in Nunavut or Nunavik schools. Students used this analogy to create and present their own sewing kit which contained items required as educational leaders. Students’ referenced back to their ‘sewing kits’ later in the program suggesting they found this kind of assignment particularly meaningful.

While reflecting after courses, many instructors commented that fewer requirements or assignments allowed students to move more deeply into topics. One experienced instructor reflected, “Less is more, we were more focused on what we were going to do and we knew some of the stuff would be picked up in the [next] course.” This instructor added, in another context, “I have a tendency to try to put too much in.” A newer instructor to the program agreed: “I would have re-thought the number of assignments we had and not have expected as much written work.” Instructors felt that students were very successful when they were given more time to process dynamic understandings orally, through dialogue, with less emphasis on written evaluation.

In considering the design of future MEd programs offered in Inuit contexts in Canada, careful consideration needs to be given to the choices open to students with respect to course-based and thesis-based options. Unless students have an option to pursue thesis-based MEd programs, the numbers of Inuit educators available to pursue doctoral programs will be limited. In other words, while a course-based MEd program offers a relevant graduate degree for Inuit teachers interested in pursuing leadership positions in schools, the civil service, or in Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), it is not designed to provide the level of graduate scholarship required to pursue studies at the PhD level. In the Nunavut MEd, it would have been difficult to provide both these options to large numbers of the students; however, it was possible for one student to transfer to the thesis-based MEd program after completing six courses. This now provides an option for this graduate to pursue studies at the PhD level in the future.

Recommendation 2. Focus on supporting students to produce high quality assignments, rather than a high quantity of assignments. Adding more course assignments does not increase academic rigor. Provide students with time to process information prior to submitting work for evaluation.

Recommendation 3. Provide an option for course-based MEd students to choose to complete a thesis when that is possible

Accreditation

In order to earn the MEd, students had to complete all ten courses, with grades of 70% on all courses. Thirteen students graduated in 2013 and one student defended her thesis and graduated in May 2014. Overall, the Nunavut MEd offered a high quality, relevant, decolonizing graduate program to a cohort of talented Inuit teachers and educational leaders who, for various reasons, would have had difficulty accessing graduate level education in any other way.



PART 2

PROGRAM OUTCOMES



Academic Outcomes

The Nunavut Master of Education program was first and foremost an academic program. A primary goal was increasing the number of Inuit educators with graduate-level qualifications who demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and practices such qualifications entail. The Faculty of Education at University of Prince Edward Island has established standards for graduate-level work, which were respected in this program. Graduation from the program entails that students achieved course objectives and completed assignments with grades of 70% or higher as per the course syllabi in Appendix F. This section of the report presents specific academic outcomes as observed and recorded through research on the program, including critical thinking; knowledge relevant to Inuit education; advanced literacies; and research capacity.

Critical Thinking

A guiding focus throughout the program was building leadership capacity by improving students' ability to reflect, analyze, and interpret situations from different perspectives to develop a deeper understanding of education within Nunavut and broader national and international contexts. When students were asked in October 2012, "What are some of the changes you have noticed in yourself as a result of the program?" one of the top three responses was "improved ability to critically think about and analyze educational issues and problems." A student very clearly articulated this process:

After receiving the information and seeking my own answers to questions that were raised by my instructors I find that I'm now thinking critically about how things should be operating, running in my community and Nunavut as whole. I'm beginning to think more critically and am now

asking more questions. It's great.

When students were directly asked whether they felt they were developing their critical thinking skills, all fifteen respondents completely agreed that their critical thinking skills were improving (Figure 3). The research survey results, together with strong personal testimony, provide evidence that students believe the program enhanced their ability to critically examine issues.

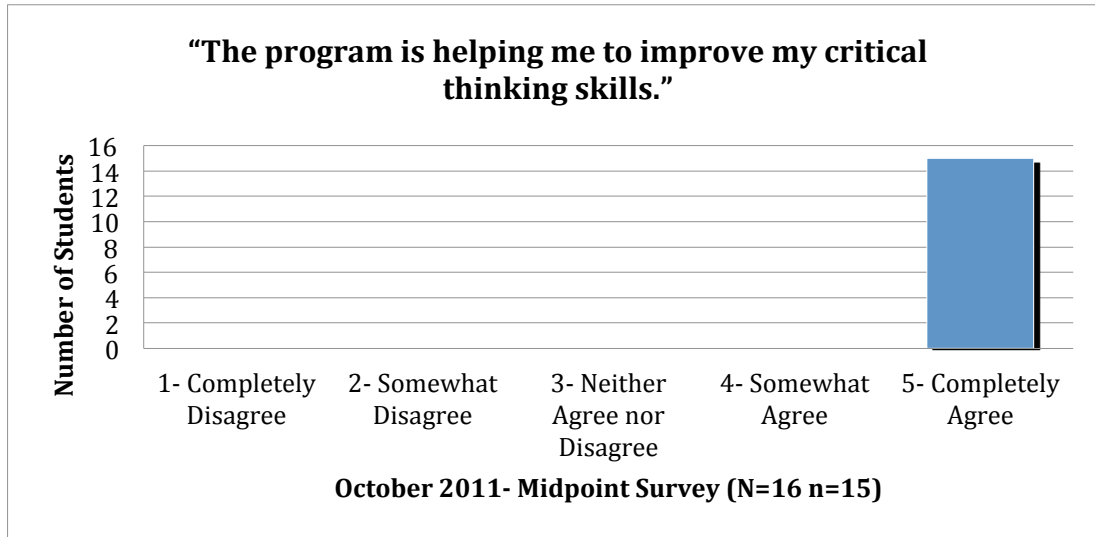


Figure 3. Improved Critical Thinking Skills.

Critical thinking skills helped students to broaden their range of different opinions or perspectives about an issue. A student stated, "I feel like my viewpoint has changed so much, my ability to see the big picture... I feel EDUCATED!" The ability to re-evaluate and question the status quo was also touched upon:

I think this [MED] program will continue to help me grow and improve. The program has challenged me to rethink ... some ideas that have carried me, the program has helped me to re-think, "Is that still the reality today?" Because the things I think about—our society and our situations with language and education—are from my own history and what I've learned. It's gotten me to re-think that, to say "Okay, is it still that way after twenty years?"

A second participant also expressed how she was deepening her understanding by examining how the past had shaped the present:

I have definitely become more aware of things happening, anywhere. I thought I gave everything clear and meaningful thought but I am becoming a little more critical wondering "Why?" and "How [did] things come to be?" My level of thinking has been 'refined'...

In the program participants learned how to critically approach and analyze the past, as well as current situations, "I feel that I can be critical with the whole situation and to deconstruct situations or outcomes that are unsatisfactory and to try and find a better way to deal with it next time."

Students were also able to see the bigger picture related to education in the North. A participant explained that the Nunavut MEd program, "made me become a person who can see from all directions."

Another student explained:

I feel I am not just gaining knowledge from our readings and courses, I am able to think about where our topics are coming from, where we are at, and why as well as where to go from where we are.

Students learned how critical thinking skills were applicable in all aspects of their lives. "[I] became more critical around the environment or other issues in life," one person shared.

Participants in the program explained that critical thinking skills helped them to understand the perspectives of others:

I only wish I knew what I do now from these courses on the first day of teaching, they would have helped me so much. This program is helping me to think critically and how to better understand the viewpoints/standpoints of individual voices from my community, Nunavut and the world. The course content has allowed me to bring a deeper level of understanding and compassion to my relationships with a variety of people.

When asked if the program was helping her develop critical thinking skills, one student replied, “Absolutely and definitely. I am learning to be critical of the decisions for example and not the people. Obviously there will be things irritating me, but I think I will have more tolerance.” While another said, “I am now a critical reader and a critical listener. I follow through immensely with work and with my personal life. I thank God for the opportunity to take this course at the right time in the right place.” Further, on the theme of tolerance and becoming more open-minded, a student said:

The program has helped to open my mind to the ideas of others to the point where even though I may not necessarily agree with an individual but I can understand and see where...she is coming from. Now that I have developed the critical thinking skills in my head and heart I have to now take it one step further and develop my confidence level and voice to share those critical thinking skills with others. Further support for critical thinking as a means to build tolerance was provided by a participant who shared her thinking about a situation from a different perspective can help to build understanding between colleagues. She explained that she had learned to:

Be critical; be equal with others even if they are not Inuit [...] Be more aware and organized in workplace and at home. Really get an understanding of what [the] school system is and how to incorporate I.Q. [*Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*] in school.

Critical thinking skills were also credited for students’ interest in effecting change in Nunavut. “This [program] is helping me go further and ask why and what can be done? Instead of just attempting to understand the why, it is making me think about change.” Critical thinking about education, as one individual explained, “Helps me to recognize my personal power, how I can contribute to society.” Another participant said, “I strongly believe that this [program] is helping [me] to do some critical thinking with my job... and how important we are in our jobs.” Also, “This program has helped me look back, reflect silently and think critically [about] how we as Inuit are so resilient.” Exploring some of the biggest changes she had noticed in herself as a result of the program, a participant explained how influential and life-changing the program was:

I have a deeper knowledge and understanding of how the actions of the past have affected people today, and will continue to do so until we stand up and make a change. [Because of] my increased passion and dedication to the development of the Nunavut Education system, I am better able to understand systemic change and the process it requires to [make it] happen. I am more critically aware, I can detect the hidden messages in things and people now better than I could before and I also can make sense of what happened during colonization, how it affected Inuit people and the process and purposes of de-colonization and the fears of neo-colonialism.

Critical thinking skills enabled students to carefully analyze current and past political and educational situations in Nunavut from many points of view, and also to understand others who viewed the world from different perspectives. Skills such as these are invaluable in future leaders in community and in education in the North. Critical thinking was a key academic outcome, which also contributed to decolonization, to empowerment, to tolerance, to renewed commitment to work, and to education.

Transformative Knowledge

Decolonization of education

Students acquired a broad range of knowledge outcomes in content areas, including the history of education in the North, educational philosophies and practices, indigenous literacies, approaches to teaching and learning, and models of leadership. Their growth came from taking in new knowledge and mobilizing existing knowledge relevant to Inuit educational issues on the one hand, and systematically practicing critical reflection on the other hand.

While courses exposed students to a wide range of education-related theories, principles, philosophies, perspectives and practices, decolonization provided a cross-cutting focus, which distinguishes it from the other Master of Education programs offered on campus at UPEI. Decolonization was taught as a theory; students gained knowledge of the history and impacts of colonization and subsequent resistance and read texts specifically describing decolonizing practices and methodologies. It was also modeled as a practice, where, for example, Inuit and non-Inuit values, knowledge, and communicative systems all had their place in the program. Decolonization was a central theme in the curriculum, and also emerged as an important theme in student evaluations of the MEd program.

Part of the journey toward decolonization involved learning about colonialism, and what it has looked like in the past and continues to look like in Nunavut today. To ground current Northern education and to deepen students' awareness and understanding, the program explored the impact of colonizing practices on Inuit society as a result of the formal educational system, including the residential school system, as well as the Federal and Territorial day schools. The impact of colonization and the importance of personal and societal decolonization were frequent topics in all courses.

Students' responses to questions about what the term 'decolonization' meant to them show they incorporated the concept into their understanding and practice. Responses touched on three main themes: learning the history of colonialism; healing the wounds of the past; and reclaiming power as Inuit. As one program participant explained, one of her major lessons about decolonization was, "Understanding our history and the effects of the contacts from the outside world to our society. With that understanding we can name the feelings we as a society have had on being oppressed and inferior to the colonizers." Another person indicated that for her, "Decolonization means trying to 'unlearn' what the colonizers have brought with them." Students believed that decolonization was also about recovering as a society from the domination experienced in the past. This involves a consideration of colonial practices and being able to, "See how they have affected the Inuit way of being. To look at them with a critical eye and deal with the underlying issues that colonization has caused." A participant explained the way the Nunavut MEd has affected her awareness:

It has made me more critical. It has made me more aware of the history of issues, especially colonization. I never knew these terms before, a lot of the terminology, and the theories made me go, "Oh, I understand now." It's starting to put pieces of the puzzle together. And with those puzzles together, I can feel like I can explain to others who are not quite aware ... because we get stuck with little things because we are missing a lot of the pieces, and I find that being a part of this [program] helps me look and be able to connect all these pieces.

Students understood decolonization as an ongoing and necessary process in the face of ongoing colonizing practices. One student said:

[Decolonization is about] reaching a state of awareness of the underlying forms of oppression, and power struggles that are embedded in today's society. To be able to critically analyze choices or actions that were made as a result of indirect/direct forms of colonization.

Another emphasized the need to continue practicing decolonization:

Unless you face your demon, you will never move forward. And I really believe in that. I had to go through this and deal with [it]. I'm sure I should still deal more with it. And could I say that I've been decolonized? I don't know. And, when I see other people that are still colonized and they say they are decolonized, I just can't agree with them and I just can't agree with their acceptance of, "Oh, we've been decolonized already and we can just move on." I don't—I can't—relate to them because they are just looking at themselves and just their immediate family maybe, and not looking further into their own communities and into all of Nunavut, their whole region.

The program enabled students not only to identify and name what happened to Inuit as a group, but also to draw parallels between their history and that of other marginalized cultural groups:

We have our own understanding of what happened to us as Inuit, but reading and understanding about the different groups of people that were also colonized and seeing the similarities. That's gotten me to understand not just us, where we're coming from, but everywhere. And, looking at the similarities, we can go, "Okay, this has happened to black people in the South. This has happened to other Aboriginal people." Then knowing that we can focus more clearly on what has happened to us as Inuit. With that understanding, we can work on decolonizing and fixing our education system to work for our people—for our children.

The empowerment in this participant's perspective is echoed in the following quotes that tie together decolonization as learning about the past, healing, and moving forward:

For me decolonization has been the awakening and realization of what colonization has done to Aboriginal and Native groups around the world and what we could do within these societies to reclaim and regain some of what has been lost through the colonization process. For me personally decolonization = re-education and then sharing that new-found knowledge and awakening with society to make others aware as well.

And from another student:

First, being able to agree to the fact that Inuit were one of the colonized people and not bury it or deny it. Then the next step for me would be to accept that fact, not hide it in a corner and pretend it never happened. Finally to be able to move on from the hurts and other effects it had, to not use it as an excuse.

Echoed by a third:

I didn't know a lot about colonization, but I knew about oppression and the class differences. But really, the [knowledge about] colonization and the theories helped me to see that we, as Inuit, can be part of that change and that transition in a healthy way and to open that dialogue which is really lacking in my region.

Students' comments above reflect the empowerment that students experienced through knowledge and practice of decolonization, and will be explored further in discussion of non-academic outcomes.

When students were asked in the closed questionnaire whether their studies were helping them to understand the process of decolonization, all participants agreed (nine agreed completely and five agree to some extent) (Figure 4). The students' evaluations of their learning, as well as statements about decolonization, confirm knowledge outcomes in this focus area. Such understandings were gained throughout the program through the teaching and sharing of personal and family experiences. While students had other content outcomes as reflected in the program curriculum, this example of decolonization shows how new knowledge contributed to students' understanding of education in Nunavut and empowered them in their roles as agents of change.

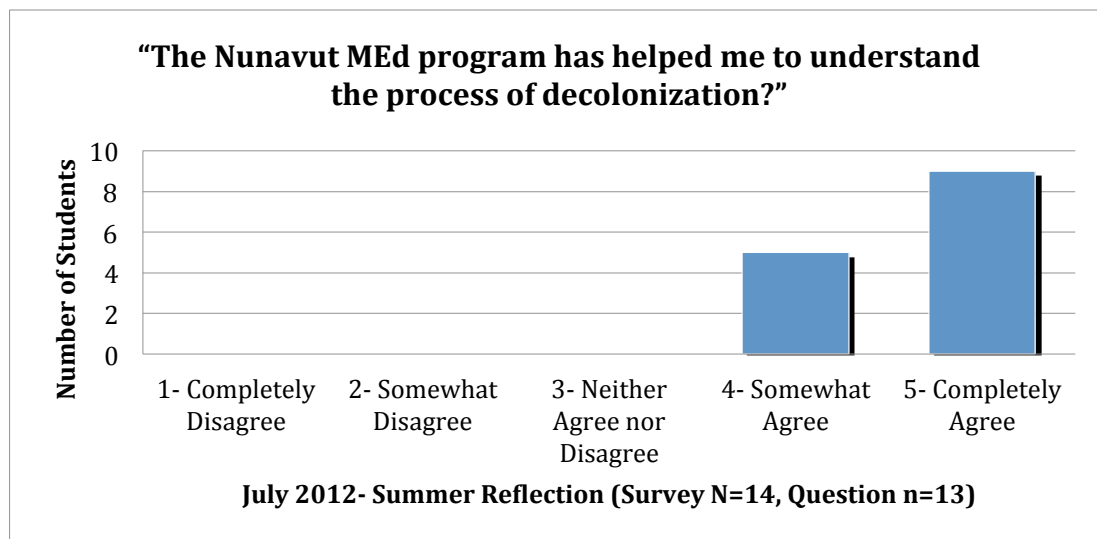


Figure 4. Understanding the Process of Decolonization.

Activating prior knowledge

The students joined the program with rich, sometimes latent, knowledge gained over a lifetime of involvement in Inuit communities and education. One distinctive aspect of the program was the depth and breadth of students' prior lived experiences in education, which came out as profound wisdom joined with the academic theories students were exposed to in courses. A successful teaching practice used was “Starting with their prior knowledge and experience and validating that” through class discussions and readings. One course syllabus explained, “The knowledge that exists within our communities and in our own experience is just as important as the research and theory that has been developed elsewhere.” Using this approach, students' own experiences were mobilized as course content, and educational terminology was added to their personal context. An instructor felt that students learned to “put names on things that they already knew intuitively.” Rather than teaching new information, instructors taught words and theories that helped students to reinterpret and articulate their life experiences. Class activities “provided perspective—provided windows on their own experience and the experience of their colleagues and peers, both growing up in this context and also teaching this context.” As one instructor explained, “They kept reading themselves. [I had] the sense that they could really see themselves in those stories.”

Students' prior knowledge was thus mobilized through ‘naming’ concepts and informed dialogue:

I think the concepts and the ideas that I introduced essentially acted as kind of a trigger or catalyst for knowledge that they already had and so there was a linking together. And in a Southern [Canadian] context, where people haven't personally experienced processes of colonization, processes of subordination ... they don't get it intuitively, and so there is a need for more elaboration, more talking, more reading around stuff.

The instructor explained that in this program, “The insights that people had developed, and their presentations showed a really deep understanding of some of the concepts that we had talked about in the course.” Insights in the course were also related to the ways in which students expressed themselves. “I think they developed a way of talking about power relations, colonization, and how that related to teaching practice in schools, in ways that they probably didn't have before the course.” The knowledge the instructor taught students was how to see their own world differently and how to articulate it using established academic terminology. Again, bringing knowledge to the surface mobilized leadership, as one instructor explained:

All of the things that I brought to the course and that [the co-instructor] had brought were understood at a really deep level, and they [the students] presented these things not as an intellectual exercise but almost as action plans.

Recommendation 4. Acknowledge students' prior knowledge as a valuable contribution to the course. Build on students' knowledge by teaching new theories and terminology. Students gain knowledge by reinterpreting their personal experiences.

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit

Another knowledge outcome that distinguished the Nunavut MEd from on-campus offerings was acquiring *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* (IQ), Inuit ways of knowing and being, alongside the typical content of a Master of Education program. Such knowledge was highly valued by students. One said:

The strengths I see are the Inuit components. I feel that it is very important to hear the Inuit perspectives on life, and then it begins to ground [us], and gives it the richer and deeper meaning[s] that we so need to hear.

Another explained that, "It was very powerful and intellectually satisfying to hear from Elders just as much as the academic studies because Inuit traditional knowledge validates some of the [educational] theories."

Another confirmed that IQ outcomes corresponded with students' learning goals:

I feel I have learned a lot of what I had been searching for all my life and could NOT get any answers. [The program] allowed fellow Inuit to openly discuss Inuit values, something we hungered for for so long.

Instructors pursued the goal of integrating academic and Inuit knowledge into all courses, supported by visiting Elders who shared their intricate knowledge of Inuit culture and language and their personal stories and experiences with education. One student indicated that a major strength was "hearing from the Elders who had experienced life before and after education started, education that is Western." Another reflected, "The program is rich in materials and knowledge of our dear Elders."

Half-way through the program students were asked to rank how satisfied they were, "with the incorporation of the Inuit worldview along with the Western worldview." Results indicated that the majority of students felt that the program was incorporating Inuit knowledge very well. Twelve of the students said that they were very happy, and one was somewhat happy, while two students were content with how well Inuit knowledge was taught through the program (Figure 5).

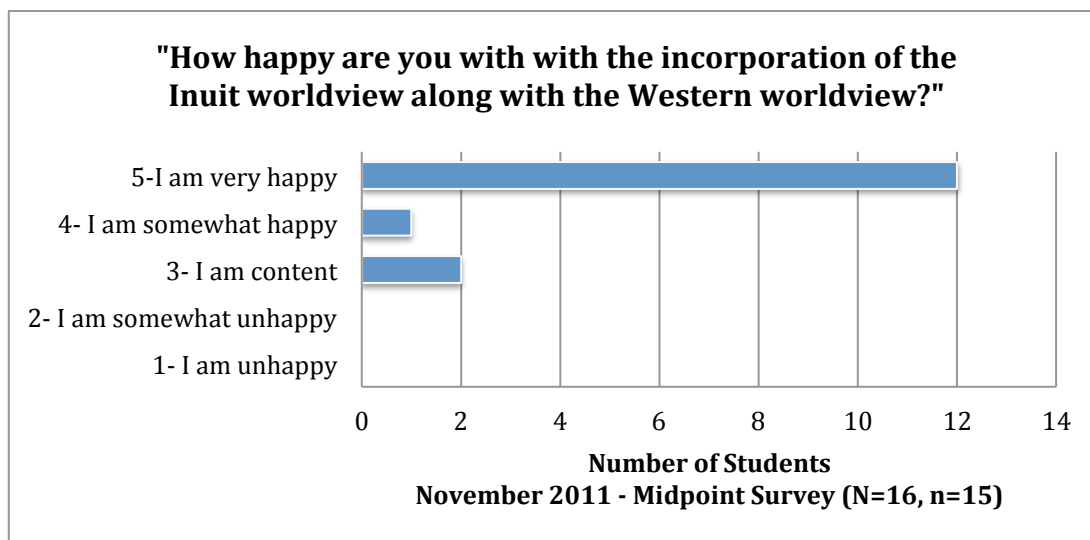


Figure 5. Student Satisfaction with Incorporation of Inuit Worldview.

In the exit survey, students were again asked if the program successfully blended *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* with Western knowledge. A resounding “yes” from all 13 graduates suggests that graduates were satisfied in their acquisition of Inuit knowledge (Figure 6). Comments from participants confirm: “I really felt that I was learning two things throughout the courses, the course content and the Nunavut IQ principles.” “Between the instructors, the Elders and the cohort I feel I’ve got a blend of the two [cultures].” “Because we had Elders who were very knowledgeable to help us learn /or see life. And there [was] so much to read that was given us for assignments that is both for I.Q. and Western knowledge.”

Learning and practicing *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* was a student priority and a priority of the GN Department of Education. Gaining knowledge in this area, as in the others, mobilized students to share knowledge they treasure and that is uniquely held in Inuit communities. Asked in the final survey, “How will your life be different?” one student replied, “I want to help my staff and students to [know] more about Inuit language and culture.” This graduate reflected a desire to be a facilitator of others’ learning, passing on what she received through the Nunavut MEd.

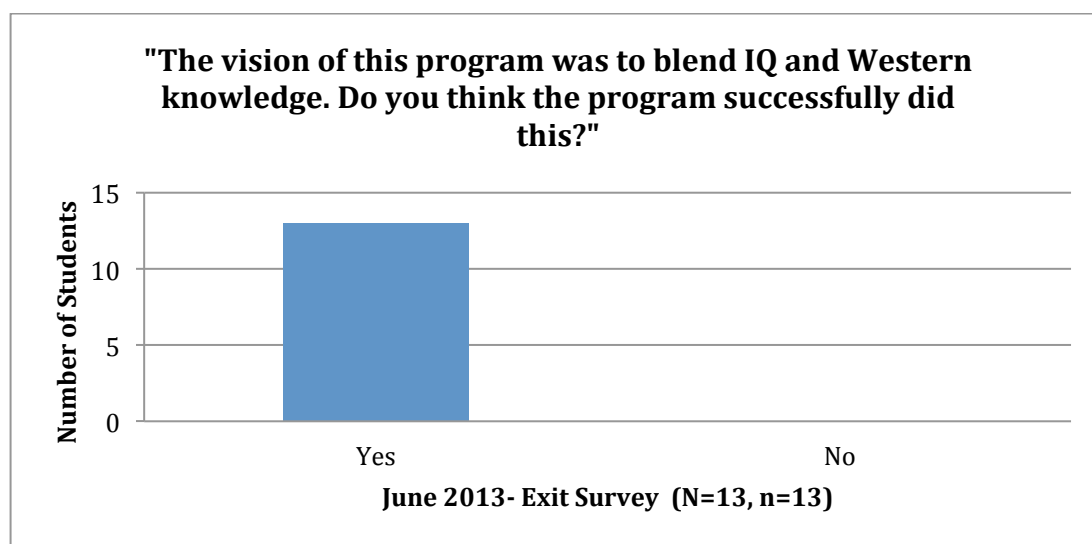


Figure 6. Successful Blending of Inuit *Qaujimajatuqangit* with Western Knowledge.

Advanced Literacies

Common to graduate level programs, the Nunavut MEd equipped students to access, process, and communicate high-level knowledge using advanced literacies. The program was unique in that as a bilingual, bicultural program, the Nunavut MEd actively supported students in developing stronger communication skills in Inuktitut and English, respecting the ‘literacies’ privileged in each tradition. As Street (2000) writes, “Literacy practices vary with cultural context, there is not a single, monolithic autonomous literacy...rather, there are... ‘literacies’ or rather ‘literacy practices’ whose character and consequences have to be specified for each context” (p. 125). Ningwakwe (Priscilla) George, a Canadian indigenous scholar and literacy activist defines indigenous literacy as:

A tool which empowers the spirit of Native people. [...] As part of a life long path of learning, Native literacy contributes to the development of self-knowledge and critical thinking. It is a continuum of skills that encompasses reading, writing, numeracy, speaking, good study habits and communication in other forms of language as needed. Based on the experience, abilities and goals of learners, Native literacy fosters and promotes achievement and a sense of purpose, which are both central to self-determination. (As cited in Antone, et al., 2002, p. 8)

This holistic view of literacy contextualizes the advanced literacy outcomes the students might aspire to, encompassing outcomes discussed above of recognizing and articulating what one already knows, and exercising critical thinking. Within the MEd, students made specific gains in reading, writing, understanding,

and speaking in their two languages, as discussed below. Students had different beginning levels with each language, orally and in writing, as well as with the cultural communication genres associated with each language, which affected final outcomes in each area.

Accessing and processing knowledge

Students learned to effectively engage with new ideas by accessing, evaluating, and understanding different sources of knowledge, in Inuktitut and English. As seen in the IQ section above, access to Elders' knowledge is not a given, even for Inuit in Inuit communities. The program supported students in accessing Elders' knowledge and Inuit oral history, including learning to draw out this knowledge; understanding the Elders' rich language use; and acquiring new Inuktitut vocabulary and Inuit genres particularly within oral communication. Orality has traditionally been favoured over writing in Inuit societies, and it is not surprising that the most noticeable outcomes in Inuktitut literacies were in accessing, processing, and communicating knowledge orally.

Students also made gains in their capacities to access and process new knowledge in English, both orally and in writing. In instructors' and guest lecturers' presentations, as in readings, students were exposed to advanced uses of English and specialized vocabulary, which they incorporated into their own practice. For some, functioning within a graduate program in which English was a main medium of instruction was a challenge. Nonetheless, students' summaries of readings, as well as their practice of incorporating content and vocabulary from readings and lectures into their class contributions, in many cases reflect high level processing of ideas they were exposed to in courses. These gains in receptive literacies are ends in themselves, but they are also important stepping stones to further development in advanced literacies; ongoing exposure to the types of language students wish to master is one of the most helpful conditions for moving forward.

Students developed the ability to access, evaluate, and synthesize credible sources of information through libraries and online databases. This practice was well acquired by some students, who produced, for example, annotated bibliographies on particular subjects and adeptly integrated academic sources that they located on their own into their original research. Others seemed to struggle, partly because they had little background with the practice and possibly because of epistemological differences between Inuit and Western traditions about what constitutes a credible source and a well-articulated position. For example, value placed on first hand experience versus academic credentials; on storytelling versus linear, quantitative proofs. In these areas, instructors worked to recognize Inuit equivalencies, where possible. For example, while consulting academic literature was still mandated, students' consultation of oral history, through dialogue with Inuit Elders, was considered part of "literature review" in an Inuit context. In these ways students and instructors worked together to shape and balance program outcomes related to accessing knowledges valued as academically credible within Inuit and Western worldviews.

Willingness to communicate

According to MacIntyre et al. (1998), willingness to communicate is the most important precondition to improving orality and literacy in a second language. Willingness to communicate, orally and in writing, in both languages, was deliberately nurtured through the program. Strategies for encouraging comfort in communicating included creating intellectually, emotionally, and culturally safe spaces for articulating one's ideas; including a wide range of options for self expression; encouraging students to speak in their language of choice; and incorporating short written components evaluated only for content. One instructor, for example, encouraged students to journal, writing private reflections free-form, as a springboard for contributions to class discussions: "[through journaling, students] had a chance to what I call, 'talk back' and they could draw from that in the discussions and [that] made them feel more confident." For many students, an important outcome was in their comfort, willingness, and desire to communicate orally and in writing in this advanced academic environment.

In July 2012, participants were asked if they felt they were becoming more comfortable expressing themselves (a) in writing and (b) orally, and in both cases twelve out of fourteen respondents confirmed a greater sense of comfort when expressing themselves (Figure 7). Many participants felt they had made equal improvements in their confidence speaking and writing, while some felt they had made more gains in their comfort level writing, and others felt their progress was more in the level of speaking. One participant shared, "The MEd program has allowed for some growth in me. I am one who does not do well in sharing personal experiences orally, but writing has become a tool to allow that to happen. I'm grateful for that."

Differences in student experiences are reflected in their comments on the survey sheets.¹¹ Highest levels of confidence were reflected in comments like, "Absolutely [I am more comfortable expressing myself]" and "I am comfortable to express my feelings." Another person felt she had improved her writing, "especially at work." Others recognized improvement in writing as a work in process, and were conscious of their efforts to express more: "I don't feel totally comfortable with it yet but I feel MORE comfortable with it now." "It's a process. I believe I am expressing more and more." "I am still getting better at becoming comfortable and [to] be in a better position to write."

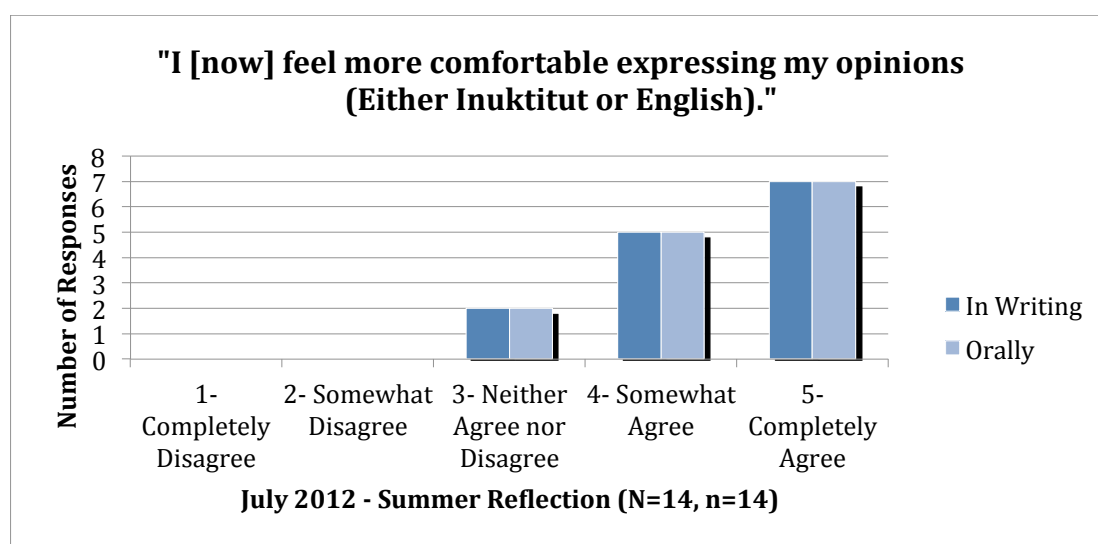


Figure 7. Increased Comfort in Self-Expression (Orally and in Writing).

Students' comments moved from *comfort* expressing oneself to confidence in one's *skill level* in written English, "I am learning to polish my writing skills, which I have always struggled with (writing). I feel I am more comfortable with the process." They slowly gained confidence sharing particular written products with different audiences, "I still have to gain the courage to publish or share my writings with groups and individuals outside of the cohort." Skills in writing, as well as producing for particular audiences, are discussed in the sections below and in the chapter 'Ongoing Challenges'.

Improving written English

The Nunavut MEd set ambitious goals to support Inuktitut mother tongue educators, many living and working in Inuktitut-dominant contexts, to write in English at the level expected of graduate students living and studying in an English language environment. Students were expected to work with advanced vocabulary and grammar, practice writing in multiple genres including journals; autobiographies; critical reflections; research proposals and research reports. They also learned how to start building cogent arguments, according to

¹¹ Due to an error in the online survey space for respondents to explain responses, qualitative responses are only available for students' perceptions of increased comfort expressing oneself in writing (not orally).

Western standards, and applying rigorous APA formatting, as required by the Faculty of Education at UPEI. While this involves ongoing learning, many members of the cohort developed greater skill in these areas.

The teaching and learning related to expressing thoughts that follow the highest standards of written English filled a felt need among the students. One student reflected that her greatest struggle was, "Learning to write again in English since I live in a 100% Inuktitut speaking community." Another wrote:

The greatest challenge is writing a report that illustrates my thoughts. I know I can speak and read well in English, but it is hard to capture the thoughts and try to think of the right words in English. I think it is a learning process so I am hoping that by the end of the program, I will be able to be a better writer.

Throughout the program students were offered multiple supports to help improve their writing in English, including writing workshops; extra writing support sessions in the evenings during face-to-face courses; support sheets to consult and stylistic guidelines to follow; and instructors' editing of successive drafts of students' research proposals, ethics applications, and final research papers during the online as well as face-to-face courses. For roughly half of the graduates, teaching and practice in writing academic English came together with their prior knowledge and experience in powerful ways. Students achieved pleasure and confidence in writing at a high level, independently, though with the help of software resources: "I like writing but the grammar part is helped largely by Microsoft [Office]." "It was quite an empowering process to be able to acknowledge to myself that I do have a free ability to have my voice. Throughout the courses I have learned to practice, utilize and polish my voice." The remaining students exited the program having produced satisfactory work, but unsure of their ability to do so again without the range of supports offered during the MEd program: "I want to do my best in the writing setting, but then I am not sure if I can do it, unless I have someone there to support me in editing my assignments as well."

Instructors echoed students' self-evaluations. They praised the perseverance of students who, with extensive support in successive draft writing, achieved high quality writing that the instructors and students were proud of:

It is really difficult to put into words the strengths and the challenges of the [online, writing-intensive] course. I am so proud of what the students achieved, and yet I feel like I (we) pulled teeth to get there. I know the students and I were both sometimes equally frustrated with them not yet meeting expectations and having to keep re-writing, but I think at the end at least the four [students] I worked with are proud of what they achieved. I am certainly extremely impressed with what they produced.

Observation, as well as common sense related to the sheer amount of practice students had writing, indicates improvement, as one GN representative reflected:

If they progressed in their writing, which I'm sure they did when they look back at those first papers[...] compared to their final papers. If some people did, I understand [that after] five drafts [of their final paper], obviously their writing has progressed.

Still, instructors keenly felt the tension and disappointment of not seeing every student reach as high levels of fluency and accuracy in academic and professional use of English as they had aimed for: "Writing is a great problem for some students." "The weak writing skills of some graduates reflected badly on the calibre of the course." "Two other participants had English writing skills [that] are [at] very low levels and I question the amount of support that was required to enable them to complete their papers. Was this support too much?" Instructors wondered whether expectations and supports to meet those expectations had been appropriately established for students' writing in their second language.

Further, one instructor explained mid-program that writing across multiple genres, and accessing materials written in different genres, was a particular area in need of further development:

Writing clearly in English remains a huge challenge. Students need to continue learning how to write effectively across a range of genres: letters, proposals, reports, even e-mails. Structuring argument is weak and needs more support. This is linked to critical reading and the ability to comprehend what an

author is suggesting or arguing. Students seem to believe that their critical sensibilities improved a great deal...but they are just emergent [academic writers] and need further development.

According to another instructor:

Some writing difficulties seem linked to problems with a very Southern logical/sequential attitude. The research paper template, even for a qualitative approach, entails separation of different pieces of work and step-by-step progression.

Instructors observed that some challenges experienced by students might be the result of conflicts between the narrative styles and structures of 'proof' in English and in Inuktitut. One finding is that students achieved strongest outcomes when encouraged to access sources and write in genres that fit both within Inuit and Western epistemologies. For example, students tended to write best and respond best to publications when working within autoethnographic, autobiographical, or narrative frameworks, systematically reflecting on and telling one's own story based on rich description and personal experience.

Instructors were faced with dilemmas in this program that would not be as frequently encountered in programs that include students speaking English as a first language and that take place in English-dominant environments where multiple writing supports would be available outside the program. Reflecting on the accessibility of the Nunavut MEd program and the support she received within it, one graduate commented, "I know I would not [have] passed [without the support] because of my poor English. Thank you so much for accepting me even when I struggled over the three years." Interpreting the strengths and weaknesses in English writing outcomes alongside the program's goals of remaining accessible and responsive to Inuktitut first language speakers remains an open question.

Writing and speaking for public audiences

Partners within the Nunavut Department of Education, as well as members of the Faculty of Education at UPEI, expressed strong desire for the students' work to be published and shared with the Nunavut community. During the majority of courses, students presented their papers or assignments to their colleagues in the course, as generally takes place in other course-based MEd programs. Presentations within the cohort allowed students to improve public speaking skills, share their insights, and elicit feedback from their instructors and peers. Results from final research projects were presented orally at a public research symposium in Iqaluit on June 2, 2013. Some written work was also shared publically. In an early course, students wrote a brief autobiography, which is now posted in summary form on the Nunavut MEd website (<http://projects.upei.ca/nunavut/student-biographies-2010-2013>), and included in Appendix E. Students also wrote abstracts of final research papers, published at <http://projects.upei.ca/nunavut/files/2013/09/Nunavut-MEd-2013-Abstracts-KW-Edit-May-29.pdf>, included as Appendix H. Final research papers were edited with a view to publication in a joint volume. In addition, some selected writing from theses, as well as final Nunavut MEd papers from both cohorts, will be published in an edited book through Canadian Scholars Press/Women's Press (Walton & O'Leary, in press).

Students learned to write at high levels in order to be able to share their ideas and knowledge publically. However, questions were asked about what it meant to offer a bicultural program to Indigenous students when the products at the end of the program were so focused on reaching content and style at academic levels that merited sharing with the public. Very few course-based MEd students in most graduate programs offered at that level in Canada actually publish their writing in academic journals or books. While MEd theses are available through online sources, most are never published. High academic expectations, coupled with students writing in a second language placed a great deal of stress on students and instructors alike. Due to the emphasis on publishing, one instructor said, "I think we over-focused on academic writing. I would have preferred a wider focus that encouraged confidence, voice, coherence, and fluidity over a single genre. Our students were held to standards far stricter than those in general MEd programs." These questions remain open and will be discussed again in the chapter, 'Ongoing Challenges'.

The Nunavut MED was ground-breaking in its attempt to support students in developing an academic voice in their mother tongue and in English, respecting the communicative norms and genres of each tradition. Graduates' abilities and practices related to the advanced literacies developed within the program vary greatly, as one would expect in a bilingual cohort in which participants entered the course with very different levels of literacy in each language. For some students an appropriate target outcome was increasing willingness to communicate more extensively across a variety of genres and that is where their main gains are seen. Such students, and their instructors, acknowledge that for some students, written English is still at a level where an academic struggle in an English mainstream graduate context would continue. Others came into the program much more familiar with speaking and writing for public audiences, and benefited from the program to further refine their skills and confidence. Students at this level were writing academic papers independently and as well as any graduate students. A few students were writing at a level of scholarly strength that merited publication. While students, instructors, and administrators may well have wished for *more* to be achieved by a greater number of students, this does not negate the fact that all the students improved greatly, and some students reached high levels of independent academic writing.

Research Capacity

Students graduated from the program with the tools of emerging researchers, capable of contributing to the field of Inuit education. This achievement is seen in their passing grades in three courses focused on research methods and reporting research results, and perhaps most convincingly in their design, execution and presentation of independent, original research projects. In these projects, graduates, as emerging researchers, developed and implemented innovative methods inspired jointly by Western scientific traditions and Inuit ways of knowing and learning. Methods included use of family trees, oral history, autobiographical narrative, journaling, story-telling, kitchen table talks, observation, questionnaires, and interviews. Research focused on issues close to the students', and their communities' hearts: healing; cultural grief; relocation; decolonization; identity; cultural values and pedagogy; *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*; Inuit leadership; music and language learning; cultural programming; reaching out to young males; Inuit literacies; language maintenance; bilingual education; and standardization of Inuktitut. The students' research raised difficult questions, yet as community members their work was imbued with knowledge of unique strengths alongside challenges allowing for action and solutions-based approaches. Students reflected positively on their achievement as researchers, and the impact they believe they can have with these new skills. One student wrote that she gained the power "To write papers that I feel have the possibility to change the education system within Nunavut with practices and plans of actions." As mentioned, research results were presented at a public Research Symposium and abstracts are included in Appendix H.

While some students moved smoothly into the role of independent researcher, others faced some barriers. The lowest course success rate seen in the program was in the *Action Research* course (ED 616N), which five out of sixteen students failed to complete successfully.¹² The course involved development of research proposals that included research questions and methods and then completion of two extensive applications for approval from the UPEI Research Ethics Board and the Nunavut Research Institute (NRI).¹³ If the proposal met the required criteria of these ethics bodies, the student could then start the research project. The stringent requirements for submission to these ethics boards provided the students with significant challenges.

¹² ED 616 was also the second distance course. We are not suggesting that difficulty reaching research capacity outcomes was the primary reason for attrition, but that the high challenge of navigating ethics boards and licensing may have been one factor.

¹³ Research involving human subjects requires permission from overseeing agencies, to protect possible research participants. In addition, sharing of research with the public required that full research proposals were to be submitted to both the Nunavut Research Institute (NRI) and the UPEI Research Ethics Board.

Reflecting on this course, it was questioned whether requiring students to navigate their way through the Nunavut Research Institute license application, as well as the UPEI Research Ethics Board application, had been too ambitious. Students were asked to write ethics proposals for which they would be accountable to external agencies, who in turn were upholding Tri-Council Research policies developed to meet the highest requirements for working with Indigenous people. Successfully moving through two ethics boards is very difficult, even for experienced university researchers. Ironically, barriers that were put in place to protect Inuit as research participants became bureaucratic hurdles that blocked these emerging Inuit researchers. The ethics procedure was demanding for students, instructors, and reviewers at the UPEI Faculty of Education as well as at the Nunavut Research Institute.

In the end, several students altered the focus of their final papers to tell their own stories, using reflective practice or autoethnographic methodologies that did not require the same level of proposal development.¹⁴ Students had valuable personal insights and experiences to share. Instructors believed students' personal stories may have been more important to write and share than engagement in more formal investigations with human participants. Writing their own stories gave students an opportunity to engage in deeper level thinking about their personal experiences as they documented their observations and interpretations. In writing autoethnographies, students produced something meaningful to them and provided a research paper that was valuable for families and in some cases communities.

Reflecting on the particularly time consuming and disheartening process of pursuing ethical approval, it is suggested that this program, and others designed in the future should remember that MEd students are beginning researchers. Drafting an ethics proposal might more appropriately be used as a teaching tool, presented as an option for students who are motivated to do the kind of research that requires it, rather than requiring all students to successfully submit to and successfully gain approval in an arduous ethics procedure.

As in other aspects of the program, students came in with different levels of experience with research and its governing bodies, and different levels of motivation in developing as independent researchers. Some, after careful mentoring through one independent project, left the program equipped to carry through their own independent scholarly research in the future. Others left with a better appreciation of the process that creates scholarly knowledge in a Western scientific sense. All left with an appreciation of their ability to create stories and contribute these to knowledge about education in Inuit communities.

The students' capacity as scholars and the quality of their research production has been acknowledged beyond the program. Graduates were invited contributors to the Forum on Research in Inuit Education hosted by the Amaujaq National Centre for Inuit Education in Iqaluit, February 2013, and thus influenced the resulting document *Future Directions in Research in Inuit Education* (Amaujaq National Centre for Inuit Education, 2013). Graduates have taken their places as invited or peer-reviewed speakers at significant international conferences. For example, Louise Flaherty, MEd graduate, co-presented with Kerri Wheatley, Nunavut MEd Research, Program and Evaluation Manager, at the World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education (WiPC:E), in Honolulu, Hawaii, May 19-24, 2014. Alongside Indigenous educational leaders and scholars from around the world, Louise spoke about *Stepping Forward: Collaborative Community-Based Research to Change High School Education in Nunavut, Canada* as well as *Lighting the Qulliq: Decolonizing Graduate Education in Nunavut, Canada*. As another example, Adriana Kusugak and Jeela Palluq-Cloutier are invited speakers at the joint 2015 American Association of Applied Linguistics/Canadian Association of Applied Linguistics (AAAL/CAAL) conference, in Toronto, ON, March 2015. They will present, respectively, "*An Empowerment Approach to Indigenous Literacy Programming*" and "*A Standardized Inuit Writing System*" alongside other internationally recognized scholars of indigenous language revitalization. Naullaq Arnaquq, Jeela Palluq-Cloutier, and Louise Flaherty recently presented papers at the Inuit Studies Conference held at Laval University from October, 29 – November 1, 2014. Graduates are also taking their places as authors and editors of relevant

¹⁴ Autoethnographies do not require full ethical approval because there is no data collection from human subjects except from individual researcher.

publications. For example, Jeela Palluq Cloutier co-edited and she and Louise Flaherty published chapters in the book *Uqausivut Sivummuagutivut. Our Language, Our Leadership* published by the Iqaluit Nunavut Research Institute, 2014. These academic contributions are evidence of the graduates' expanding roles as recognized scholars of Inuit education.

The vision guiding the three-year Nunavut MEd program was for students to enhance their "academic knowledge, wisdom, critical understanding, and leadership skills" (Walton et al., 2010, p. 16) and in many ways they achieved this vision. Students gained the critical thinking skills to join their life experiences to the theories presented, and communicate these effectively. Outcomes addressed critical thinking, transformative knowledge, advanced literacies and research capacity and they were experienced as personally and professionally empowering. To some, it felt like the most salient academic outcomes were seen in the aspects of the Nunavut MEd that distinguished it most from other MEd programs. Areas where a gap is seen between hoped-for and actual outcomes may reveal areas where program partners and instructors tried too hard to make the Nunavut MEd 'just like any other graduate' at the expense of drawing out other skills and knowledge more in line with students' learning needs and goal.



Non-Academic Outcomes

The academic outcomes discussed in the previous chapter are those students needed to demonstrate in order to complete courses and graduate from the Nunavut MEd program. Although primarily designed as an academic program, the Nunavut MEd also aimed at personal transformation.¹⁵ Students were empowered by the knowledge, skills and practices they developed, as well as through the experience of engaging with each other, and their instructors, course guests, and course materials. As they left the program, graduates reflected, “[The MEd] has more than exceeded my expectations. The program is life changing for the positive,” and “So much growth in me has happened.” Graduates came out of the program strengthened as educational professionals, and also as leaders able to address educational issues, and empowered to bring about change in Inuit educational systems.

When students were asked in October 2012, “What are some of the changes you have noticed in yourself as a result of the program?” and again in June 2013, “Realistically, how will your future life now be different because you now have an MEd degree? (What changes will there be?),” two of the most common types of responses pointed to increased self-confidence and increased sense of personal voice, both related to community level leadership. Other data suggest that students experienced healing, and reclaiming of culture and identity. The following sections discuss these personal changes, gathered from various sources of data over the three-years.

¹⁵ Although this report differentiates between the kinds of outcomes universities usually look for in order for graduates to meet their academic criteria, and so-called “non-academic” outcomes, it is acknowledged that the outcomes are intertwined and indeed reflect indigenous models of learning which tend to encompass the whole self.

Healing

Antone et al. (2002) write, "The Aboriginal people have experienced great trauma in their educational journey [...] Therefore, factors such as healing, reclamation of identity, language, cultures and self-determination, play a major role in the complex issue of Aboriginal literacy and learning" (p. 8). Students found that the process of learning about colonization and decolonization, being affirmed as Inuit women who were also strong and wise leaders, and connecting with the range of people involved in the program, especially Elders, brought them personal and collective healing from trauma and disappointments in their experiences with learning and education.

Students said that their journey toward decolonization, as they now understand it:

Means to let go of past hurts by the colonizers, which have been carried by our ancestors for generations, and to break free from it, and to realize that we have survived for thousands of years without the help of the colonizers. [It means] to break the inferiority complex.

They said, "[Decolonization is part of] the journey to total recovery" and it "has meant healing." One student expressed:

For me it means repairing my health and nursing my wounds from a fall in order to feed my soul as everyone has the right and equal footing on this earth.... Inuit as the colonized are flowers that have been stepped on but are now starting to spring back to life high enough to see the sun.

Gaining knowledge and new perspectives supported personal healing, which in turn inspired students to move forward in support of others' healing:

Thank-you for this very informative program. As an Inuk who has gone through internal colonization, it has been a positive experience to help me to begin to lead me on a healthier road to decolonize my life. I will continue in this path of decolonizing my way of life, spirit, soul, and body and I will be able to help my people as a healthy person who is dealing with the pain of the past. I feel I will be able to use my training to help my fellow Inuit in their paths to begin decolonizing in their lives, in a healthier collaborative fashion

Other comments echoed that the program's coverage of decolonization promoted healing, which liberated students to embrace healthier ways of life, "Dealing with colonization in your life and begin healing and to begin moving on with a healthier way of life spirit, soul and body." Another was motivated "to go beyond the blame-shame aspect, to see the bigger picture. To be proactive in finding a healthy way of deal[ing] with the impacts of colonization and to be careful also not to go back into neo-colonialism."

A representative from the Department of Education also observed students' experiences of healing: Whatever you think the word "healing" means...I think if that's what people thought this course [MEd program] did for them, then that's important. Because to me that means dealing with some difficult things and getting beyond it. If the course did that, then that was a strength of the program. That [healing] was allowed to happen, not very many adult educational experiences give you that opportunity.

Sharing knowledge, experiences and opinions through the program was healing, though emotionally demanding and difficult.

I truly enjoy the opportunity to develop my voice and express opinions based on facts...with colleagues and the faculty appreciating what I have to say. This alone [is] decolonizing, a healing opportunity after being oppressed for almost half a century. It is stupendous.

The program recognized and built on the wisdom women had earned through their lifetimes, and supported them in expressing it in healing ways.

Reclaiming Culture and Identity

Discussions about colonization and decolonization enabled students to deepen their knowledge of Inuit history and issues and their personal understanding of the implications for Inuit society and education:

Once I realized about colonization and what it looks like and how to identify it, I find that it's really important to be able to recognize that before we can be able to decolonize. When I did my paper... I kept going back to the political situation of my region, because I find that our vision is to be decolonized, but there's this wave of going back to almost colonization and I'm trying to push that wave back out, to the vision of being decolonized through education. I find that education is the key to become aware of all the social issues and the power issues so that we can move forward. But, I know I can't do it alone.

Beyond this, Nunavut MEd students also believed that through the process of decolonization they were reclaiming their Inuit culture and identity, an important part of personal growth and well-being. One student explained:

To get out of being colonized. Today we are trying to work on getting back to our (Inuit) culture and - what was lost, to take back who we are as Inuit. The non-Inuit had "put a tent over our heads" and taught us their way of life but our culture was put aside, therefore, we saw less of the Inuit culture.

Another talked about "[taking] ownership or relearning our traditions, and taking back our society in our communities." Another said that because of learning about decolonization, "I must try to find my own place in my culture—find my place in the Inuit society— find my place in the global world. To regain and to recapture the essence of who I truly am."

Participants in the Nunavut MEd program viewed decolonization as a journey from knowledge, to healing, to reclaiming Inuit identity:

Decolonization means to get back our culture and language that had been taken away. What I mean is that we cannot take it all back but at least try to get what we can. Also, there is a hierarchy involved in colonization, to use action and voice in a positive way, to decolonize our Inuit way of life, to become who we are, find who we were, and to have equal treatment as who everybody else is.

The Nunavut MEd taught and practiced Inuit knowledge and culture as part of the program. Students acquired advanced Inuit knowledge, as seen in the previous chapter. Moreover, the healing they experienced empowered them to confidently embrace that knowledge, and themselves as keepers of valuable Inuit knowledge in new ways. From this perspective, learning about and practicing decolonization helped achieve one of the major goals of the programs, student growth.

Confidence

A prominent theme in research data was participants' development of self-confidence. A representative from the Faculty of Education said that one of the strengths of the program was, "confidence building...[both] personal and professional." Students' growing confidence is seen in quotations throughout this report where they write about knowledge they acquired, skills they developed, and changed opinions of themselves.

In her final research paper for the program, graduate Adriana Kusugak wrote about *pijunnautitaaqpaalliqsimaliqtut*, an Inuktitut term which roughly translates 'confidence from skills' as a key outcome in the decolonizing program she documented about the *Miqqut* project in Rankin Inlet. When students spoke about becoming more confident as speakers and as writers, more able to think critically, and more hopeful that their research and writing can make a difference, they conveyed confidence coming from increased knowledge and skill:

[I am] gaining the confidence and skills to raise issues and speak my mind while listening to my heart... the message does not have to be big or ground-breaking either, it simply has to be something that you are passionate about, believe in, value and are willing to stand behind or lead.

Asked how her life would be different, now that she had completed an MEd, one graduate said, "I will have confidence in what I am asked to present, knowing I have a degree to back me up." One student summed up the feeling, "I feel prepared to tackle anything that comes my way in the future."

Confidence also came as students embraced decolonization, and felt affirmed in the value of their culture and identities:

I am forever grateful for Nunavut [Department of] Education who believe[d] in me, where I do not because of [my] past experiences. I believe when I am done [that] I will truly believe in myself. I will believe I can do things to make a difference in the North for the Inuit young and old who are in my situation and make them believe they are capable and that they have the voice and thoughts that are useful ... All oppressed can believe in themselves and be capable of making ones life better and for their community.

Students gained greater belief in themselves: "I have become more confident in myself. It truly is a leadership program allowing us to step up and take action, at least say something."

Students expressed newfound confidence as an increased willingness to take risks, "I am more willing to take risks, speak my opinion, trust my instincts, not simply be a people pleaser but work hard for what I believe in;" "I am learning that mistakes help me grow even more, so I am becoming less afraid to try what I want to. It really does help to just do it, give it a good honest try;" "My maturity will catch up soon enough and I have confidence in myself that I never had before which will allow me to try doing more but still in little steps." Confidence empowered students to move forward with less fear of failure or negative judgement.

Confidence helped students to be forward looking and hopeful. One expressed her optimism, "Many doors have opened for me. I have the right to choose which one to go in to." Another said:

Honestly, I really don't know yet [how my life will be different now, with an MEd]. I've been asked that a lot this week and I haven't been able to answer it. However I know that a multitude of doors, I haven't even seen yet, have opened for me—It is now my job to go find them and walk through them.

Another wrote: "[Now that I have completed an MEd] I am ready for challenges coming my way and have a positive outlook on making positive differences." The confidence that students gained in the program will help them to speak up, share what they have learned, and feel willing to take on new opportunities in the future.

Voice

Another strong theme from student interviews and surveys was the concept of *nipiga*, 'voice.' Coursework was designed to increase students' awareness and practice of personal voice. The following quotes reflect what the word 'voice' meant to Nunavut MEd students, "Voice is something that is unique to each individual person and does not necessarily refer to the sound coming out of your mouth." "[It] is something that no one can take away from you. It's yours and yours only." "Silently or verbally standing for what I believe in."

Students related 'voice' to confidence to share opinions and be heard, "Voice is a form of self-expression, to have confidence to speak, write and be... it was quite an empowering process to be able to acknowledge to myself that I do have a free ability to have my voice." They saw voice as a tool to educate and enhance understanding:

To communicate, to illustrate your position and perspective. It allows you to carry your personal style and power within you. It is also a way to educate other people anywhere, who will listen, to understand better about you and where you come from.

Voice was also expressed as a form of leadership and advocacy, "Voice to me means, that I am standing in the gap between the Inuit, students, community, etc. and I am talking for them, *Inuuqatikka* on (behalf of my people)." "Voice is powerful—you use this power to help others."

When participants were asked if they experienced improved personal voice as a result of the MEd, all indicated that this was the case. Eight out of fourteen respondents agreed completely, and the remaining six agreed somewhat (Figure 8).

While all students advanced in expressing their concerns, ideas and experiences, the actual level of "increased voice" varies from student, as each student came into the program with different experiences exercising her voice. Many of the students, although they were experienced Northern educators, described themselves as 'shy' coming into the program but said through the program they were becoming more confident

with their voice, “I truly have a voice but I am shy as always to use it, but if I have no choice then I will use my voice.” “For me personally, I have been a very shy person for too long I can’t seem to overcome it. This program has helped in a big way to try to overcome my shyness.” Participants expressed how they had been timid to share their opinions but had started to develop the courage to speak out, “I have noticed and have noted that my voice is becoming louder... At first it was a squeak here and a squeak there but now it’s more comfortable to speak. [I’m] getting there.” “I am willing to try to speak up more, not stay quiet anymore.” For women who still live with the baggage of colonial policies and practices that ignored or tried to silence and eliminate Inuit voices, becoming comfortable hearing one’s own voice and voicing opinions is a noteworthy outcome.

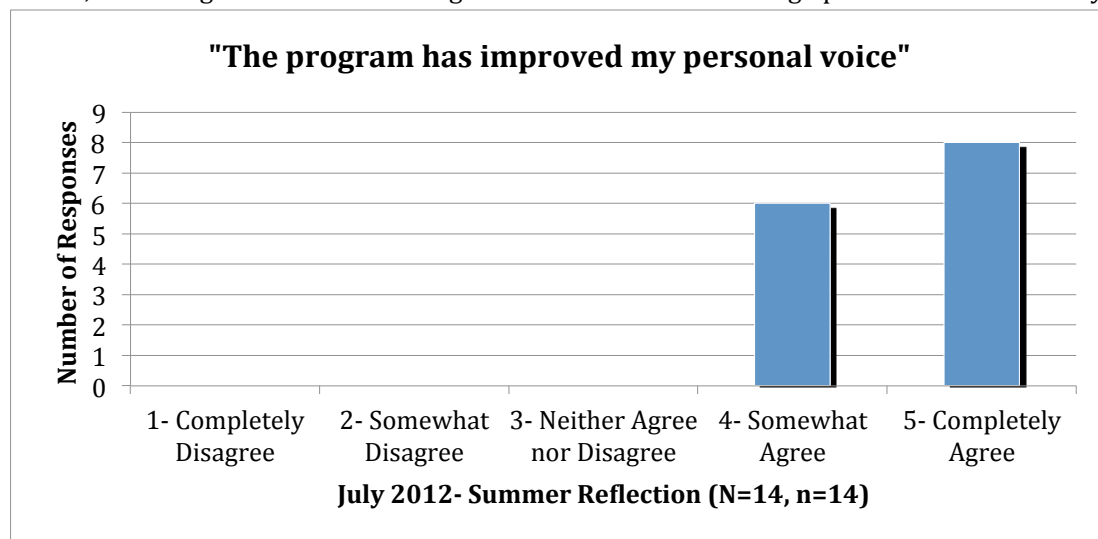


Figure 8. Improved Personal Voice

A representative from the Nunavut Department of Education commented on the significance of students’ increased voice:

That’s actual self-growth, I was really happy that they got up and spoke, because sometimes ...we don’t have the confidence to stand up and speak... And so the ability to be able to speak your mind and speak your voice [is important]. I was really impressed with the [students’] presentations, I knew they had a voice.

Developing self-confidence and the ability to speak out to share opinions was a journey. The classroom acted as a safe training ground for students to practice sharing their opinions and voice their opinions, “[It] helps me a lot verbally to use my voice to other people who I am not used to speaking with.” The respectful learning environment created in the courses enabled most participants to freely express their opinions. It also built connections between students and instructors and between students that created a safe space, an essential condition for the growth of voice and confidence. Students explicitly encouraged each other to embrace their own voice. For example when the Research Manager asked students what they would say to cohort members to encourage them in the program, comments included, “I am here to listen if you need things to take out of your system. The Inuit need you to speak for them. You have come this far and only a few more to do. Let’s do it!” and “Focus on what you want to express.” Students said the program had lived up to their expectations because of the outcomes they observed in increased voice: “The program has helped a lot. Yes it has lived up to my expectations, by helping me to find who I am, and to have voice.” Voice was thus part of the motivation to take and stay with the program, and was a noticeable outcome for many students.

For some students, the increased confidence and voice coincides with increased leadership at the community level. Students saw how their voices have impact, “It’s okay to be shy, and yet I did realize that I have something to give to affect someone else’s life. In a positive way.” Students felt that because of the program, they may now step up to speak in the community, schools and workplaces, and to address issues in Nunavut education, “I have surprised myself [with] the strength I have gained in my voice in the community, in

the school and when we have face-to-face meetings.” “I have realized that I have stronger voice now in my community. I somehow realized I can use my voice if I strongly believe I need to use it.” When asked how their lives will now be different with the MEd degree, about half the graduates referred to changes in personal voice, with comments such as “[Having an MEd] will help me to voice out my concerns;” “I will continue to voice the need to be aware of the decolonization process and to contribute;” and “I have found my voice. I’m a better listener. I’m a stronger advocate for my students. I’m a better educated speaker now.”

The final quote above reflects how students developed a more sophisticated, informed and appropriately discreet personal voice. Students also commented on learning to use discretion in when, where and how to use their voice:

I have realized that my voice is changing through this process of taking my masters. I feel that before we can "voice" our voice, we need to reflect and be sure about what we would like to voice. We shouldn't just talk or lecture for the sake of it. Only when we have something important to say or contribute should we speak up and out. Therefore, I believe in the process of developing that voice. Through our experiences and those of our cohort we began to see the whole picture and the effect it has had on generations of our people and territory. I feel that we must be knowledgeable in the areas we wish to speak about before we speak about them. Often people are not given credit for their contributions because they speak too quickly or before they've thought things through.

These comments show how other outcomes from the program: transformative knowledge from reading, listening and observing; and enhanced critical thinking and confidence, come together to amplify voice as a personal outcome, and contribute to more meaningful and effective contributions to debate on educational issues.

Results from the survey, along with the large body of participant testimonials related to this theme, confirm that the program increased students’ ability to value their voices and use them to share their opinions. As in other aspects of the program, women entered the program with different levels of comfort and ability to share opinions and perspectives. The difficulty that many participants had in expressing their opinions prior to the program, particularly verbally, is significant in understanding the degree of hesitation and discomfort these established educators felt when expressing themselves within the group. It speaks to the forces that have constrained voice and verbal expression among Inuit, even those who hold Bachelor of Education degrees. These forces are related to a colonial history. Even as they graduated and presented research findings at final research symposium, some students were noticeably more at ease than others. There is a tangible fear related to sharing perspectives in public and this needs to be acknowledged in all educational spheres, possibly all across Inuit Nunangat, if change is to take place. These findings have implications for professional learning and leadership development as it means that special attention and care is required to ensure that high levels of safety and comfort are fostered to enable growth in both verbal and written expression. Voice needs to become a focus in all educational programs offered in Nunavut.

Community Leadership

Finally, student outcomes show that the program achieved its goal of building the leadership capacities and practices of the MEd graduates. Indeed, many of these women were powerful leaders even prior to the program. A representative from the Department of Education reflected, “I really think bringing the women together is a big strength, because they were leaders in their own right before they joined the program because of who they are within their communities and the organizations that they were [at].”

Even so, participants’ comments and instructors’ observations show that many did not acknowledge themselves as leaders, or feel affirmed in that role, prior to the MEd. An instructor revealed:

Many of them [the students] said, “I would have never used the word ‘leader’ to describe myself” ... And I am reminded that so much of education is encouragement and affirmation and that involves everyone in the system. That involves encouraging the children, leaders in the school, teachers, the board, and the principals... This is so important, for them [the students] to name what they do. They don’t name it as leadership and they’re not named in their schools as leaders.

This instructor lamented, “The sense that no one has validated these women, so much of what they have [done], and I see that all the time with women in leadership.”

Thus, one aspect of enhancing leadership was expanding women’s ideas of what it means to be a leader, and supporting the students to recognize leadership traits and roles they already had. In one course, for example, the instructor named different dimensions of the concept of leadership. The students then named leadership roles they held. Through this process, students saw their past in a new light; the program gave them the academic terminology and the theoretical understanding to name their leadership experiences. One student expressed the distinction she was learning, “However, a leader does not necessarily mean a political one, and not to always [to] be in the ‘spotlight.’” Another expressed that she now acknowledged herself as a leader, and was growing in this role, “It [the Nunavut MEd] is helping me find myself. It really is a leadership program, *pilluavik* (real). It is helping bring out the leader that I didn’t think I was, at home as well as at work.” An active community participant recognized how she had always led by setting a positive example, and challenged herself to start leading by speaking out also:

I have always felt like a leader when it comes to volunteerism and work ethic. I lead by example not by my voice. I am working on developing my voice within other levels of society and different fields of knowledge.

These women recognized that as they took on informed, powerful voices, they served important leadership roles in their families, workplaces, and communities.

Recommendation 5. Highlight and name how students may already be practicing concepts or leadership skills that are being taught.

When asked if they felt they were becoming stronger leaders in their communities, students’ responses were positive to neutral. Six out of fourteen agreed completely, four agreed to some extent, and four were neutral (Figure 9). Comments reflected growth in confidence and voice translated into community level action, “Although I do not readily go into the community, I feel like I can start now;” “I can stand up for myself;” “I am stronger and have learned so much. I wish all teachers would take the course [Nunavut MEd].” A few comments expressed hesitancy, “Taking the steps to move forward is a challenge;” “I still feel there is more to learn.”

When graduates reflected on whether the program had met their expectations, and how their lives would be different as graduates, again the concept of leadership was expressed, “[The MEd program] allowed me to comfortably reflect on my abilities & develop my leadership voice;” “I can now make a difference in Nunavut.”

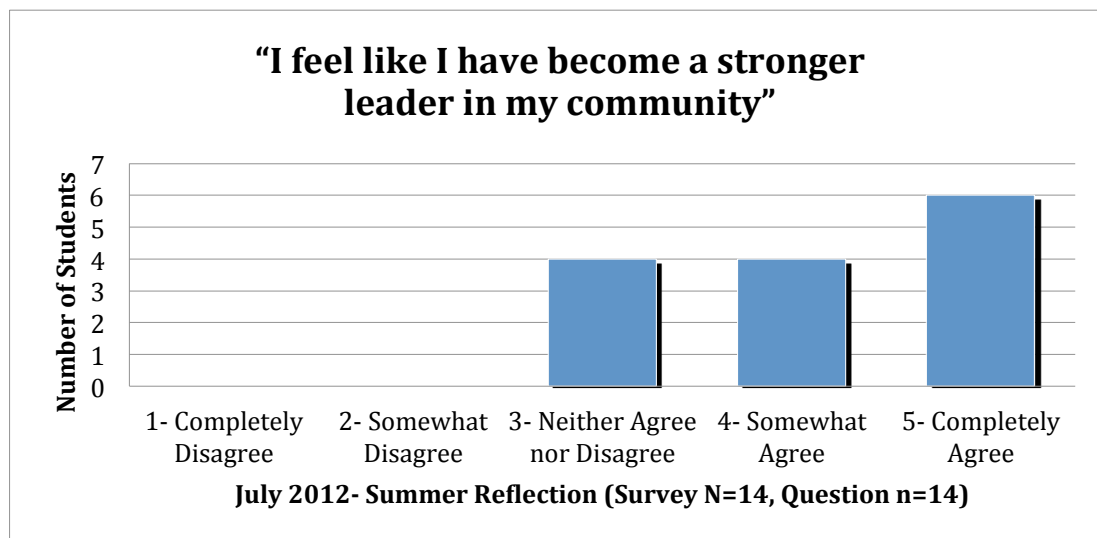


Figure 9. Increased Community Leadership

The program brochure explained to students that the Nunavut MEd was, “designed to enhance your knowledge, understanding, critical awareness, confidence, and skills to effect positive change in Inuit education.” These goals were pursued as an integral part of program design and delivery, from offering language of choice in oral and written communication, to developing relationships, to ensuring a safe and respectful sharing environment. Evidence indicates that students improved their ability to objectively analyze and evaluate situations and to think critically. Results also show that students improved their leadership skills, particularly those related to confidence and voice. Graduates believe these outcomes are already being acted on and are being felt in their wider spheres of influence; however, this process will require ongoing encouragement and support from within the educational system.

The graduates have shown their commitment to leadership and education in Nunavut, and have gained new abilities to confidently speak out, advocating and working toward transformation of the educational system, which ultimately has the ability to improve the lives of all Nunavummiut.

Testimonies from participants in the Nunavut MEd program, as well as from instructors and administrators clearly indicate that students grew personally during the MEd experience. Enhancing personal and professional growth was as much about process as it was about outcomes. The instructional team prioritized respectful learning environments, supporting participants to freely express their opinions. There was an intentional focus on building relationships and connections among students and between students and instructors and on creating a safe space that is an essential condition for personal growth and learning. The results shared above show the changes participants saw in themselves and each other. Subsequent chapters present additional components of the program that contributed to such transformations.



PART 3

SUCCESS FACTORS AND CHALLENGES

Introduction to Success Factors

Ongoing feedback and observation throughout the program allowed for the identification of factors that contributed to the outcomes identified in the previous two parts. The key success factors influencing the Nunavut MEd are presented in four sections: *Piliriqatigiinniq & Inuuqatigiitsiarniq* (Partnership, Relationship, and Respect); Decolonizing Approach; Importance of Place; and *Parnangniq & Aapiliqtailiniq* (Preparation, Hard Work, and Perseverance). The purpose of identifying these areas of success is to ensure they are clearly described and substantiated in order to form the basis for future endeavours in the area of graduate studies offered in Nunavut. While some of these factors repeat findings already discussed in this report, it was considered important to gather the success factors together to ensure that they were fully explicated in order to leave a detailed history for the future.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

I

Piliriqatigiinniq & Inuuqatigiitsiarniq
(Partnership, Relationship, And Respect)



The process involved in offering the Nunavut MEd program is considered to be as important to understand as the outcomes it produced. This process was collaborative and approaches were empowering. There were times when the needs of students were prioritized over theoretical academic focus as time was required to ensure that concepts were fully understood. The creation of space for decolonizing knowledge, practices, and attitudes to emerge was a priority. These characteristics of the program, along with their inherent challenges, are discussed below.

Partnership

One of the Inuit societal values that the program put into practice is *piliriqatigiinniq (ikajuqtigiinniq)*, which translates roughly as ‘working together for a common cause’. Partnerships and collaboration were the foundation that made the program possible. The GN Department of Education and UPEI Faculty of Education worked together to fund, create, and deliver this unique program. Instructors worked together in planning sessions and then during courses to shape and offer meaningful learning experiences in ways that motivated and engaged students. Students made the program what it was by putting forth their best efforts which often meant extensive editing and re-shaping of particular assignments or pieces of writing. This ability to patiently and carefully revise and re-think is a crucial element in any graduate program and ultimately enabled a group of students to graduate with MEd degrees.

Shared intellectual direction

Partnerships made this program possible. During the planning process, the Department of Education representatives contributed their vision for meaningful graduate-level education in Nunavut for professional educators. UPEI worked collaboratively with this vision, making specific and strategic adaptations to its MEd course content and format to ensure the program was appropriate for Nunavut. For example, a new course, ED 631 *Leadership in Postcolonial Education* was created specifically for the Nunavut MEd program and offered immediately following the program orientation as the first learning experience encountered by the students.

A representative from the GN reflected on how important it is to articulate goals, “In order to have the program right, you know you have to have certain [necessary] components... It’s really important to say, ‘We want this to be different’.” This GN representative appreciated UPEI’s willingness and ability to respond to GN priorities, “UPEI was unusual in its flexibility with regard to including Nunavut content.” The GN representative also commented on the need for compromise in partnerships between universities and governments, recommending going into the partnership knowing and holding onto elements that might be non-negotiable for each partner:

I really would recommend to the Nunavut partner, don't compromise the things that you think are of essence to make it a Nunavut program. Whatever those [things] are, whether it's the instructor having experience or the IQ [*Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*] content because... there's so many things you have to compromise on.

The partners’ ability to be flexible on some aspects of a program but firm on others to create an excellent MEd program that adapted to various needs, illustrates the successful teamwork that took place between both organizations.

Recommendation 6. Identify, within program partnerships, which aspects of the program can be compromised and which aspects of the program are non-negotiable.

Funding

Another essential aspect of the partnership was GN funding which made it possible for students to complete the MEd program without paying tuition fees and course-related travel costs.¹⁶ This was possible because the program addressed the requirements of Article 23 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA). In 23.2.1 of the Agreement states the objective as being to, “increase Inuit participation in government employment in the Nunavut Settlement Area to a representative level.” In addition, this clause also states that, “It is recognized that the achievement of this objective will require initiatives by Inuit and by Government.” The Nunavut MEd students recognized the privilege of pursuing higher education, and were grateful to the Department of Education for investing in their education; however, providing a graduate program to Inuit beneficiaries of the NLCA is exactly what is required in order to enable qualified and motivated Inuit teachers to move into leadership positions in the new Territory:

I really appreciate the fact that our Department of Education has allowed me to participate in the course with the support they provided me...For all the years I have spent as an educator, they still invested in me believing in me that I can still contribute to the curriculum reform movement and I will.

Students felt the responsibility to make the most of the opportunity, and provide return on the GN's investment and may not have fully realised that this program was addressing aspects of their rights as Inuit to access an education that would equip them for leadership in the future.

Graduates were asked if they could have completed the program if they had been required to pay tuition (Figure 10).¹⁷ Nine out of thirteen said paying tuition would have been a barrier.

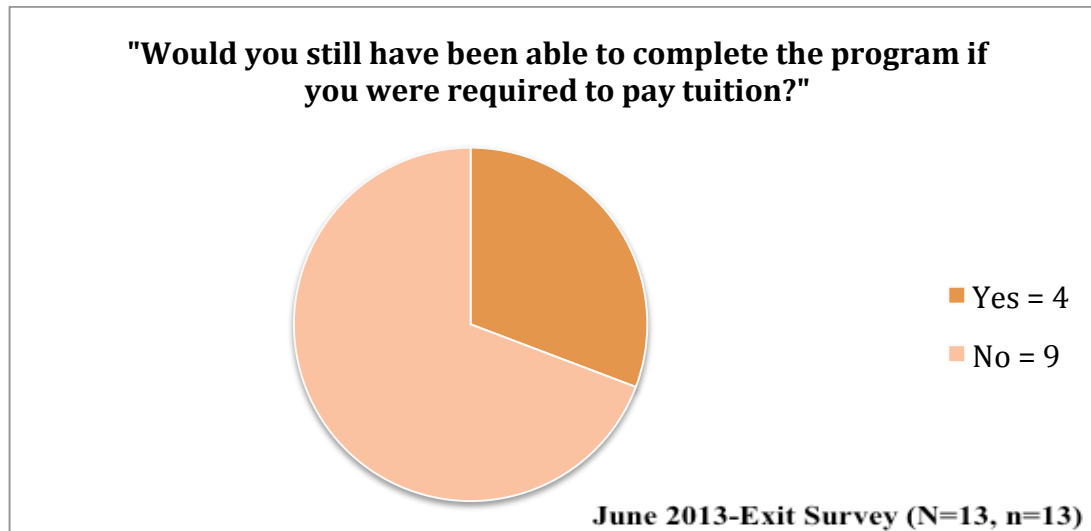


Figure 10. Funding as a Factor in Program Completion.

Many of the women were supporting large extended families, which made it difficult to save money for higher education. They provided explanations, such as, “Again a lot of energy, time, even money is used for family; immediate and extended;” “Inuit help extended families left and right;” and “I am such a family person that I find it hard to save money, but I could have tried.” One person explained that she would like to invest funds in her own education, but another noted that it would not be possible due to the high cost of living in Nunavut.

Paying tuition would have introduced another burden on this group of students who already carry many responsibilities that may not be evident to teachers who come from southern Canada to take on professional roles in Nunavut: “I would be willing to pay some but maybe not all costs. It would have to be

¹⁶ Additionally, participants were not required to complete lengthy procedures to ensure that their funding was approved.

¹⁷ This question did not explore the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students program, it was merely meant to uncover whether graduates would have been able to cover their own costs for the program tuition.

broken up over time too. I think having to pay would be an additional stressor.” Of the four graduates who said that they would have been able to pay program tuition, two indicated that the program location was the deciding factor: “I would [pay] so long as it was available in the North;” “What an opportunity and privilege to take this course in Nunavut for Nunavut.” Due to the financial supports made possible through the NLCA, participants were able to focus on their academic work during the program without worrying about the financial burden of paying for their education. In these ways, the GN, UPEI, and students worked together to ensure access this unique MEd program.

Co-teaching with Inuit Instructors

Effective teaching

The co-teaching model, with Inuit instructors paired with university-based instructors, was a significant benefit of the Nunavut MEd program, acknowledged by students, instructors, and representatives of the GN. A representative from the UPEI Faculty of Education felt that a major strength of the program was having “Inuit instructors working side by side with UPEI instructors.” Having instructors from different backgrounds, areas of expertise, and teaching styles helped students achieve success, “I also like having multiple instructors for one course. It helps us to get clarification or gain a deeper understanding. When we have more than one instructor we are often able to go to either for support or guidance as well.” Team-teaching also permitted greater contact time between students and instructors. The efforts of instructors to check in on students on a regular basis were well appreciated, and without team-teaching, the students could not have received the same levels of support, care, and attention from instructors.

A major strength of co-teaching was that it also supported bringing Inuit and Western values, knowledge, expectations and standards into each course. One Inuit instructor explained, “I think what worked well for me and [my co-instructor] was that [they] were coming from more of Western knowledge [side]...and I...from the Inuit cultural side.” Another instructor affirmed that co-teaching allowed instructors “To offer the course bilingually from the perspective of two Nunavut school leaders.” Instructors drew upon each other’s strengths while team-teaching:

I think co-teaching is an excellent approach. When you’re teaching by yourself you don’t have that second perspective. Two heads are always better than one, so I really value and hope that the university in offering the MEd program [in Nunavut], continues to ... endorse this approach of co-teaching. It’s so valuable, because then the co-instructors are able to discuss issues, concepts, for the course, but also...if there are issues that are arising [in the class], then it really does help having that second person.

Indeed, the presence of Inuit co-instructors helped call into question the role of academic, university-based professors as ‘experts’, a decolonizing practice that was supported throughout the program.

Having Inuit co-instructors provided rich opportunities for the current students to observe Inuit role models in leadership positions. One student said, “The inclusion of Inuit instructors who are graduates from the previous MEd cohort is very energizing and exciting and makes me proud to be part of the program.” Students’ positive reflection on the incorporation of Inuit instructors is seen in their responses to the survey question, “How happy are you with the involvement of Inuit instructors co-teaching courses?” As seen in Figure 11, a total of 11 out of 16 students were very happy, two were somewhat happy, and one student was ‘content’. The final respondent was “somewhat unhappy”.

Comments reflect students’ enthusiasm: “I loved the co-instructing. They worked so well together. Great model;” “[The co-teaching team] were excellent role models of positive, productive educational leaders;” “Both of the instructors were well planned, super organized and made learning fun. The energy of the instructors radiated and [was] inspiring. They used so many strategies to get their message sent across.”

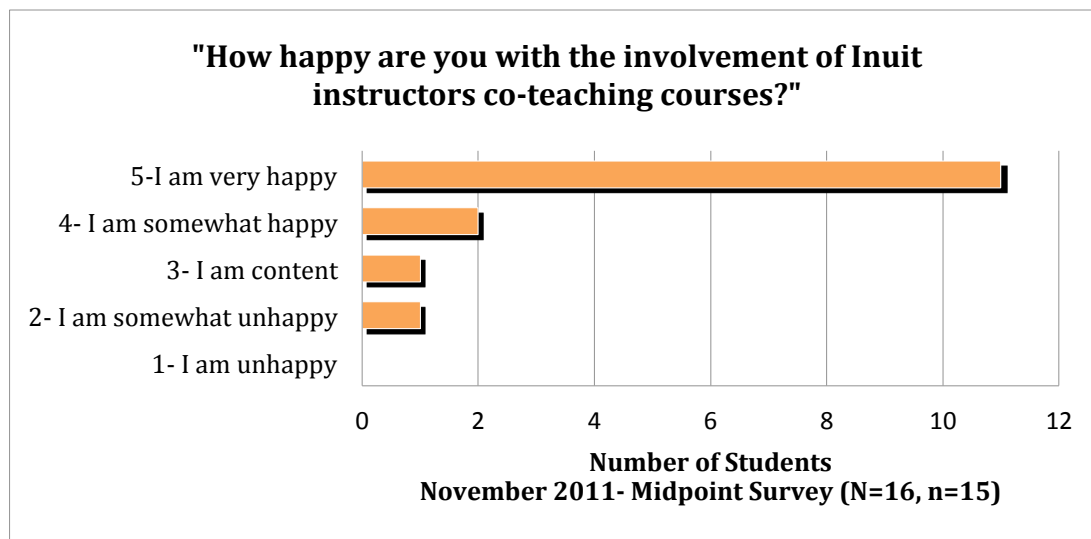


Figure 11. Satisfaction with Involvement of Inuit Instructors.

Mentoring instructors

In addition to the benefits for students, the co-teaching model created spaces for mutual mentoring and modeling related to teaching Inuit adults. In the words of a GN representative, co-teaching allowed Inuit MEd graduates from the first cohort to gain experience and “be mentored for the future.” Including Inuit instructors was, according to the GN representative:

[A] really important learning experience for the graduates [of the 2006-2009 program]. Although many of them are used to instructing and teaching in many different ways before, but still to teach their own colleagues in a Masters program is somewhat different, so I think it was very important to do that.

Graduates were invited to join the instructional team shortly after being students themselves. Their reflections show their process of growth: “Just graduating and trying to be part of it [the instructing team], you kind of sometimes fall into that, ‘No, I’m not a student anymore, oh okay.’ You have to kind of allow space there.” Another affirmed, “If former MEd students would be asked to be instructors, I think it’s really important that they understand they’re part of the program and they can have input as much as they want to.” Inuit MEd graduates, now instructors, learned to take ownership of courses, and step into their new identities as university-level instructors.

One of the challenges Inuit instructors learned to overcome as they stepped into their identities as university instructors was teaching classes where many of the students were the instructor’s professional peers or were older individuals, with whom the instructor would not normally take on an authoritative voice:

It’s easy to associate with the people that you know, and some of them are older. In our culture, some of us who were raised to respect older people or people older than us, even our older siblings. [When I’m teaching] it’s like, “Am I intruding?”... There is that little conscience that you have about respecting the older people. [...] You kind of feel, “Okay they are older, their level of understanding may be a little bit more than my understanding right now.”

The Inuit instructors learned to work through cultural expectations between students and instructors. New instructors looked to established university-based co-instructors as resources to coach them in their role:

If there is to be [a recent graduate as] an instructor, [what is important is] just talking about the comfort level or views of that person who is invited to [teach]. And just try to talk amongst the instructors, like “For this time you’re going to be the instructor.” So [you] don’t worry about some barriers or cultural barriers that you may be thinking about or conflicting in your mind, like *this* is the culture and *this* is the university expectation.

As Inuit teachers gained experience and confidence as university-level teachers, professors from Southern Canadian universities learned about Inuit pedagogies, Inuit knowledge and values by observing and listening to their Inuit co-instructor. They also learned about sharing power, and co-managing classrooms with care and respect.

Co-teaching provided an opportunity to deepen professional relationships, which, when present, helped teaching teams work smoothly: “We were able to pull it off because we had clearer ideas [about] where we were going and because we had the relationship base.” One instructor observed that the negotiation of roles required in co-teaching was achieved most easily when co-instructors already had a trusting relationship and had time to reconnect and plan:

In order to do co-teaching or even to share space in a classroom you need some amount of relationship. I had not seen [my co-teaching partner] in a long time so a lot of that time we spent reconnecting. You know building some trust so you can have that conversation about, “What do you feel comfortable doing? And what will I be doing? And what will the class be like?” It’s a lot of negotiation and getting familiar. We had worked before together but ... there’s a heck of a lot that goes in to that [co-teaching].

Each co-teaching team had different relationships with each other, as well as methods for sharing time and space within the class. To teach in a team setting, both individuals needed to be flexible team-players, and additional time had to be available to ensure that teams prepared together for the courses they were offering.

Negotiating Teaching roles

Teaching roles were negotiated somewhat differently across courses. An experienced instructor in the program commented on the need to continue working to draw the most benefit from the co-teaching model:

In addition, Inuit instructors were sometimes leading courses but in another case they were playing second fiddle...The smooth blending of IQ [*Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* or Inuit knowledge] and QQ [*Qallunaat Qaujimagatuqangit* or Non-Inuit knowledge]... was emergent and far more work is required to integrate Inuit content, Inuit instructors, and Elders into the program.

While in distance courses instructors did not share physical space, different skill sets dictated negotiation of roles, workflow, and division of labour. In one course, instructors struggled to find their respective niche, until the Inuit instructor’s role evolved into that of a “cultural broker” (Stairs, 1995), where her ability to bring the course material to life based on her understanding of Inuit culture and recent experience as a MED student provided an invaluable contribution to the learning.

While most teaching teams worked collaboratively and with great success, and while the benefits outweighed the disadvantages, students and instructors pointed to some challenges related to communication and detailed planning. When given the opportunity to comment freely on the program, a student who was somewhat unhappy with Inuit co-teaching (Figure 11, above) explained her position:

Having two to three professors seems to be slowing down what could be progressing in the very short time we have in our face-to-face courses. I thought that more discussion and learning could have happened in the last course...with one professor. It looks good to have an Inuk co-teaching, but it must be planned well and that it is useful and not slowing things down.

Other informal comments suggested that the co-teaching team did not work as well during this particular course. Possibly due to a lack of planning time, the team teaching was not as balanced as it could have been. The success of a course hinges upon both instructors working well together to ensure focus, productivity, and high levels of learning within courses.

Co-instructors faced some challenges learning how to work together and how to balance Western and Inuit perspectives and teaching approaches. New instructors in the program also struggled to find their place within the instructional team. Yet, co-teaching remained a positive experience for many instructors. As one reflected:

These courses were also among the most satisfying. It would be wrong to stop without saying that the courses I taught in the Nunavut program gave me immense pleasure and satisfaction. Of course, I learned more from my students than ever I taught.

Team teaching is not commonly used at the graduate level, but made it possible to offer more effective learning to Inuit students, following a decolonizing model of education. The combined characteristics of members of each team helped students reach high learning outcomes. Co-instructing also supported mentoring of emerging university-level educators in Nunavut. Therefore, it is recommended that programs offered in Nunavut continue using the co-teaching approach. Program organizers should understand that blending Inuit culture and knowledge with Western knowledge, and Inuit instructors with university professors, can be challenging, but the approach does work and should be built upon in the future. To this end, program leaders should be careful to hire instructors who are comfortable with a team-teaching approach, are willing to work collaboratively, and have the time necessary to plan together. Time is a critical element in team teaching and must be set aside in order to prepare both instructors for the unique challenges of bicultural team-teaching.

Recommendation 7. Advanced learning programs in Nunavut should continue using the co-teaching approach. Hiring criteria for instructors should include instructors' willingness to team-teach and work collaboratively.

Recommendation 8. Programs offered in Nunavut should continue to blend Inuit culture and knowledge with Western knowledge.

Recommendation 9. Co-teaching teams should include Inuit knowledgeable about Inuit language and culture, as well as experienced university-based professors.

Recommendation 10. Build in time for instructors to prepare for the unique challenges of bicultural team-teaching.

Caring and Knowledgeable Instructors

Inuuqatigiitsiarniq, which roughly translates as 'respecting others, relationships, and caring for people' is another Inuit value practiced at the core of the Nunavut MEd. Starting with the selection of instructors, program partners and developers were careful to bring together individuals who were committed to the students' success and who could support the students on their journeys as emerging scholars of Inuit education.

The members of each instructional team were chosen carefully based on how well their personal and professional experiences aligned with course content and purpose. Expertise with the subject was required, and students generally reflected favourably on their respect for instructors' knowledge. After one course, a student wrote, "Thank you for bringing an expert to our cohort. It affirms the importance of our learning [is] at the top level. Thank you!" The importance of instructors who are grounded in what they are teaching comes across in a critical reflection on the selection process, where the student asked selection committees to make sure they were selecting Inuit instructors with a depth of knowledge and practice of Inuit language, values, and principles:

I would ask the planners to have a larger committee who would review the people that are going to be teaching [in] the MEd Program, Inuit that are going to be teaching the Inuit Program, based on *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*. That they have to be grounded and rooted in the language, not just the language but also, [they have to be people] who have dug deep inside of who Inuit really are, and their ways, their values and their principles.

Being respected for their knowledge was one criterion for selecting instructors. They were also selected for personal characteristics. Instructors who were knowledgeable about the context within which they were teaching were invaluable assets to the program. Instructors who understood and valued the cultural strengths, as well as social problems, in the territory were in a position to appropriately work through topics such as decolonization of education with the students, as well as to support students through very challenging community and family issues that came up throughout the program. Students affirmed, “The message was strong and clear that [my instructor] has extensive sensitivity to [Inuit] culture... [and] was an ideal instructor to work with and I felt lucky;” and “Thank you for bringing two instructors who have a strong passion for education in the North.”

Established relationships between instructors and students created a strong context of support. Some instructors had long standing professional relationships with the students, even prior to the program. Others established these relationships through teaching multiple courses. As one instructor reflected:

All instructors had extensive previous experience with this group of students... We faced the usual challenges with the competing complications in students' lives, but because the groups were small and we knew the students well, we were able to address them appropriately.

Another instructor also indicated that she felt prior relationships helped students feel confident and comfortable learning:

[Students having] Previous relationships with instructors was also important. When you know and trust-even like the person you are working with you can focus on your work. You feel as if you are in, “good hands” and that the person is invested in your success, is there to help and not just to see you, “do the work.”

Supporting students to the required level was much easier when instructors were familiar with learners.

Recommendation 11. Hiring decisions should give priority to (1) instructors who have knowledge of the context, and (2) instructors who have established relationships with others in the program. Personal traits of instructors, including the ability to understand and empathize with students, should be considered in hiring.

As the quotation above alludes to, instructors were also chosen for their caring qualities, and these were valued in course offerings. A GN Department of Education representative noticed, “It's about knowing who your students are and caring for them as individuals, and the Monday night telephone conversations or the Thursday night telephone conversations, that's pretty neat I think in any program.” This caring for students was noted as a highlight in the program. “I think that's another strength, most of the instructors...I know that they really did care about the students in a way that I think is also unusual in an adult academic environment.” Students were able to see that the program searched for high quality individuals with experience in Nunavut to teach the courses, and that these instructors cared for the students personally, as well as about course outcomes.

Caring is also based on a commitment to collaborative and respectful relations of power between students and instructors, and among instructors (Cummins, 1996). Unless instructors are aware of the way they are using power in their micro-interactions and relationships with students, coercive use of power can sometimes be used unconsciously.

Cohort-Based Learning

The value of *inuqatigiitsiarniq*, community and relationship, is at the foundation of the choice to adopt a cohort model. Cohort models are also promoted as promising practices in indigenous graduate education documented in the literature (Marlow & Siekmann, 2013). Following this model, students were accepted into the cohort in September 2010 and completed all courses together through to graduation in June 2013.¹⁸ Students thus formed a community for the duration of the program, with a sense of belonging, shared purpose and commitment, and mutual support. This community was intentionally nourished through the activities and practices within courses.

A Department of Education employee expressed the importance of creating a sense of the group, “I think that’s a strength of the program... The relationship building, the team building, the creating a community.” One of the practices within the program was to come together as a group in a circle of students, instructors, and Department of Education administrators to share feelings about the upcoming course, to greet one another just before any course began, and enjoy some food together. Courses also ended in the same manner, in a circle allowing each participant to share final thoughts, feelings, or insights with the group to bring the course to an end. A Department of Education administrator explained why creating a sense of community was so important to the program:

The circle time, people think that’s all a waste of time but it isn’t. Our own Inuit leaders said, “The key to *anything* is relationship building.” You have to model it. You have to take the time. It’s really hard [to do] when people want to get that [academic] content in, but it’s really important.

Students commented positively on the group or cohort-based method of delivering a program, and it was a major theme emerging from research on the program. Being together over an extended period of time, and particularly during face-to-face courses, enabled students to build trusting relationships with one another. One student said, “We are getting closer to each other each time [a course is held].” The trust which was built emerged as one of the major reasons that students believed the courses offered in person are effective, because they were not only connecting personally with one another, but also with their overall purpose as Nunavut educators. This also shows how important it is to bring groups of Inuit educators together to build a collaborative culture, shared vision, and positive morale.

Creating connections among and between students and between students and the instructional teams was very important. Reflecting how which aspects of the program she liked the most, a participant said, “The interactions between cohort [members] and the instructors was just wonderful, the feeling of belonging and being of importance was quite imminent for me. I thank all our facilitators and my classmates for making me feel this way.” Another student commented on how she benefited from the “connection to each and every one of the members, with respect and understanding. It shows community and gives so much encouragement.” Another reflected, “There is a sense of taking care of each other within this cohort, where we can already identify that we are facing the same issues in our home communities and lives.” This sense of family, and taking care of each other, and of having such a strong cohort was essential at different points in the course, particularly as personal troubles occurred that might have discouraged participants from continuing with the MEd program. In fact, many students said that the cohort is the reason why they stayed within the program. The following student provided just one example:

I would like to also express that although it does take a lot of personal individual discipline to partake on this program, I found that the fact that [through] this cohort, [the] identity of Inuit has been also the energy that allowed me to go through this program.

¹⁸ In principle, all courses were taken together. In practice, a few students made special arrangements to take a course separately when they missed a given course for one reason or another.

Drawing everyone into one group allowed for deeper personal learning to take place as students shared their deepest reflections in the supportive context of the cohort. This group-focused approach allowed students to feel comfortable enough in their learning environment to make mistakes and also to make progress, leading to the documented academic and personal outcomes:

It truly is a privilege to be able to gather and meet together in the fall and summer. Being able to meet at that time helps make the work seem easier almost. Getting to know one another helps us voice our ideas and thoughts without fear of anything.

In this supportive context, students learned about themselves and learned from each other, “I am extremely grateful to be a part of the cohort, I have learned so much from them and of myself through the courses.” These ideas are echoed in this participant’s comment: “I love how the courses provide ample time for discussions. Our group has gelled well, so there is trust and confidence amongst our group. We learn a lot from each other too.” Another said what she appreciated most is “The fact that this is a COHORT, the bond of the group, the dialogue in both languages has been amazing... The sharing of experiences and ideas, the battles, the successes have enriched this MEd program.” The community-based approach to learning created a sense of moving forward together. “The comfort of the cohort enables me to become a stronger person, we are building a critical voice together.” When students met together, they were not only focussing on the course content, they were building connections to fellow Inuit educators, and learning from one another during courses.

Recommendation 12. Continue to use the cohort model for advanced learning opportunities in Nunavut.

Student Support

An emphasis on *inuuqatigiitsiarniq*, building relationships and respecting and caring for others, created a context for strong student support. Everyone involved in the program worked to set students up for success, from the partners who supported the students financially and encouraged them as leaders, to students who motivated each other, to the Research Manager who facilitated ongoing feedback on needed supports, to the family members who encouraged the students to enrol and persevere, to the instructors who drew out the best in students.

Family support

Some students came into the program with strong support system already in place. While one of the challenges women faced was the amount of support they still needed to provide to extended family members while working and studying, some also benefited from the encouragement and inspiration of family members, “My husband was my support - he encouraged me to continue.”

Recommendation 13. Acknowledge that when a student is in a program it is also a family journey. Develop strategies to invite family members’ support and involvement.

Cohort support

The cohort provided a wide range of mutual supports. Going into the final online course, the research manager invited students to share *uqaujigiarutiit*, words of advice and encouragement, with their fellow students. Their responses provide an idea of the ways they inspired each other:

- Stay strong, go to the cohort members for help. We all have different skills and strengths, your skill will be just as valued too at a later time.
- You are strong and able! You are here, that means you can do it all the way!
- Talk about what is making one struggle - try and help them to break apart what they are struggling with because it can be quite daunting look at the whole issue.
- That it is important to validate the struggle, as well, to write it down on a journal or speak with a person or go for a walk. Which would help clear the challenge that is being felt by the peer.
- Look at the light at the end of the tunnel, the light may seem very small and far away, but it is there and we can get to it! Sometimes our struggles may seem big and heavy, we need to understand what it is exactly that is making us struggle because sometimes it may help us to understand that in reality they

are not so big and not so heavy. *Ikajuqtigiigluta uqumaittualuit uqigitippaallirunnaqtavut*. Together we can make heavy things lighter.

- Give yourself quiet time to reflect - your walk or a drive to get away from people for a morning or an afternoon. You need to take care of yourself before you take care of others. Reflect - use your five senses to refresh your strengths.
- *Ayunngittutit!* You can do it! We need you! *Anigurniarmiyuq*, you're almost there! :)
- You can do it!!! Anybody can do it!!! You [have] come a long way and did all the hard work, do not give up!
- I would tell the students to keep working hard and to keep in mind they are in training and learning new ideas to slow down, breathe, and do the best they can. Pray and use your emotions and talk to people in your cohort and help heal yourself with their input.
- Picture yourself graduating with a Masters of Education!!! Visualize it, feel it, are you smiling? Do you look happy? Are your family and friends proud? Do you feel proud of yourself? Keep that image in your mind every time things get hard and you feel like giving up. Take your time to let the image come, make sure you tap into all the feelings you feel while imaging yourself graduating with a MASTERS!! Enjoy the moment, then take that energy and let it pull you through the tough times. Believe in yourself! You can do it! *Ajunngittutit!!*
- I always look at my son or the younger generation, they look up to us and it makes me want to finish my course, so when you are struggling think about your kids or grandchildren.
- I'd say that no matter how difficult, no matter how negative it seems you need to move forward. Like my late grandmother would always say, "In life you will come across boulders that will stop you from moving on the path. Go around that boulder, go over that boulder, but don't go under it because then you will force whatever is slowing you down to overpower you". Think of this program as a tool, as a way to overcome the issues that you face, that your school faces, and what your community faces.

Think of the program as one that empowers you not limit you.

The Research Manager published these *uqaujigiarutiit*, words of advice, as a tangible document for students to keep with them throughout the final push to complete the program. They are reproduced in their entirety here to show how students supported each other, and how the program helped facilitate such support through the cohort model.

Instructional support

Many participants commented that instructional supports built into the program were a key factor in completing their program. As one reflected:

The amount of support we have gotten from [an instructor] and the rest of the staff who have instructed and supported the Master of Education program has been so amazing and encouraging we wouldn't have been able to do it without them.

When asked halfway through the program how happy they were with the support that they received, all but one student who responded indicated the highest levels of satisfaction (Figure 12). The following sections explore how instructors, in particular, stayed connected with students to provide this high level of academic and personal support.



Figure 12. Satisfaction with Level of Personal Support in Program.

Low student-teacher ratio

The program maintained a low student-to-teacher ratio, with a minimum of two instructors for class sizes ranging from 13 to 20 students. For the distance courses, the Department of Education funded an extra instructor to allow for additional student support. In these courses, each instructor had primary responsibility for a smaller group of four or five students. Instructors reflected that the low student-teacher ratio was essential for maintaining relationships, motivating students, and providing the kind of detailed feedback on writing, often accompanied with personal phone calls that promoted students' progress:

The instructors faced many time-consuming and exhausting jobs in this course... the seeming never-ending editing and revising of papers. It would have been impossible to maintain relationships if one instructor was supporting 13 participants.

Another reflected, "I believe this course went very well indeed. The small groups (4 or 5 students) worked well, any more would have been difficult. This is a crucial element in understanding how much is involved in supporting students." Even with the low student to teacher ratio, each instructor felt pushed by the level of commitment required for the course.

Recommendation 14. Maintain low student to teacher ratios, particularly in online courses, to promote high levels of student support.

Ongoing connection between instructors and students

Ongoing connection between instructors and students was vitally important, particularly during courses offered online. Students appreciated that their instructors made themselves readily available: "I appreciated that [my instructor] was available at all times via email and by phone;" "I especially appreciate how it seemed like you dropped everything to answer my call or give me some advice. Thanks." As another said, "[My instructor] was always ready to take a call to give me extra guidance or help when I needed it, which was very helpful."

Instructors took the initiative to stay connected to students, emailing and calling on a regular basis to provide updates on expectations, feedback on work, or just to check in. One student reflected, "[I appreciate my instructor] contacting me via e-mail with comments and suggestions." Another reported:

What I found in this program was [that] the support was exceptional, because I would get an update as to what was expected of me by each week. If I missed [course time] due to Medical Travels I was kept informed of my situation with honest answers.

This comment reflects how ongoing connections between instructors and students facilitated the types of flexible, personal accommodations that students in the Nunavut-based program sometimes required.

Many students specifically appreciated when their instructors phoned personally, during the online courses. Speaking directly with someone, rather than simply reading instructions online, helped students grasp what was required. One said her instructor “[H]elped me gain better perspective during our weekly calls by giving me some examples during our conversations. [My instructor] put it in such a way that it sounded much easier than I was thinking [it would be].” Another said, “The fact that the instructors check on you is what I like the most. They explain clearer whereas reading it sometimes won’t make sense because of other distractions.”

Personal phone calls and regular check-ins motivated students: “The weekly calls were very helpful. It made me focus on the writing already done and on the writing that I wanted to do;” “Overall, [my instructor] knew exactly when to call and [their] concerns made it easier to take the next step. At times it was difficult to continue to write, but having contact with [my instructor] made it possible to continue;” “Those weekly calls are so much appreciated!” These examples demonstrate that in spite of the advances in computer technology, sometimes using a telephone can be one of the best ways for students and instructors to connect with one another, and to further student learning.¹⁹

Recommendation 15. Encourage instructors to maintain regular contact with students during distance education courses. Build in regular telephone conversations as a core element of online courses. Telephone conversations can create closer connections than emails and specific aspects of writing can be clarified.

Individualized constructive feedback

In her evaluation of teaching for an online course, a student wrote that weekly phone calls from instructors, continuous feedback, and ongoing encouragement were key to her success:

I found our telecommunications very useful and the personal email back and forth about my work. Thank you for being able to help me build on my idea, and making it come alive. You were able to be critical, constructively as well, and you did not just go along with me. I took it as constructive criticism and that really helped me because you never left me hanging and wondering, “What I am supposed to do next?” Thank-you so much for your time and input into my paper, it would not have amounted to much if you didn’t encourage me to go on.

Other students also affirmed the value of ongoing feedback: “The week-by-week feedback was timely and very encouraging;” “The instructor promptly gave me feedback after each submission of my work;” “Overall the feedback that is provided by my instructor is/was very appreciated, very helpful.” Another added:

[My instructor] provided for me full support in completing my writing. And [they] provided much needed critical feedback in order to make my paper the best that it can be. I found it very helpful when [my instructor] made links to other readings that we had come across over the three years.

These students felt supported when the instructor stayed connected to them and their ideas, understood what they were trying to do or say, and encouraged them to push to the next level. Support was in the ongoing personal connection, even when feedback was critical. In fact, students welcomed and received personal, specific critique as an opportunity to grow, and an indication of the instructor’s respect and commitment to bringing out the student’s best work. The close connection between students and instructors allowed instructors to individualize instruction and level of challenge for each student, as she was ready.

Students’ comments show that they believe ongoing instructor contact and advice helped their academic work. Indeed, an isolated comment on a gap in feedback reveals how quickly a student can move from engagement to disengagement:

[I] completely lost interest in all the following tasks to be done. I revised a part of my [assignment] and never heard back if it was acceptable or needed more work. Eventually, I felt disconnected and didn’t feel like participating anymore.

¹⁹ Reaching students on the phone was sometimes a challenge. Instructors sometimes attempted calls many times before contact was finally made with some participants.

Instructors were well aware that the students were facing high levels of academic and personal challenges, which could lead them to give up if not encouraged and supported adequately, and they committed, as much as was possible, to being available and initiating ongoing contact with students.

Personal encouragement

Instructors offered feedback to students in many forms, about their work and also in the form of personal encouragement. Instructors acted as students' champions, motivating them to persevere through the course and the program. One student explained that it took her instructor's "Enthusiasm and encouragement to help me to complete my course." Others highlighted the personal support each student received from instructors, "As busy as we were during the course others' [instructors'] encouraging comments were useful and ...helped more than I realized." Students felt supported by instructors who were considerate of their often-challenging circumstances and able to accommodate their unique needs, "[My instructor] was very understanding in my situation - illness in the family." One student felt that instructors' personal experience living and working in the North particularly equipped them to appropriately support students. Instructors reflected that their role sometimes blended into that of the counsellor, and this felt appropriate and necessary, though sometimes draining, in this special teaching environment.

Balancing initiative and support

Instructors and program organizers sought to find an appropriate balance between providing the necessary supports, nurturing students' initiative and autonomy, and respecting students' (and instructors') limits. An experienced instructor within the program reflected:

Walking a fine line between appropriate support and too much support is always difficult. If you don't offer enough support the student flounders or becomes discouraged, too much support can be disempowering and may create dependencies and expectations that the instructor will "save you"!

An instructor who attempted a more hands-off approach reflected:

I think in some ways it worked out well and if they [the students] had needed help, I know they would have contacted me, but I sort of just tried giving them more space as well. [...] Being part of the instructors' team was kind of new to me as well, so I wasn't so sure if I should really punch in there and put my full effort or give them space and just let it roll as it goes along.

This instructor worried, though, that students could have done better if she had "Checked a little bit more often and have conversation with students, touch[ed] base with them."

That being said, when instructors were carrying this course alongside other full-time work commitments and family responsibilities, maintaining the connections described above pushed instructors to their limits. Teaching these courses was intellectually and emotionally demanding. One experienced instructor explained that trying to support even a small group of students over a distance course was one of the most difficult teaching experiences of his/her professional career. The workload involved in this level of support extended well beyond the time and scope of a normal course. One instructor reflected, "I've taught sessionally in [two departments] at [a university]. The Nunavut courses were by far the most demanding of my time." Personal circumstances enabled this instructor to focus only on co-teaching the distance education course, and he/she admitted that successful teaching in this course was enabled only by having huge amounts of time to devote to the co-teaching assignment. Even the simple phone calls took a toll as instructors had to make multiple attempts, at various times of day and night, to reach certain students. Another instructor reflected that he/she set tighter boundaries to balance teaching and other work, "Looking back, didn't really put as much effort as I would have if I was not working and just focusing on that [co-teaching the course]" but again, wondered if he/she had put in enough to provide the level of support students required. Instructors cared about students' academic achievement and personal well-being, but also had to care for themselves while providing intense student support. It is recommended that program coordinators and instructors be made aware of how demanding it is to provide very high levels of support to Inuit students living in remote communities and pursuing a graduate-level program in their second language. Acknowledging and

compensating the time and effort instructors must put in to support students will help recruit and retain top quality instructors. This concern is particularly pressing in the recruitment and retention of Inuit qualified to teach at the university level. They are few in number and in high demand.

Recommendation 16. Program coordinators and instructors should be made aware of how demanding it is to provide very high levels of support to Inuit students living in remote communities, pursuing a graduate-level program in their second language.

Partners and university administrators also had to find the appropriate balance between offering the highest levels of support and acknowledging when students had reached their limits and needed to withdraw from the program. From a funding agency perspective, it was very challenging to determine when to say 'no' to providing extra supports. Financial support was generous to ensure that students had the opportunity to succeed. Yet, at a point it became harder to rationalize extra funding to support students who continued to struggle with the academic expectations. Similarly, administrators were pushed to their limits trying to evaluate on a case-by-case basis when flexibility was appropriate, and when they simply needed to acknowledge a student was not meeting program criteria, and, according to the program policies, could not continue in the program.

Support as a key element in retention of students

The question of how much support is the right amount remains open. As students withdrew mid-program, everyone grappled with the question, "Could more have been done to support the student to stay?" Whether more or different supports could have increased retention is unclear. The levels of support that *were* provided without a doubt made it possible for thirteen students to graduate. When graduates were asked, "If you thought about quitting, what specifically pushed you or helped you to continue in the program?" they credited, overwhelmingly, the support they received from the cohort, from instructors, from partners, and from family as the top factor in sustaining them:²⁰

- All the encouragement from instructors. Also the acceptance from the cohort itself allowing me to be myself. The experience of all the courses face-to-face that gave us time to connect with each other.
- [The] cohort, the thought of them, and the children who we/I want to continue [with] their education.
- I thought of quitting when I was too busy with work and felt less time or no time with my studies but with the encouragement and push from [an instructor] and thinking that the Government of Nunavut is counting on/trusting me to finish, I did not want to let them down. Plus what an opportunity to be with the MEd [cohort].
- Having the support group, having the safe space to vent.
- The encouragement and support of the cohort and instructors, the face-to-face courses, not wanting to disappoint myself, family, and friends.
- When my mother had [a medical procedure] my siblings encouraged me to continue. Even with my cohort, they all helped me to get through.
- Having family support and compliments that they are so proud of you. [Receiving] Counselling by instructors.
- The need to write and voice my concerns.
- What pushed me was my husband... And our instructors!
- My goal. My personal life was near crisis with my [close family member] getting sick. My family supported me to stick it through.
- Encouragement from peers helped me to stay and the welcoming instructors.
- My husband was my support - he encouraged me to continue.

²⁰ Full responses to this question are listed here, edited only to remove identifying information.

- My determination to finish what I started.

Program participants encountered many personal and academic challenges while completing their MEd degrees, which they overcame with strong support systems in place. In future offerings of a program of this kind in Nunavut, it is important to keep in mind that most Inuit second language students require personal and academic support over an extended period of time to succeed within a graduate degree program. As one student wrote on her survey, “Best of luck to those who take this program in the future. I hope you have the support like I did while taking the Nunavut Masters of Education.”

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

II

Decolonizing Approach



The Nunavut MEd was committed to offering a decolonizing program, one that would equip Inuit to fill the educational leadership positions in the Territory, bringing their rich Inuit culture, language, values, and aspirations into these roles. An instructor commented on the importance of the Nunavut MEd program for the territory, “This program is integral to the development of Inuit educational leaders, scholars and to recording and sharing examples of Inuit ways of knowing, being and doing.” In order to fulfill its mandate of equipping Inuit educational leaders, the program sought to incorporate Inuit knowledge, including from Elders, instructors, and the students, and to create safe spaces in which students could explore their own histories with education and take their place, even in the classroom, as leaders and knowledgeable individuals.

This graduate program created an environment that respected, promoted, and valued Inuit culture, history, and the context. The curriculum covered colonialism and the effects it had on Inuit life in the communities as well as ongoing decolonization. A representative from the Government of Nunavut explained why organizers pursued a decolonizing approach so carefully and thoughtfully throughout this program:

The program originated in a Southern university and was being led by *qallunaat* (Southern) university teachers. The planning team and instructors realized that institutional standards and policies, as well as the teaching and learning processes, carried the potential to act as re-colonizing²¹ forces at an unconscious level.

Inuit cultural capital was increased by the inclusion of Inuit instructors, Elders, and the use of Inuit languages in the classroom. The courses were tailored to ensure that Northern perspectives, and Inuit theories and knowledge were integrated. This was made possible by team teaching with Inuit instructors and careful planning to incorporate Inuit perspectives and content.

Culturally Relevant Program

Inuit knowledge was kept at the forefront of the program, through teaching and incorporating Inuit culture, and inviting those knowledgeable about Inuit ways to contribute to the courses. The program and instructors tailored the content of courses to reflect Inuit culture and the Northern contexts. In different ways, the integration of Inuit culture helped students feel respected, welcomed, and set-up for success. One student mentioned, “I saw a lot of respect to blend in IQ.” Another said, “[the bicultural nature of the program was] why I felt welcome.” An instructor said, “It is revolutionary in that Inuit women have the opportunity to learn with and from each other within their home territory and also at UPEI and in that it is grounded in ways of learning that fit for them.” The sentiment that the program “fit” for Inuit is echoed by a student who said, “The deliberate incorporation of Inuit themes is another highlight that creates an ambience for educational success. The care and feeling connected [to one another and to culture] must be replicated for future MEd programs.” Integrating Inuit perspectives was key to delivering a relevant and respectful program.

Readings by Inuit authors helped students recognize themselves, and apply teachings to their own lives. For example, when students read *Arnait Nipingit* (McComber & Partridge, 2012), which profiles influential female Inuit leaders in Nunavut and Nunavik, students realized that they shared many of the same experiences as the women highlighted in the book, and were therefore able to see themselves as leaders, or emerging leaders, within the field of education. Relevant readings helped students connect personally to the material.

The pursuit of relevant content follows best practices in adult education, as well as the program’s commitment to decolonizing education. Students were asked directly about whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement “The course content is relevant to my work and life.” All respondents agreed either completely (13/16) or somewhat (3/16) that the MEd program was relevant to life in Inuit educational contexts (Figure 13).

²¹ Re-colonizing is a term coined by Alexander McAuley during the SSHRC-funded research, which led to the creation of the Nunavut MEd program (Walton et al., 2005).

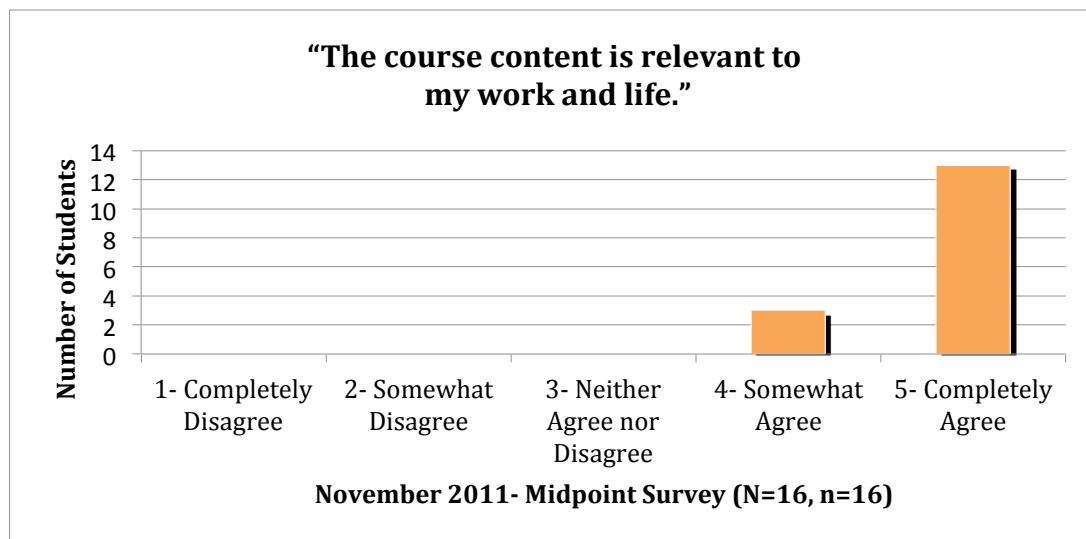


Figure 13. Perceived Relevance of MEd Program to Students' Work and Life.

Relevance was achieved through course content, use of local instructors and guest speakers, and encouraging students' lived experiences to be expressed within courses. An instructor said, "We had [a number of] guest speakers... I think using real experiences and real issues made it relevant."

Inuit Elders

Inclusion of Elders helped to appropriately integrate Inuit culture in the Nunavut MEd program. Program organizers, instructors, and students commented on the value of including Elders as they are the traditional teachers in Inuit culture, and the holders of the advanced Inuit knowledge the MEd candidates wished to learn. One of the Inuit instructors explained:

I know when we meet face-to-face ... it seems like our days are so condensed, that there's so much we want to do or talk about, yet having so little time. But it does really help to reconnect with the Elders. Even if they do a day and a half [of teaching] ...but even just the fact that... an Elder was in the course. In our culture they say even if you just go over to an Elder, just [to] see their face, [and] just smile, that helps, even if you don't have a conversation. But it does really help with hearing their stories.

Students shared comments such as, "It was wonderful to have Elders actually come in to share and work with us;" "I feel my cultural capital is limited so it helps to listen to an Elder during our face-to-face sessions;" "I really like listening to Elders and have huge respect to them. I am thankful that we had them in this course. Our perspectives would of been different if they did not come." These honoured Inuit visitors had a lasting impact on students, as one student expressed, "I will always remember what the Inuit Elders contributed to the program."

Elders' involvement in the program also helped students with their personal identities as Inuit women, leaders and educators. Elders shared first-hand experiences of colonization and resilience. One participant wrote: "The Elder presenting to the cohort has made this program all the more encompassing with our identity and culture as Inuit people and leaders within the education field." Another student explained:

When you bring in the Elders. They help ground me, make the content more grounded in the work I am doing as a teacher. As well...each time we meet face-to-face gives me more confidence in myself because I can see where and how we are connected as a people. The guests invited help me understand better the concept of the course because I can see in them the passion they have for the subject area.

An instructor noticed that including Elders, "Helps with identity and it helps with culture and language. Just recognizing where we are and who we are. I think that part helped some of [the students] to get more motivated or to try more." Elders shared their passion and vision for Inuit education, inspiring the students as advanced learners and as leaders.

Time spent with Elders contributed to the significant academic and non-academic outcomes observed in the program. As one student reflected, “The Elders involved have made us stand up straight again. The Elders are our hierarchy in our way of life. To bring them to the program has made me heal as I cannot heal with my own parents due to family constraints.”

Time with Elders was always a top priority for students. Throughout the program students formally and informally requested more time with Elders. One instructor reflected that the students “need to hear more from the Elders.” Indeed, when graduates were asked what they would have liked to spend *more* time on in the program, their top response (8/13 respondents) was “more time with Elders” (Figure A-1, Appendix I). Another common response was “more time for traditional knowledge” (5/13).

Students commented on the value of gender balance in Elder invitees, “I love when Elders are invited and was thankful to have both a man and a woman this time.” They also suggested they would highly value hearing from Elders from a wider range of communities, “As much as it can possibly be done, I suggest that we be in contact with Elders from all regions. I know that funds are always the obstacle but it would be nice to see and hear from Elders from all over the territory.” Elders were a key component to ensuring cultural relevance within the Nunavut MEd, in terms of content; respecting and modeling Inuit ways of teaching; and supporting students on their personal journeys. The program and courses were designed to foster strong relationships between Inuit educators and their history, culture, and language and the program worked towards this goal by including Elders and promoting the exploration of Inuit knowledge.

Carefully and respectfully involving Elders into the program required particular preparation and flexibility. These aspects of Elder involvement are discussed in the chapter “Preparation, Hard Work, and Perseverance.”

Recommendation 17. Include Inuit Elders as invited guest speakers.

Students as Teachers

Another effective way in which Inuit knowledge was mobilized in the program was encouraging students to share what they know. Students were long-term Inuit educators with depth and breadth of relevant knowledge, each with unique experiences and skills. Instructors made efforts to appreciate and value the prior knowledge of students, to incorporate it into the class and allow time to share and build upon the hard-earned wisdom of the students.

Students valued reciprocal teaching and the opportunity to learn from their colleagues and peers, “When a member of the cohort shares traditional knowledge from an Inuit stance, the information helps explain why things are the way they are;” “I loved the style of teaching, the support, how the cohort became the teachers just as much as the instructors were.” Another student explained, similarly:

I have always said since the beginning of the Master program that I have learned just as much from my cohort as I have from the instructors, the textbooks, and the research. Their personal experiences make it so real and they are all a wealth of knowledge with first hand experience, so I like it when we all have the chance to share our thoughts, feelings, and papers or assignments with each other.

Instructors and students were co-contributors to learning, drawing on the considerable life experience of students to strengthen lessons and to make connections between program content and the Nunavut education system.

One successful technique in drawing out students as reciprocal teachers was activating prior knowledge, creating space for dialogue and reflection. Instructors, for example, named ideas and concepts that students had experienced in the past as a basis for building up new concepts. One instructor felt that minimizing his/her interventions was beneficial for students, “I didn't have to say very much, I didn't talk a lot in this course, they didn't have to read a huge number of things, but they all came into the course knowing this stuff at a deep level.” During class discussions the instructor introduced topics, but then let students explore them more deeply during the discussions. The instructor felt that, “More elaboration [from me] would have just got in the way of the [student] insight. This strategy was successful.” Students had time throughout the day to reflect and to revise their opinions. “I think things worked really well. I think, looking back on it [the course], I

think, far more learning happened in...a far more profound way than I would have thought possible in a five day course.”

Students taught each other through dialogue, joint assignments, and sharing pieces of writing. Students also taught each other as cultural components were integrated into the class. One activity that was particularly well received by students and instructors was lighting of the *qulliq* (Inuit oil lamp carved out of stone). Each morning in one of the first UPEI-based summer courses, prior to the commencement of the day’s activities, a pair of students lit the *qulliq*, with one woman acting as a guide for another who was less familiar with the practice. Students reflected positively on the incorporation of this traditional Inuit custom into the academic context, “[I] Enjoyed reading and learning new things, especially learning how to light a *qulliq*—that is so connected to my culture.” Another explained how the *qulliq* was one example of how the women could bring their respective knowledge and skills to each other in the program:

As educated, academic, working women we don't always have the time to take part in traditional activities. The practicing of lighting the *qulliq* (seal oil lamp) was a good example of how we can include some cultural skills into our program. We all have different skill sets in this area of traditional skills.

A student accurately summarized the importance of gathering Inuit educators into one group to learn and share with one another:

I feel I learn just as much from the students as I do the instructors. More time is needed to connect and network with our classmates about our positions within leadership roles and our working roles within our communities so that we can draw strength, wisdom and best practices from each other to bring home to our communities.

The power of learning from each other was also recognized by a representative from the Department of Education, “Bringing them together as leaders to have them learn from each other, to see strengths [and] maybe see some of their own weaknesses within. To say, ‘I thought this was a strength, but maybe it’s a weakness.’”

As one student said, “I think that there needs to be as much Inuit participation as possible when the program is delivered.” Hiring Inuit instructors, inviting in Elders and guest speakers, and mobilizing the knowledge of Inuit students were a few strategies for incorporating Inuit and non-Inuit cultures, creating a balanced, challenging, as well as nurturing environment. The program practiced decolonizing education by recognizing the vast expertise within the cohort – some were newer teachers, but many were recognized for exceptional skill and knowledge, even if that had, prior to the program, gone unrecognized by academic credentials. The program was decolonizing in that students and instructors offered each other mutual respect for knowledge, ability, and experience, and learned from each other. Instructors learned from students about Inuit culture, educational experiences in the North, and preferred ways of teaching and learning in Inuit contexts.

Creating a Safe Space through an Inuit-only Cohort

In order to offer a program that embraced Inuit ways of being, knowing, and learning and create a context in which students could achieve the outcomes identified in earlier sections of this report, enrolment in the Nunavut MEd program was limited to experienced educators who grew up in the North and spoke an Inuit language. A Department of Education representative explained the rationale:

I don't know if [a mixed Inuit/non-Inuit cohort] would work... When you have those two views that may potentially clash, in essence do you really have a program that's taught from the Inuit worldview if you have non-Inuit?

A student emphasized, “[If non-Inuit were included] It wouldn’t even be the same program.” Limiting enrolment to speakers of an Inuit language enhanced acquisition of *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*. For example, it made it easier to bring in guest speakers who only spoke an Inuit language, such as Elders, and opened the door for students to share with each other, orally and in writing, using an Inuit language without translation. An

Inuit-only²² cohort also facilitated acquisition of advanced Inuit knowledge, since the building blocks, or foundational understandings of Inuit culture, could be assumed as prior knowledge.

By limiting enrolment to educators who shared common cultural, linguistic, and educational backgrounds, program organizers fostered a safe, decolonizing learning environment. One instructor emphasized how creating such an environment enhanced learning, articulating a key course goal as “To create a positive, inclusive, welcoming learning environment, grounded in Inuit ways of knowing, being, and doing that would allow students to feel safe to challenge themselves and push their thinking.” Students confirmed that an Inuit-only cohort offered them important supports. One explained, “It helped very much to be around all Inuit.” Another reflected, “I’m just glad that I was amongst Inuit people, and could relate to everyone.” Students said the high level of comfort and support they experienced would likely be missing in a mixed cohort, “There would be no close relations and support.” Building a close community, as students experienced in the cohort would also be more challenging, “We’d spend some time with just a select few [individuals] in the cohort.”

The Inuit-only cohort created a safe space where students could rely on shared common knowledge. Students felt comfortable sharing experiences because they trusted their fellow students could understand based on having similar experiences. Students expressed that the strength of activating prior knowledge might have been stifled in a mixed cohort, and that they would have been less willing to share experiences, knowledge and opinions. In their feedback, students suggested “People wouldn’t be willing to share as openly or comfortably [in a mixed cohort] and it would take a longer orientation to gain trust in the group;” and “I would have a harder time opening up, be careful with sharing. It would probably not be as easy for me to share.” Some areas of course content, such as decolonization, would have made opening up even harder in a mixed cohort, “I think the first course [Leadership in Postcolonial Education] especially would be difficult and not as open, so the impact would not have been the same.” Students believed that shared cultural backgrounds provided a foundation for fostering their academic and personal growth, “I think that we Inuit would not have been able to grow as Inuit if it were a ‘mixed’ class.”

The growth in students’ voice was nurtured in the Inuit-only cohort in ways that would have been less likely in a mixed cohort. Differences in Inuit and non-Inuit interactional styles, in addition to the colonial history between the two groups, impact Inuit educational leaders’ willingness and ability to speak up in mixed environments. A Department of Education representative pointed out:

Typically when you put Inuit and non-Inuit [together], the Inuit tend to be non-vocal, totally non-vocal, so perhaps they would have not found their voice, or showed their voice. And you’ll see that in meetings, where Inuit may not speak up.

The Inuit MEd students certainly felt they would have held back their opinions and their voices would not have become as strong if the cohort had been mixed. A range of students made this point in different ways: “[We] would not have reached the [same] level of voice we have gotten to [in a mixed cohort];” “Inuit educators would stay silent, and not develop as fully [as they would] in a safe environment;” “I am sure there would have been over-powering by [English] first language speakers... and you would not receive confident work from Inuit people;” “Feelings, emotions, view and voice would be very different;” and “It would have been interesting to hear different perspectives, at times I think the Inuit voice would probably be drowned [out].” These kinds of comments suggest that limiting enrolment to Inuit students helped achieve the program’s goals of building the self-confidence and voice of the Inuit educators.

In summary, as seen through the comments above, when students were asked, “This program was offered to students who were long-term educators, who grew up in the North and were fluent in an Inuit language. How do you think the program would have been different if the class had been a mix of Inuit students, and Southern-hired teachers?” students’ responses confirmed that they considered an Inuit-only cohort desirable, and that limitations on enrolment, in this case, were conducive to the outcomes observed.

²² “Inuit-only” as defined by cultural and linguistic identities.

Nonetheless, students and program organizers acknowledged that a program that incorporated Inuit and non-Inuit students *could* be acceptable. One person said (in contrast to comments above), “It [the program] would not have been different [with a mixed cohort]. Educators are basically the same mind set.” Another said she would have taken the program with a mixed cohort “because we can work together.” Others expressed uncertainty, “I had not even thought of this [mixed cohort as an option];” “[I’m] Not sure.”

Students and program organizers generally felt that a program that admitted both Inuit and non-Inuit students would achieve different goals and would have to be delivered somewhat differently to maximize positive outcomes. A representative from the GN Department of Education, for example, said he/she did not believe the program could achieve its articulated vision of creating “the time and space to enable Inuit educators to enhance their academic knowledge, wisdom, critical understanding, and leadership skills” (Walton et al., 2010, p. 16) while offering the program to a mixed cohort:

No, I don't think so. [...] If the objectives were very different, for example if you looked at [a different style of] leadership, yes, but if you're looking at self growth and bringing out your leadership skills, I think, they're different programs.”

A representative from the Government of Nunavut suggested a mixed program “would have to be set up very, very differently.” To maintain a decolonizing approach, instructors would need to deliberately address potential points of conflict. He/she suggested, for instance, “the non-Inuit would have to expect that the way teaching and learning is going to take place is going to be very different than what they're accustomed to.” Furthermore, the program would need to create space for non-Inuit students to recognize themselves in discussions of colonization and to acknowledge white/Anglo privilege that perpetuated marginalization of Inuit leadership in education:

I think the very first course [*Leadership in Postcolonial Education*] you'd have to break them [the mixed-cohort students] off into two groups. You would have to have the Inuit together, that [group] would take that first decolonization course together and then the non-Inuit would have to have their own specific workshop, in the point of view that they're seen as the colonizer. [Students need to learn] what they should be expecting with the interaction between the two groups, so it's not racism. So when someone over here reacts and says, “See this is what you've always done to us,” the non-Inuit need to know how to understand why they're being spoken to like that, and how they're going to communicate with each other, so that [there is] respectful communication, and respectful understanding.

Students reflected that, in particular, non-Inuit students who were sensitive and committed to the North could add value to the program: “Depends on the characters and attitudes of the Southerners;” “There would be benefits to it if the Southerners were planning to stay in the North.” If an open environment could be achieved, respective sharing could enrich each group's educational experience, “They [non-Inuit] have stories from another view that would have helped us.” Honest and open sharing of colonizing and decolonizing experiences could further the Inuit educators' experiences of decolonization and healing, and equip non-Inuit educators in the North to more openly assess the impact of educational history in the North. As one student said, “Maybe they [non-Inuit educators] would...find out and understand what Inuit went through over the past.”

Upon exploring the expected differences of a mixed cohort, students were asked, “If this program had been offered as a mixed cohort of Inuit and *Qallunaat* (non-Inuit), do you think you would have completed an MEd program?” Results reflected that the majority of the graduates (9/13) were uncertain about whether they would have personally been successful in completing a Master of Education if they had studied within a mixed cohort of Inuit and non-Inuit educators (Figure 14). One graduate felt sure she would *not* have completed the program in a mixed cohort, while three graduates indicated they definitely would have completed the program, even in a mixed cohort.

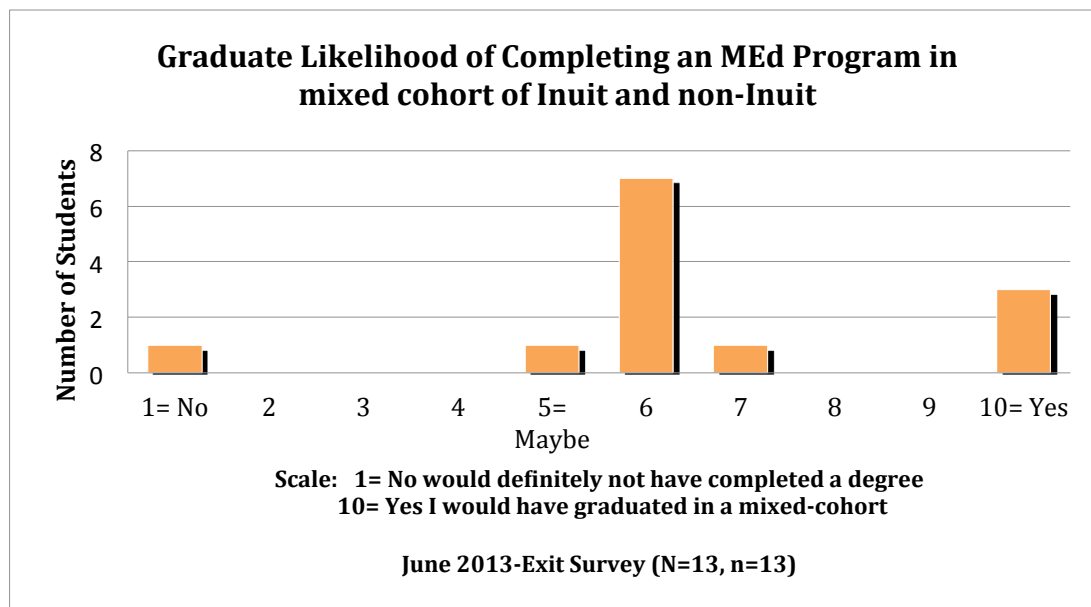


Figure 14. Perceived Likelihood of Completing MEd within Mixed Inuit-Non-Inuit Cohort.

The graduates were highly motivated to complete graduate-level education, and to take advantage of the program being offered in the North. However, participants pointed to the large differences that would have taken place in the program if they had not had the security provided by and cohort of students who were raised in the North. If programs aim to improve the voice of Inuit, and to be decolonizing in nature, students have strongly indicated that an Inuit-only cohort favours those outcomes. These findings bring to light the discomfort and forms of silencing some Inuit educators experience in mixed groups of Inuit and non-Inuit educators. While these results are uncomfortable for non-Inuit colleagues, if Inuit are to succeed in graduate-level programs offered in the future, then serious consideration needs to be given to the composition of the groups and the way that non-Inuit use their power and voices when Inuit and non-Inuit are together. It is evident from these responses that non-Inuit educators in Nunavut need to be far more aware of how their Inuit colleagues feel about being in a mixed Inuit and non-Inuit learning environment. The perspectives of program graduates along with the comments from the Department of Education representative make it clear that if the Nunavut Master of Education, or a program with a similar goal, are to be decolonizing and improve Inuit leadership skills, it may be helpful to offer it again to an Inuit-only cohort or establish the program so that non-Inuit participants are conscious of the way they are participating in dialogue. Ensuring that the bilingual and bicultural aspects of the program are maintained will also be very important in the future.

Recommendation 18. Protect an effective learning environment for Inuit graduate students by offering the program to students with shared cultural and linguistic identities.

Inunnguiniq – Reaching the Whole Person through Counselling and Wellness

Another way in which the program was decolonizing was the value it placed on teaching the whole person. The Inuktitut term *inunnguiniq* roughly translates ‘guiding the potential of the human spirit’ and this was a goal pursued within the Nunavut MEd. One way in which the program embraced students holistically was by hiring of a full-time counsellor specializing in suicide and cultural grief to support students. The counsellor attended face-to-face courses²³ and provided supports as needed throughout the program. The counsellor walked with the students when course content brought up painful or traumatic memories. She was also there to support students in working through issues that might be happening at home or work, or that were related

²³ The counselor was unable to attend the first course, Leadership in Postcolonial Education, due to an unforeseen family commitment.

to the broader challenge of pursuing an academically and personally rigorous program of study. In addition, the counsellor led specific wellness activities during the face-to-face courses.

The counsellor²⁴ explained how embedding her in the program put her in a position to support students:

[I] establish[ed] the contact right from the beginning. This is a therapeutic mode that has been very valuable and instituted in [the] crisis intervention process that you're there; you start right from the beginning, rather than word of mouth or messages.

She explained:

With both cohorts, I have attended all face-to-face classes, and being there, following the material... [I saw] how they were handling what was presented, the challenges of the material, the conversations, the crises that they brought with from home or that were still happening at home.

As a member of the team who was with students during class time and staying in the same residence as students, the counsellor was able to offer support at all times of the day.

The counsellor helped to create an emotionally safe environment and provided opportunities for emotional sharing. She explained:

I would approach [students] gently, informally, and be available, offer them to spend a bit of time with me and chat and this worked in many situations but not always. Some people had their own defenses, but there were moments in classrooms, like when there were news of a suicide at home or somebody struggling, that the whole learning environment was disrupted, and that's where, how I put in my energies at trying to regulate people, trying to calm down. I wasn't the only one doing that, but everybody contributed in supporting those more needy at the time.

[...]

Some of the times, when somebody ran out of the classroom, it was obvious that I was after them to support and keep them company, but at the same time, nobody questioned what I was doing in the classroom. I was accepted as part of the whole program. That [acceptance] was great.

Many instructors have informally commented that providing a full-time support person who helped students to work through emotionally difficult memories or events brought up by class content was a strength of the program. Students were not asked to comment on the counsellor's role in the program.²⁵ However, one student did describe the importance of her role:

The support system in place from the instructors and organizers of the course is very helpful for us as students...The guidance counsellor aspect of the course is beneficial for all students as the subject matter we deal with is at times very sensitive and traumatic for individuals.

While the counsellor's role was sometimes overlooked, the above comment indicated that students recognized and appreciated the purpose of counselling support. A representative from the Department of Education also commented, "I think that was really important to model the wellness part" of the program for MEd students. In a program that touched upon very emotional topics relating to colonization in the North, it was important that students felt adequately supported.

Recommendation 19. Consider embedding a full-time counsellor in the program.

²⁴ Due to her unique position on the support team, the counsellor was aware that her comments would not be able to be reported anonymously. Nonetheless, for sake of consistency, she is identified by her role in this paper.

²⁵ Students' perceptions of the counsellor were not formally researched. It was felt that the safe space and the connection between the counsellor and the participants was not a topic that should be evaluated.

In addition to on-demand counselling, the counsellor joined the instructional team during the face-to-face courses, and had her own periods to teach wellness activities, although her self-care work was separate from course content. The counsellor aimed to create a position for herself both within the group, but also at enough of a distance for students to feel comfortable:

I do recommend that this process of having a support person available, because I assured everyone that all my person-to-person contact with the individuals would be confidential. I always reinforce[d] that... I was not involved in [course] marking, [which is important because] that could affect whatever they shared with me, but mostly [it was] the assurance of confidentiality.

Generally speaking, course instructors and the counsellor worked out respective roles effectively. As one instructor reflected:

I think we did not a bad job figuring out the ratio between [the counsellor], [the Inuit instructor], and myself and trying to work with three different instructors across three different cultures. That was such a challenge. I think [my Inuit co-Instructor] and I felt okay. [The counsellor] kind of opened [the class] with the morning and then she was available and then she would be there [in the class]. I'm never sure how [the counsellor] felt about that.

In terms of class content, the instructor explained that all three of the teaching team members were able to build upon the strengths, and "to link in" to one another. When teaching a particular topic, one co-instructor "was able to introduce this and [the counsellor] was able to pick up. So I thought of all the courses I taught with [the counsellor], I thought we had the best mixture of that."

While, overall, embedding a counsellor in the program was highly effective and valued, a few instructors and students struggled with the counsellor's role. Working with one instructor, the counsellor felt limited due to a perceived misunderstanding of roles:

[One instructor] did not understand the concept of my presence in the classroom and this instructor asked me to stay outside [the class], and in case there was something happening that I was required, [they would] call me. That went against a lot of our previous connections, but it was mostly that instructor was not familiar with the needs of the students. I got second hand messages from [the instructor] that, "So-and-so cried," "So-and-so might need some help," and that was a real break of the continuity of my own ability to reach out to each one of them in my own way.

Instructors and the counsellor worked well in many courses, yet as with any emerging relationship, there was room for improvement.

Recommendation 20. Ensure instructors are clear on what role the counsellor will play, including how much time the counsellor will have teaching students daily, and how student crises will be addressed when they happen. Communication between instructors and the counsellor is key to supporting students.

Another challenge was differing levels of comfort with a counsellor among students. The counsellor recognized that some students received her contributions to the program more warmly than others:

Some of the students have confidently opened up to me. On the other hand, I have sensed that the "wellness" component of the program has made others very anxious. A few students do not show a minimum of enthusiasm at participating in the morning sessions I've offered and they seem to withdraw, by sitting down and disengaging.

These comments highlight how particular aspects of the program may be beneficial for some students and not for others. Some participants were not willing or able to participate in the activities that were considered to be important in providing student support.

One suggestion for improving reception of the counsellor's wellness activities was to move them from the beginning of the day to the end of the day. One student said, "I would rather not start the day off with [the counsellor]. If her involvement is necessary it would be best to do it at the end of the day." For another student, this change in timing would foster higher energy levels for the day's learning, "I felt that time [in the morning] could have been utilized better to prepare and motivate for the upcoming day." An instructor further reflected

that the wellness activities might be better timed at the end of the day and might be more effective in a different physical space from the learning classroom:

For this particular group, the sessions with [the counsellor] might have been a little bit emotionally heavy and/or there were at least a couple of students, in that one, who felt that these sessions... -in the first part of the day- seemed a bit unnecessary.

[...]

It might be helpful to put those sessions in at the end of the day, because it sets a kind of a tone for the day, if they're dealing with heavy emotional issues and in fact one of the students did say that she found it hard, because it was too emotional... Maybe holding those sessions in another classroom, I think that would also help. Because then you have a physical space for that kind of stuff, that's different from where you're doing more "academic type" stuff.

Recommendation 21. Create a separate space for the counsellor to work to provide one-on-one help with participants and also to lead group sessions on self-care and personal healing.

Recommendation 22. Timing of self-care sessions should be negotiated between students, instructors, and the counsellor to find the best time of day for these exercises.

Another suggestion was to include an Inuit counsellor on the counselling team. One graduate recommended a change in the program "To have an Elder present and be able to do morning sessions with us, as [the counsellor] has been doing, leading Inuit healing and building of Inuit knowledge with us." Feedback from students who struggled and/or ultimately did not complete the program underlined that having an Inuit counsellor might have made the difference, "If we had more counselling in Inuktitut, because at times I couldn't really let my frustrations out because it was in English." Another said what would have helped her to succeed was "Counselling in Inuktitut. If we had little sessions towards healing." The Nunavut MEd program blended Inuit and Western knowledge and wisdom, and some students felt they could have been better supported if they had counselling in their first language and culture.

Recommendation 23. Include an Inuit Elder or Inuit counsellor to support students through the educational journey.

In closing her reflection on her supporting role, the counsellor said, "I just want to say what a privilege it is to be part of this process." Graduates' final evaluations suggested that they would welcome more time spent on healing (5/13 respondents, tied for third top priority for more time, see Figure A-1, Appendix I Appendix I). Even if they expressed ambivalence about explicit self-care teaching, and had suggestions for how the counselling component could be improved, they certainly welcomed the program's efforts to create safe spaces for personal growth and healing.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS III

Importance of Place



A distinctive aspect of the Nunavut MEd was that students could complete the program without relocating outside of Nunavut. Analysis of success factors point to the importance of place in program delivery and students' successful program completion. Each of the program's course locations – UPEI campus, Iqaluit, and Rankin Inlet during face-to-face courses, and students' home communities during distance learning, offered important benefits and challenges.

Nunavut-Based Program

The opportunity for Inuit educators to pursue graduate-level education without relocating was a significant benefit within the Nunavut MEd, and opened the door for educators who could not move outside the Territory. One student reflected, "I am just so thankful to have been given the opportunity to pursue my Masters of Education in the comfort of my home territory without having to relocate my family otherwise I would have never, ever taken a Masters program." Her sentiment is echoed by a majority of students who said the location of the program was a deciding factor in their enrolment.

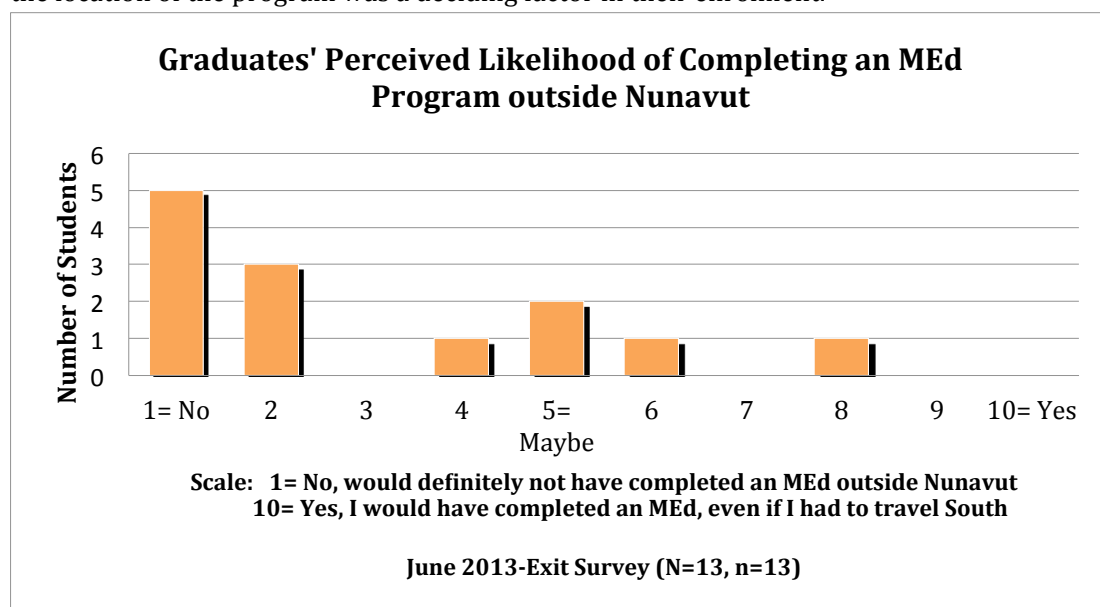


Figure 15. Importance of a Nunavut-Based Program.

When students were asked, "This program was structured so that you did not need to move to Southern Canada to complete your Master of Education degree. If this program had not been offered in Nunavut, do you think you would have completed an MEd program?" eight out of thirteen students (62%) responded that they definitely would not have taken an MEd if it was not offered in the North (responses of one and two on a ten point Likert scale). Only one student felt that she would have completed a MEd if it meant relocating (response of eight, on the ten-point scale). The remaining four students expressed uncertainty (responses of four, five, and six on the ten point scale). These results, summarized in Figure 15, indicate that offering a Nunavut-based MEd program provided an opportunity for Inuit educators to further their qualifications that would have otherwise been unattainable and inaccessible.

When students explained why it was so important for them to remain in Nunavut, many comments focused on family. These established women had spouses, children, grandchildren, parents, and other extended family who depended on them, making it hard to leave. A few students said, "I would not leave my family members," "I have family who I had to be around," and "It is truly hard to leave family, immediate and even extended." Another reflected, "Uprooting is hard when your whole life is in the Arctic." Indeed, in addition to family, students had jobs, community commitments, cultural practices, friends, homes, and more, that would be hard to walk away from for the months and years a campus-based MEd would require.

Staying in Nunavut also allowed students to stay connected to family and local support networks, which they needed for the program and for life in general. For example, one graduate after sharing the details of her personal and family life at the time she started the program closed by saying, “I needed the support of my extended family... Moving to the South was NOT an option for me.” While another student felt that if she had studied in Southern Canada she “might have felt lonely.”

Students also preferred a Nunavut-based program because some were nervous about the idea of studying at a university in the South, “Because the thought of going to a university in the South was too intimidating,” or because of past negative experiences, “I have been at a Southern campus, and I could not go through this again.”

Finally, one student indicated that she valued a Nunavut-based program because it opened doors for other Nunavummiut to observe and be inspired by these educational leaders pursuing higher education in the territory, “I liked that I was in ᐃᐃᐅᐅ [Nunavut written in syllabics]. Youth need to witness that all things are possible in ᐃᐃᐅᐅ.” Offering the program in Nunavut went beyond supporting success of the immediate cohort, but was also important for profiling what can be possible in the Territory.

At least one student said she might have completed a MED program outside of Nunavut if this one had not been available, “Yes there was a time I wanted to go South and complete my Masters.” However, the majority articulated that without a program such as the one that was offered, they would not have completed this graduate-level qualification. This result is very important for future program organizers to keep in mind when designing programs for Inuit who need and want to stay in the territory.

Recommendation 24. Continue to develop and offer relevant advanced learning opportunities in Nunavut for teachers and educators who are Nunavummiut.

Face-to-Face Learning

While the design of the program allowed students to remain anchored in their personal and professional lives throughout the program, students did travel for short periods of face-to-face learning. According to students and instructors, these times where instructors and fellow students were in the same place, working together, facilitated motivation and success.

Nunavut MED program participants considered spending time in a classroom with fellow students a strong asset of the program. When asked to comment about aspects of the program that were working well, the importance of face-to-face courses was reiterated time and time again. For example, almost all (14/16) students completely agreed that “face-to-face courses are effective in teaching new concepts and information,” based on an October 2011 survey (Figure 16).

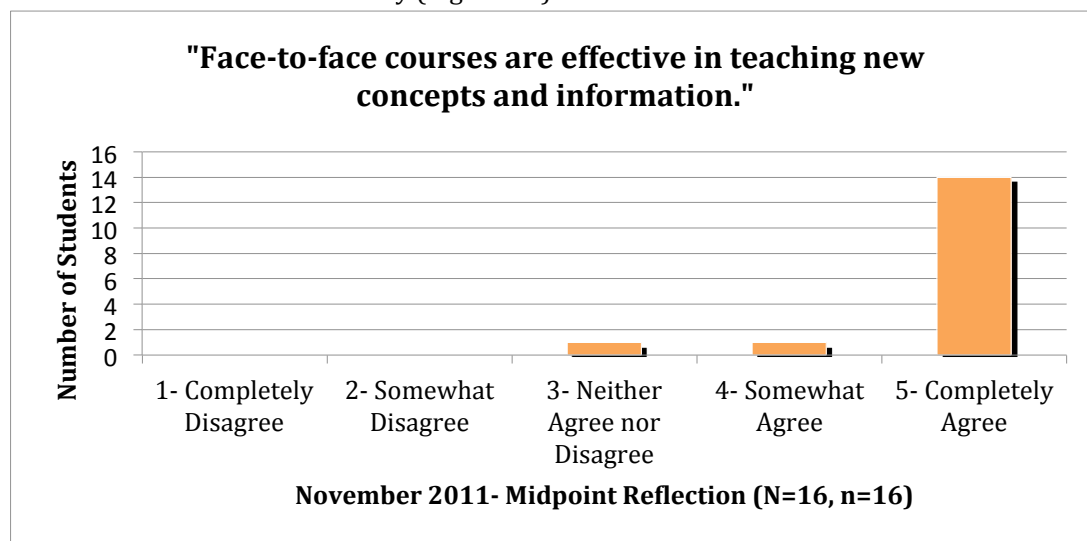


Figure 16. Value of Face-to-Face Learning.

Students valued both the quality and the quantity of learning that took place in the face-to-face courses. Being together in person facilitated relationship, mutual respect and dialogue, which in turn led to deeper understandings of course material. One student explained, “The face-to-face courses allow us to get deeper into the meanings of the text and allow us to search for the connections to Nunavut and our communities as a whole collective group.” Face-to-face learning offered greater opportunities for creating connections between students, building a sense of community that helped students stay with the program.

Due to the very short periods of time students were able to be together for courses delivered in person, students had to arrive prepared for intensive learning at a graduate level and then work extremely hard during the short period of time. The face-to-face courses are described as, “Very quick, intense bursts of courses with almost like a factory mode production level coming out of us when we are attending.” The tight schedule led to a full week of studies for instructors, administrators and most of all, students, who were pushed to their limits. As one person recalled, “It was challenging and stressful at times but we made it through together.” Another student explained that she felt, “Some activities/ learning and reading strategies required a lot of contributing, and at the end of the course I felt overloaded and then overwhelmed when it came down to doing my [course] paper.” Despite (or maybe because of) the pressure of working within a condensed timeframe, students felt, “A lot of learning takes place [within] face-to-face groups,” reflecting that “Each time I attend a face-to-face course I learn new concepts that build onto what I already know.”

One of the reasons why so much material could be covered in short periods of time during face-to-face courses is that they created a separate space to study. Students who travelled to courses had an opportunity to fully immerse themselves in classes for the week. One student said, “I especially enjoy the face-to face-courses where we all get together and learn as a whole group. I find it easier to focus and give the course everything I've got when it is my main priority.” Another echoed:

Honestly, I prefer the face-to-face courses to the distance education courses because I feel that I am more focused and dedicated to my work, as it becomes my sole responsibility for the week, especially since I usually travel and leave my family and work behind [to attend classes].

Though face-to-face courses required intense periods of learning, being away from other distractions helped students to focus on course work, getting a lot done in a short period of time.

Face-to-face courses also presented challenges. Weather, family, or health emergencies occasionally prevented students from travelling and taking part in the course. Bringing everyone together was also expensive. Nonetheless, students firmly expressed a preference for in-person learning. At the end of the program, when students were asked to indicate which aspects of the program they would have liked *more* time spent on, the second highest answer was “more time participating in face-to-face learning experiences,” with more than half of the students choosing this response (Figure A-1, Appendix I).²⁶

As a side note, face-to-face emerged as an important success factor for the whole team, whose progress depended on relationships, and sufficient time to process. While the program organizers used a combination of in-person and online or telephone meetings, they particularly valued face-to-face planning meetings for providing the most appropriate context to connect:

For planning meetings, at least if they have a face-to-face meeting one time, I feel really helps a lot. Because when you're on Skype... you're conversing on the same topic, but because you are not physically in the same environment, it also kind of detaches in some ways. Conference calls, Skype, I know it would work, but I know from my experience that face-to-face is really important and you can carry on longer than how you would on a conference call or on Skype. It's easier to be looking at the time when you're on a call or on Skype, but when you are face-to-face it doesn't matter how long you go through the discussion that you have. Especially if we're staying in the same place, then we could just continue on through the evening instead of cutting it [off].

²⁶ Students were asked to choose up to three responses.

Another instructor/administrator commented, "It feels real good to touch base and when we do meet face-to-face after some time away from each other it gives us more connection."

In face-to-face meetings, planners are focused only on the task at hand, and are not constrained by time the way that might be in a one-hour conference call. As one instructor explained:

Just like the presentation last night, I noticed that some of them [the students] were quite comfortable or confident, but as soon as they [saw] the three minute or one minute [signal of time remaining], they panicked and some of them froze actually. With planning meeting calls, I know looking at the time, if it's getting close to the ending part, some participants might think, "Oh we're ending anyway so what's the point of bringing this up." But if it's in a face-to-face, they can just continue on.

In spite of the financial cost of meetings, and the time commitment to organize and participate in meetings, partners at the Department of Education and the Faculty of Education remained committed defenders of face-to-face gatherings for the organizational team.

Instructors, students, and administrators emphasized the value of coming together in the same physical place at least periodically throughout the program to maximize connection and to improve the quality of sharing and learning.

Recommendation 25. Programs offered in the North should continue to deliver the majority of courses face-to-face.

Recommendation 26. Support face-to-face meetings of instructors and program contributors prior to courses.

University campus courses

Based on feedback from 2009 graduates, students in the 2010-2013 program travelled to Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island to complete two face-to-face courses on campus at UPEI in July 2011. Students appreciated the opportunity to connect with the university that would grant their degree. Students reflected upon their experience taking courses on campus at UPEI in November 2011 three months after returning to Nunavut. Their comments indicated that they were very happy with the opportunity. "It was a good experience going to a university, [I] learnt a great deal there," a student explained. Another said, "It was nice to actually see the UPEI on the Island one summer though, thank you!"

In particular, students noted that they enjoyed being able to experience campus life: "We were exposed to campus living at UPEI. That exposure was very good." "It was nice to make a connection with the campus." Another appreciated being able to access a wider range of university services, "The advantages were seeing the University and studying there, to be able to see the staff in one place. To go to the library and be instructed in person by the librarian." Yet another enjoyed, "that our classes were in a real university classroom setting."

Students felt validated as graduate students as they studied on campus: "It was beneficial for us to experience university life, as we were able to see and feel equivalent to other UPEI Masters students." "It was certainly an advantage to be in the campus and meet the Dean [of education], and to see other Masters program students taking courses during the summer." A Department of Education representative, similarly viewed the campus experience positively:

I'm just happy that they had the opportunity to go down to UPEI, the campus. Because I think they really, often times there's that "safe culture," but their [the students'] views and horizon has to be broadened to see that there's more to life outside of Nunavut. The opportunity to participate in the university as it's presented, to validate them as students, I thought was a very important component [of the program].

Building a link to campus life also demystified the Southern university experience (which had been a barrier to some students' willingness to consider a program outside of Nunavut):

The face-to-face program in UPEI was very interesting because it was an eye-opener as to what it is like in campus, and I am sure most Inuit don't get that chance of being outside of Nunavut to experience other places and really see how it works once you are at a university or at a college setting.

Another student commented, "I have seen other universities that are huge and the experience I had with UPEI was awesome. I recommend it to our youth; it's small and not intimidating." Another student echoes the feeling:

I wish I had that chance [before] to experience being at a University or College setting when I was done school. Now that I know what it is like to be in a place like that, I can share it with our students who are thinking of furthering their own education and give them more support.

These comments touch on the influence MED graduates may have on the youth of Nunavut. MED Nunavut students are parents, teachers, and leaders in their communities, and therefore have the ability to affect the perspectives of future generations of Nunavummiut. They are now able to share their experiences of being on campus with Nunavut youth to allow them to understand university life in Southern Canada, and perhaps be more willing to venture out and try one of the many programs that are offered on Southern Canadian campuses.

Both the participants and the Department of Education felt that the suggestion made by the first cohort of MED students was most valuable. Spending two full weeks on campus offered program participants a unique opportunity to experience life at a Southern university while remaining within the cohort of Northern educators and in a program that was tailored for Inuit contexts. The lessons learned at UPEI by the Inuit MED students will be valuable in their own educational studies, as well as to the students they may advise in future years.

Recommendation 27. Incorporate on-campus learning opportunities at the host university to ensure students have the opportunity to experience a university campus during a Northern cohort program.

Courses in Iqaluit and Rankin Inlet, Nunavut

The remaining five face-to-face courses were offered in Nunavut. Four took place in Iqaluit, the capital and travel hub for the Qikiqtani (Baffin) region, and one took place in Rankin Inlet, a travel hub for the Kivalliq region. Courses were held in a variety of different classroom settings, depending on the community and available classroom space.

Courses offered in Nunavut generally meant less travel time for students (and students in the host community did not have to travel at all). They also provided increased opportunities for integrating the program with the broader community. For example, local Elders and speakers could more easily be invited into the program (see "Elder instructors"). Students offered each other hospitality, "[One student] brought her coffee pots and has been inviting us for dinner." Others involved in the program also welcomed the students to that particular area of 'Nunavut' (our land). For example, one evening, Leena Evis, a guest speaker, invited the cohort to her 'tent' at the Sylvia Grinnell Park to share both her family camp and her journey as an educator and community leader with the students. Everyone involved with the program attended this special supper of country foods including caribou stew, char, and clams, as well as tea and bannock. This special evening activity gave students an opportunity to reconnect with the land mid-way through the course.

Local courses also made it possible to consider recreating more traditional Inuit learning environments. During the planning stages for a special, day-long visit with Elders, it was suggested that Elders should be asked where they would like to meet students, if they "would want to be in a tent [or another traditional setting] or in a classroom setting." The instructor of the course thoughtfully deliberated on the past experiences of the invited Elders, and it was decided that in this case the classroom would be a safe and comfortable environment. The instructor explained:

We didn't feel it was necessary to be in a tent, but that environment also helps some of the Elders with their comfort level. Sometimes it's intimidating to go into a school setting or a classroom setting where all the tables are laid out in a very formal way, but thinking about how the environment will have an affect on a particular Elder. Some Elders are okay with whatever setting there is because of their experience, but to some of them, I know it's intimidating to walk into such formal setting.

While the final decision was to remain in a classroom, Nunavut-based courses opened additional doors to ensure that the teaching environment was accommodating to the invited Elders.

As established above, students highly valued the Nunavut-based program and considered face-to-face learning a highlight of their program. Nonetheless, their reflections offer a few caveats for program organizers to take into account. Students living in the communities where the courses took place sometimes felt added pressure. Students who travelled in were able to (somewhat) set aside family and work responsibilities for the course's duration, whereas students who lived in the community where courses were being held could not create this dedicated space. Students in this situation expressed their perspectives: "During our face-to-face [course]... working at home and juggling between my family and the course is somewhat disruptive. It would be so good if the face-to-face courses were not in our hometown" and "[I] would love to take them elsewhere away from family responsibilities." Another student repeated:

The face-to-face courses are mostly located in Iqaluit. There are [a number] of us from Iqaluit who don't get to leave family to study peacefully without our little ones interrupting us. I found we had more time to work when we were in PEI because we were away from our family responsibilities.

In addition, when students worked in the building where a course was being held, they felt doubly burdened in the hostess role, "It felt like I was at a disadvantage having to worry about having the course at my workplace. It was an added stress trying to be a student and expected to be a hostess at the same time."

Other students were aware of this added stress for local students. Speaking of a few students in particular, one program participant shared:

Because our next courses are going to be here in [community name]... I get concerned about them because they are at home, yet have to juggle everything. We get to leave our families so...we have less responsibility. I just think about them. I don't want them to feel pressured to entertain us while they're also carrying the load of being a student.

Another student added, "We don't want them to feel they are responsible... ..I think they need a little support too." While the opportunity to show hospitality was valued, and everyone involved in the program appreciated the gestures made by students living in the course location, it is important for program administrators to keep in mind that students living in the course location, whether it is at their exact workplace or simply in their home community, have that added pressure. Ongoing collection and analysis of student feedback made it possible to accommodate this concern; moving the location of the final face-to-face course from Iqaluit to Rankin Inlet gave students living in Iqaluit a chance to study in Nunavut in a community other than their own. It is recommended that in future programs courses be held in a variety of locations, to ensure that the location is fair for all students.

Recommendation 28. The location of face-to-face courses in the North should move between communities, and include smaller communities, to share the benefits and disadvantages of having courses held in students' home community.

Distance Education

The Nunavut MEd program offered three courses completely by distance education. During the dark winter terms, when blizzards made travel less reliable and students were home working at their full-time jobs, distance education courses drew students together. On the whole, students felt that the distance courses offered them effective opportunities to continue learning, even if they preferred to be face-to-face.

When students evaluated the perceived effectiveness of courses offered through distance education at the mid-point in the program, most (14/16) completely or somewhat agreed that distance courses were effective (Figure 17).

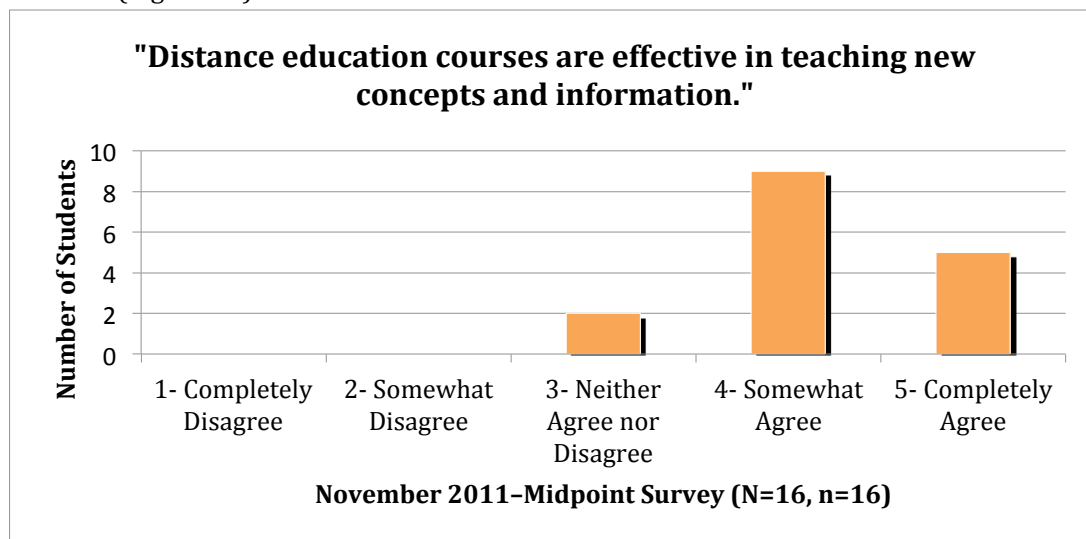


Figure 17. Perceived Effectiveness of Distance Education Classes.

The distance courses continued the high standards introduced in the face-to-face courses, "The program on-line challenges my thinking skills to do all the work and assignments that are expected of me throughout each new course offerings." Some students particularly appreciated the flexibility to choose when and where to do their work, "I enjoy the fact that the distance education courses are carried out over a longer period of time so even though the workload is still stressful I don't feel I am under the gun as much as I am when I attend the face-to-face courses." The overall feeling about online courses was perhaps best summed up by one student who said they are, "so much better than no courses."

Even if distance education offered advantages, and were necessary, students struggled with them, "[Distance education courses are] a bit difficult for me sometimes but I try and complete them." Students specifically missed the personal connections from the face-to-face courses, which had enhanced learning and provided support. One said, "The distance education courses I feel are less effective in teaching me new concepts and information because they lack the emotional side of the conversations that are taking place." Another reflected, "[My greatest challenge during the program was] the on-line courses, I miss seeing my cohorts faces." Another explained that, "Being alone in a town and instructors [are] not in town sometimes make the course more stressful." Efforts were made to mitigate this isolation. Students were encouraged to meet together when two or more lived in a given community. Instructors and students met one-on-one, informally, when other travel brought them into the same community. The GN also funded local tutors for struggling students in some online courses. These efforts made some difference in supporting students through distance courses.

All the same, students struggled to maintain focus and motivation during the 12-week online courses: I find the 12-week online courses very long and dragged out. I realize that they are meant to be that long to give us time to learn and work through the writing process but I find it very difficult to stay focused for the entire 12 weeks and consistently give the course the priority it deserves in my life.

Other students made comments such as “The course seemed long;” “It was a long winter and long course;” “This 12-week online course took too long, it would have been doable in 6 weeks;” and “I seem to have a few problems with the distance education courses. I tend to procrastinate when it comes to online learning.” Participants indicated that in online courses, as with face-to-face courses, they struggled with the tendency to delay work, which became a problem when they discovered that the course work took more time than they had anticipated.

When graduates were asked at the end of the program, which aspects of the program they would have liked *less* time spent on, the most common response, given by more than half of the graduates was “less time on distance education” (See Figure A-1, Appendix I). From students who were often reluctant to criticize any aspect of the program, and who did not identify any other clear area on which less time should be spent, this feedback stands out. Distance education allowed students to keep learning, but during these courses some students felt discouraged and wished to be back face-to-face with the instructors and the cohort.

Recommendation 29. Continue to incorporate distance learning into Nunavut-based advanced learning programs. Incorporate strategies to mitigate student isolation and increase student motivation.

Teaching technologies

Knowledge Forum

Knowledge Forum was used as an online interactive platform to enhance learning and maintain a sense of community during the distance courses. Students used Knowledge Forum by creating postings, and responding to each other’s ideas. An instructor who was experienced teaching courses offered fully online explained that Knowledge Forum created an excellent learning space for students:

Many participants provided provocative, critical and insightful comments that were inspiring! These kinds of comments lit fires and raised the level of exchange to higher discursive interactions that raised questions and pushed the envelope. This required time and effort, something that was demanding! Taking time to read and then submit a thoughtful response provides the backbone of a weekly dialogue that becomes exciting and energizing.

A student explained how she grew to see the usefulness of the process in enhancing her own learning:

The first online course, and having to read other people’s comments on the Knowledge Forum, I thought that was a bit of an added activity that sort of was wasting my time... At first I thought it was sort of a burden, in helping me to understand other students’ thoughts. Because we’re not together, we’re not conversing with each other, but KF is really helping me through that process. And it helps me get new ideas.

This thought was echoed by another student who explained, “The online programs are very interesting because we are able to read everyone’s statements and support each other with our assignments.” Students are also able to view their own academic progress since the beginning of the MEd program by looking back at their online work in Knowledge Forum courses over time.

Ongoing dialogue through Knowledge Forum helped students stay engaged, “I find that when the group is not together physically, the Knowledge Forum allows us to communicate as if we are still together. It is as effective as our face-to-face meetings.” An instructor described this online space as, “The glue that kept the dialogue flowing and the participants engaged. [Student] [s]uccess is due to the relevant and exciting dialogue created online.” Others also shared their appreciation for Knowledge Forum:

I’m not crazy about distance education, but how they are arranged with dialogue with the cohort through Knowledge Forum has been thought out well. I just find it harder to commit fully to discipline myself. I’m still open to it.

These comments highlight the benefits of using an online platform to create connections and dialogue when students are studying in communities that are geographically far from one another.

However, a downside of dialogue online, across multiple time zones, was that feedback was often not immediate. One student said, “We take more time though in understanding new concepts, as we have to wait for responses through e-mail or the K-Forum.” Prompt feedback from instructors and fellow students was vital during online courses.

Knowledge Forum provided a context for students to practice expressing ideas in writing, and held promise for drawing out quieter students. As one instructor said:

Knowledge Forum is a spectacular environment to enable students to grow as writers and thinkers. Encouraging responses that take up the ideas of colleagues and expand or critique them is a huge benefit in KF but it requires instructors or participants to push the students ... There were students whose responses remained superficial in spite of a great deal of feedback and encouragement.

Instructors struggled to balance facilitating student ownership of the learning space, which required a hands-off approach, with encouraging full participation of each student, which required more intervention as students and instructors worked to draw out quieter students, or those who were less comfortable writing. One instructor reflected:

Students were broken into smaller groups, each with its own sharing and dialogue space. The idea was to maximize meaningful and rich discussion while keeping the amount of reading [peers’ comments] to a reasonable level. However this fragmented the group and students had a disproportionate impact either by over or under-contributing.

Knowledge Forum helped facilitate online discussion, but also required a fair amount of work to facilitate and ensure that students remained engaged and participated fully.

Even in face-to-face courses, instructors used Knowledge Forum to provide pre-course readings and assignments. An Inuit instructor expressed that she felt, “Knowledge Forum is an excellent approach for dealing with reading.” The distance platform supported students to come to classes prepared, with some content already mastered and assignments begun.

While all students were taught how to use Knowledge Forum in the orientation, and most became more comfortable with it as the program progressed, feelings of incompetence with the technology were a barrier in a few cases. One student, who indicated she learned very well at face-to-face courses, said distance education courses were less effective, “due to feeling incompetent in Knowledge Forum interactions” (even after completing two distance education courses using the platform). Instructors also had trouble with the technology, particularly those who were not UPEI professors and who were teaching a single course. One instructor explained, “I wasn’t happy with the online discussion,” specifically because he/she was unfamiliar with the learning environment. Another said, “[Y]ou know I’m not tech efficient.” At least one face-to-face teaching team elected to use Knowledge Forum less, because they weren’t familiar with it: “[W]e aren’t UPEI professors, and ... we hadn’t really led this group before using Knowledge Forum, so we didn’t use the Knowledge Forum as much as maybe we could have.”

While professors received informal support in Knowledge Forum from the UPEI-based teaching team, it was suggested that training to use the technology to its full capacity be offered to each professor: “That would be something that is strongly encouraged... if they haven’t used Knowledge Forum before... ensure that the instructors are shown how to use it.” Such training could happen, for example, during annual instructor planning meetings. Alternatively, one-time instructors in the program teaching face-to-face courses could be advised that the use of the online environment was not necessary.

While students and professors valued face-to-face interactions over distance learning, Knowledge Forum created an online space for students to stay connected and share insights during their course. Instructors who taught online courses regularly expressed the benefits of using Knowledge Forum even while acknowledging that, like any learning platform, it left room for improvement.

Recommendation 30. Continue to use Knowledge Forum to create an interactive online learning community and to support student learning.

Recommendation 31. Make use of Knowledge Forum optional for instructors teaching only face-to-face courses in the program.

Recommendation 32. Provide training for all instructors on how to use online tools such as Knowledge Forum before teaching a course.

Internet

Use of the Internet made it possible for students to complete this program, including preparing for face-to-face courses and completing online courses, as well. However, poor Internet connections limited the ability to use online communication tools, which rely upon high-speed internet access that was not available in all Nunavut communities. Students and Northern-based instructors faced challenges working with Internet connections that were expensive and unreliable, with slow connection speeds and time-out periods during large downloads. One student explained, “Sometimes the internet services are not so good in Nunavut.” Another student said, “Those [students] in more remote places have less bandwidth therefore it was a little bit more time consuming but this is not a weakness of the program but a consideration. This will be a thing of the past very soon.” These ideas are echoed by another student who explained:

The only weakness [in the program] I can think of is to do with technology, and it is really not the MEd program’s fault at this time. We have not much choices for internet and it is almost impossible to download a book or magazines we may want from the UPEI library, without exhausting our bandwidth we have purchased.

Students and Nunavut-based instructors had to be selective about what they downloaded, as they often went over their monthly bandwidth allocations and paid high fees for additional data.

The time and cost involved in downloading large files was particularly problematic. As students did not have access to a physical academic library (except while on campus at UPEI, or travelling South for other reasons), they needed to access journal articles and books online to complete literature reviews. Students had learned, on campus, how to navigate UPEI library’s online databases, but informal conversations with students revealed that these resources were not being accessed due to problems with Internet connections in Nunavut.

Instructors in one research-based course expressed concerns that students’ assignments were not completed as well as they could have been if up-to-date literature was more easily accessible via the Internet. In 2012 a stopgap solution to this issue was created. Students could email the Research Manager and request specific resources. For example, on February 2, 2013 a student sent an email that said, “Could you please provide me the following literature...” and went on to list references. For the Research Manager, the process of gathering specific articles and chapters was labour intensive. Resource gathering required that multiple articles needed to be accessed for each student, downloaded onto a portable USB drive and mailed to Nunavut or Nunavik. In communities with reliable Internet, the online file hosting service DropBox was used to send students scanned copies of resources only available in paper-copy at the UPEI library. The students’ experience trying to access resources was one example of a significant challenge encountered when offering a graduate program via distance education to remote locations. These challenges were mitigated by instructors and program coordinators who were flexible and willing to adapt to meet the needs of the students in the MEd program in order to provide equitable access to resources.

In summary, Knowledge Forum, the online interactive database that was used successfully to support the previous Nunavut MEd, performed with equal success in the 2010-2013 program, although a number of students continued to find Internet connectivity and reliability a challenge, particularly for multimedia use.

Recommendation 33. Incorporate strategies to provide additional assistance and connection to students in communities with slower, less reliable and more expensive Internet service.

Recommendation 34. Use telephone and Skype calls to connect students with instructors during online courses. Calls can also be used for instructor planning, but these calls should be in addition to face-to-face meetings not instead of meeting.

By using online technologies such as Knowledge Forum, and periodically coming together as a group, instructors, and students were able to stay connected over the three-year program. Each of the course locations, at UPEI, in Iqaluit or in Rankin Inlet, and online courses completed from students' home communities, offered students particular benefits and challenges. One strength of the Nunavut MEd program was the range of learning environments it offered, adapting to the realities of the students and the context within which the program was offered.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS IV

Parnangniq & Aapiliqtailiniq
(Preparation, Hard Work, and Perseverance)



The final factors identified as contributing to program success reflect the Inuit values of *parnangniq* 'preparation', *pisuqsiniq* 'mastery', and *aapiliqtailiniq* 'perseverance'. These values are deeply held in Inuit society. Inuit women would know which winter clothes their family would require when the months turned colder, they would clean and prepare skins; soften skins until they were ready to work with; carefully cut out pattern pieces that would fit together and yield the correct size for the wearer; and sew together pieces making sure the stitches were perfect, to hold water out and warmth in. We have heard many women speak of crying at the labour involved in making *kamiit*, (traditional Inuit boots) and the pride they felt when they or their family members finally wore the hand-sewn footwear and had warm feet throughout the winter. The Research Manager had the privilege of walking alongside students (and instructors) as they completed a similar process and gained mastery of academic and professional competencies, with some tears, but ending with great pride and a feeling of accomplishment.

Balancing Extensive Preparation with Flexibility

The 2010-2013 Nunavut MEd was able to build on the preparation and hard work that went into, and came before, the 2006-2009 pilot MEd program, and make improvements based on feedback from that iteration of the program. Research conducted during the pilot MEd program proved to be valuable in planning and delivering the second iteration of the program. A representative from the Department of Education in Nunavut explained at the outset:

If we took what we have now, in terms of the basic course content, and then, ...we had a couple years to work with it...it would be that much stronger the next time, rather than waiting and then starting all over again in the future.

The UPEI Faculty of Education and instructors built on a solid foundation of expertise in Indigenous education and prior research into post-secondary education in Nunavut. Instructors also built on rich histories of living and working in Nunavut, and deep relationships formed over many years. Students built on knowledge gained over a lifetime as community members and professional educators in Nunavut and Nunavik. These foundations prepared instructors and students to be ready to contribute to and to benefit from a program such as the Nunavut MEd. While recognizing that extensive preparation began long before the program's inception, this section presents a few strategies that the program incorporated in order to continue to act on *parnangniq* and *aapiliqtailiniq*, preparation, hard work, and perseverance.

Annual planning meetings

Annual planning meetings, hosted by the Nunavut Department of Education, allowed for the teaching and co-ordination team members to meet face-to-face and to build relationships and plan courses for one year at a time. Held over long-weekends in Ottawa, planning meetings were centrally located for participants to travel from across Nunavut and Canada. All instructors and program administrators shared daily meetings and meals, which allowed contributors to connect with one another, build trust, and strengthen the partnerships that sustained the Nunavut MEd program.

Meetings were specifically focused on the program goals, curriculum, and teaching practices. All instructors for the upcoming year planned course objectives, and ensured that courses built sequentially upon each other to create flow within the program. When instructors were unable to travel due to unforeseen circumstances, they connected to the group using Skype.²⁷ A representative from the Department of Education stressed the importance of the meetings:

I think that instructor planning meetings turned out to be really important, because it was an opportunity. When you have people from different organizations teaching, there's no chance to get together and talk about it [teaching]... I think it was really valuable to have those meetings. And the one course that I have heard where the instruction didn't work as well, that instructor never was able

²⁷ Skype is a free online video conferencing tool.

to attend one of these meetings, so I think that could have had an effect. And I think that's where at least in many cases, or hopefully most cases...the co-instructors were able to get together and talk about the content and the approaches they would take and maybe some of the strategies they would use, and how to make it work when you have all these different people coming together to try to make something happen. It is one thing when you have one instructor, it's their course, they just do their thing, but the more people you involve the more complicated it gets. So I think that [holding planning meetings] was a strength and it would be something that I would highly recommend as worth all the money that it costs in this case to do it. Maybe in some other cases it wouldn't cost so much money, but I think it's very valuable.

The value of these meetings cannot be underestimated as they deepened personal connections and enabled instructors and partners to carefully plan the program and courses in some depth, including the development of draft day-plans for the intensive courses.

Instructors spoke very highly of the planning meetings, and credited this time together as one of the keys to the success they experienced when teaching the intensive week-long, face-to-face courses in the program. An Inuit instructor commented that she, "Found the planning meetings to be very helpful and very informative in identifying each role for the person that will be involved [at the] different stages during the MEd program." Reflecting at the end of her face-to-face course, another Inuit instructor revealed that the course:

[W]ent pretty well considering that [we] planned once together and that was in April when the group of us met in Ottawa, and I think that was critical. I think it's ideal to meet more than once, but we're both very busy people.

Planning meetings helped instructors prepare to work with one another, and to feel ready for the intensity of the short face-to-face courses.

Course planning continued over the phone or online after the meeting in Ottawa. Many instructors felt that additional check-ins with one another ensured courses were fully planned prior to the start of a course. One instructor wrote that in their teaching team, "The instructors were able to communicate through e-mails and on phone calls to clarify everything from the course outline." Another commented, "Giving each other feedback on the drafts by emailing each other, I think, does help." This instructor also felt that:

From that aspect the actual planning, I feel that we would be good to touch base by phone if we can't meet, of course if we're in different places ... I think I'd do that next time. It's not so much the university that would drive that, but I think that could be a recommended strategy, so then, you're able to iron out more stuff that you might not have thought otherwise in the first time in the session.

Co-instructing required a commitment from both instructors to effectively plan together as a team. Comments from instructors generally suggest that the extensive group planning built into the program equipped them to offer the best possible content in the best possible way and, through high quality teaching, also set students up for success.

Just as co-instructing teams required careful planning and negotiating of roles, so did full incorporation of the counsellor into the teaching team. While reflecting after her week-long course, one instructor explained, "I wish I had made more time at the beginning of the course to plan with the counsellor to better work together and to be more of a team." Some teaching teams had experiences where the counsellors' role and space within the class had not been carefully planned or negotiated. Instructors expressed uncertainty about how to team-teach in a class with two full-time instructors and one full-time counsellor. Such hesitations further suggest the importance of team planning in advance of each course.

While courses and respective roles were carefully planned at annual face-to-face meetings, and further developed through subsequent phone and online discussions, instructors and administrators maintained a commitment to flexibility. Adapting to students' interests and needs on an ongoing basis, as a team, was valued, and facilitated by the connection between instructors nurtured through the planning process and the Research Manager's ongoing collection of feedback to address in next stages of planning.

Recommendation 35. Hold annual planning meetings to gather all teaching and co-ordination team members face-to-face to build relationships and plan courses for one year at a time.

Planning with Elders

Another aspect of the program that required careful planning, balanced with flexibility, was the inclusion of Elders as guest speakers. On one hand, this involved practical considerations such as timing and location to ensure the special guests' well-being was carefully considered. Another aspect of respecting Elders was setting aside time for instructors and Elders to plan lessons together, to discuss and prepare what would be taught. One instructor said, "[We] got in touch with [the Elder], we talked about it a little bit." Another explained, "It was good that they [the students] had given us the topics or which of the areas that they would want the Elders to have focused on." Planning time enabled the Elders to feel comfortable with the teaching team and practices, the classroom space, and the content to be covered during the course.

When Elders were aware of the important topics in a course, they could better prepare for their time with students. Planning carefully shows respect for the Elder, allowing him or her to carefully shape what is to be shared. Administrators and instructors were aware that the teaching practices of Elders can sometimes differ quite significantly from the teaching techniques used within a typical university environment, and the content may not be what one expected:

Sometimes Elders given a topic can go on and just deliver everything like a whole package, and it's up to the students to pick out which parts they want to focus on. And even with stories, I've read somewhere that if you ask an Elder, they won't give you the answer directly, they'll make you think and they'll add a story to it.

Elders can choose their own direction and way of teaching within courses. Even if the instructor attempted to carefully shape the direction of the Elder's contribution, sometimes what ends up being shared sounds very different, as a representative from the Government of Nunavut Department of Education explained:

Sometimes what the Elders offer is only slightly related, or it may take a very long time before you figure out that it was related. I know we've had Elders speak at meetings... and we've worked with them ahead of time, we've said, "This is the topic, we know you've said *this* before, and you've said *this* before, and that would all relate." And they go in there and talk about something completely different!

Planning with Elders was a tool to support Elder instructors/guest speakers, but ultimately Elders had freedom in the topic chosen and how it is shared.

Recommendation 36. Instructors should spend time with Elders prior to Elders visiting the class to share priorities and focus topics.

Recommendation 37. Be prepared that successful lessons may come in many different forms. Acknowledge that Inuit Elders will teach in their own way, sharing deep and insightful conversations and stories. The ways in which they choose to pass on wisdom cannot be evaluated using the standard university criteria.

Pre-course readings

In order to ensure that students arrived at face-to-face courses with the background knowledge required, almost every face-to-face course had a two to six-week online component prior to meeting together. Students and instructors maintained dialogue online as they prepared for and completed pre-course readings or assignments to prepare for face-to-face courses.

Many instructors successfully implemented pre-reading assignments. Students' preparation prior to the course was considered essential in order to get through course content and achieve deep reflection on ideas, "I definitely wanted them to have the reading done. Because there's no way to get that amount of reading done in a couple of nights, and be able to work with the ideas." Many students felt that this short distance learning experience was helpful "because it prepares us for the short time we are going to be together for the face-to-face meeting." Pre-course readings help "To get me prepared for the summer [face-to-face course], and to do some pre-writing and reading it also helped me because we have such a short time together."

Students agreed that completing and reflecting on readings ahead of time helped them ‘set their minds’ to the ideas that would be discussed:

The one thing I think is going very well is the pre-course information sent to us because it allows me to set my mind and prepare me on how the intensity of the required course will be. It gives me time to absorb the content of the readings.

This sentiment was shared by another student who explained, “The textbook used and the pre-course instructions were great. It helped set the mind prior to the course.”

Instructors also often assigned small activities with the pre-readings, which enhanced the pre-course learning:

One thing that went really well was the reading beforehand...They really did know that book and they had marked it up and had made reference to it... and they did a physical reading journal. That worked really well, they did come prepared and were able to have discussions and reference that in their discussions.

For some instructors, assignments given on the pre-readings were primarily to motivate completion of the readings, “I think it just gave them a purpose for doing the reading.” However, instructors observed students’ confidence when they came to discussion-based classes prepared with understandings from the pre-readings, “[Students] could draw from that [reading] in the discussions and made them feel more confident.” When both pre-readings and assignments were completed prior to classes, students were able to quickly move into the activities of the six-day course.

One student suggested that pre-readings could be assigned to students earlier than the standard practice of two weeks before. She suggested that three weeks would be a better option because it “Was very busy the last two weeks before I came here. I’d like that [pre-readings] to keep [happening], but maybe three weeks before. It takes time to internalize what I am going to do, what I am going to study.”

At the end of another course, the instructor had successfully implemented both pre-course readings and small pre-reading assignments, and found these effective learning tools. He/she suggested that building on these kinds of short, prepared-in-advance assignments might have been a more effective and appropriate evaluation tool for student grading, rather than the major project students were expected to complete while at the face-to-face course, “The [pre-course assignment] the majority did have that finished...That might have been a way to go, in terms of having it [as a] part of that major project instead of having a different assignment.” This instructor suggests designing courses that ask students to complete pre-course readings, with small assignments on each reading, then to use these assignments as part of a cumulative final paper.

Recommendation 38. Help prepare students for face-to-face courses by assigning readings and small assignments in advance. Allow adequate time for completion before the course (e.g. three weeks).

Pre-readings worked very well in courses when students worked online in the weeks before the course and then met immediately afterwards for the face-to-face experience, but one instructor explained that during the two weeks of back-to-back courses held in person in the summer, it could be a challenge to have pre-readings completed ahead of time for both courses.

I know it’s always an issue getting them to pre-read... That whole question of, “Do you do pre-reading for each course?” I don’t know how you do it in the summer for two courses. If we had done two [very theoretical] courses they [the students] would have been dead. I don’t think to say our [course] was weaker because there wasn’t as much reading, but some people would say, “Where was the rigorous reading?” But I think the rigor was in the thinking in the classroom.... I think they got a really good course and they got rigor if rigor is thinking hard about your practice.

Each course has had its strengths and weaknesses, and each was different from the next. The use of pre-course readings provides another example of how students’ extensive preparation for each course maximized their potential to make use of intensive face-to-face learning times. However, they also introduced a burden for students in some cases (notably when two courses were offered back to back), so flexibility is needed in their

implementation. Offering the more theoretical courses that require a lot of reading before courses that may be more practice-oriented might work reasonably well.

Recommendation 39. Use judgement and flexibility in assigning pre-course work. Quantity and timing of pre-course readings should be adapted on a course-by-course basis. They may not be as necessary or appropriate for all courses.

Hard Work

Students who entered the Nunavut MEd were motivated to work hard, push their academic limits, and see what they are capable of achieving. One graduate explained that her observation of low expectations of Inuit students in earlier education systems was what pushed her to pursue a career in educational leadership:

It started from having really poor teachers and poor leaders [in other programs]. What I found to be poor was that they were not building capacity, they were just keeping everybody where they were at and that really bothered me, when I could see all the potential in people. Even as a student I could see some of the students really growing, but they were never pushed to develop and that would bother me. And as a student I would always say, “We can be more, we can do more, I want more.” It started from there—I didn’t feel like a leader, but I knew that we could be more than we were.

The program thus addressed Inuit educational leaders’ hunger for a program that would push them to work hard and develop to their individual potentials.

Mid-way through the program, after the fifth course had been completed, all students were asked to evaluate whether they felt the course content was at an appropriate level of difficulty. According to the students, the program achieved a correct balance of building on students’ existing knowledge and strengths, and pushing them to new levels of sophistication in knowledge and communication. Thirteen of sixteen respondents completely or somewhat agreed the content was at an appropriate level, neither too easy nor too difficult (Figure 18).

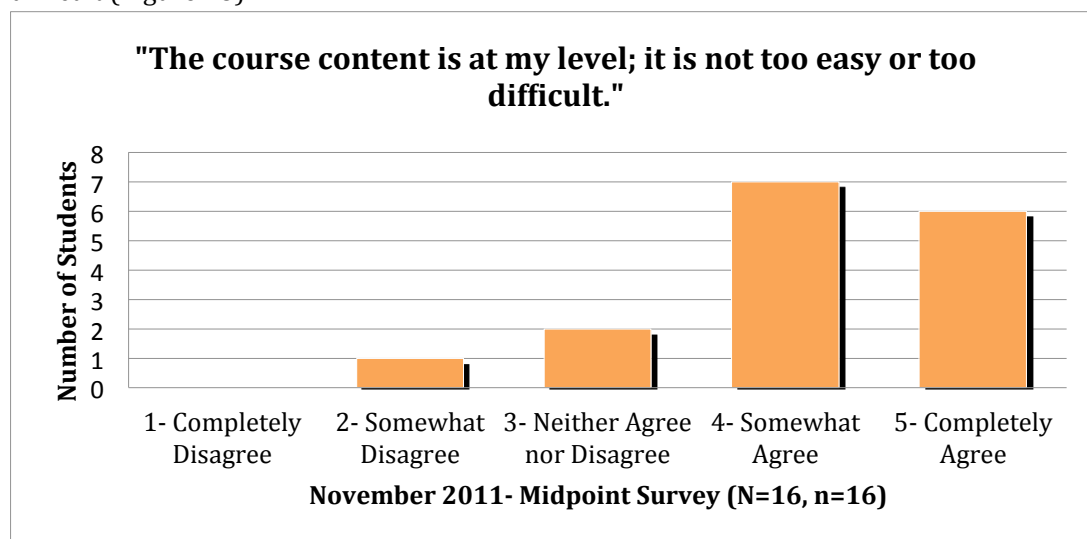


Figure 18. Perceived Level of Difficulty

Participants said they welcomed the academic rigour of the program: “I love what is given to us. [I]t is challenging and that is what I think we need.” Another explained:

I am pleased with the course content because I feel engaged and challenged, stressed and appreciated but also at times stretched to my limits so that they get everything they can out of me. This can be viewed as both a positive and a negative. I realize anything worth doing is worth doing well and I enjoy the challenge of being tested and pushed to my limits in critical thinking and application of those skills.

One student explained that the supports in place made it possible to continue pushing one's intellectual boundaries:

I enjoy the challenge of being tested and pushed to my limits in critical thinking and application of those skills. The only time I go beyond the barrier of what I believe to be a healthy balance is when we are pushed and crunched for time to complete assignments at a high quality level. This happens at both the face-to-face courses and the distance courses. So I would say the content is difficult but we have supports in place to teach us the difficult concepts and we have support to get us through the high levels of expectations we put on ourselves.

These students, and others, expressed how they worked at and beyond their limits to master concepts, skills and practices of the graduate program, and most importantly, to reach their own expectations.

While the overall feeling from students was that the program was challenging, to an appropriate level, three students said they did not feel particularly challenged. One offered a balanced view, "It is definitely not too easy, but I find that it has not been too difficult either." Two others expressed the desire for higher expectations and to be pushed to higher levels of excellence in a wider range of areas:

I expected it to be more challenging, very academic and to be of a higher standard. I've been challenged with my writings and I've wanted to write at an acceptable level as a student in the Master's Program.

But I've found that some of the courses that we've taken were not as challenging as I thought they'd be.

Another student explained, "I agree somewhat [that the content is at my level] but at the same time I find that the assignments can be easy, that I do not mind especially with my busy schedule as an administrator."

Students reflected that some aspects of the program were challenging, for example the writing, and in other aspects some wished for greater challenge. Near the end of the program, students were given more freedom to choose the focus and content of their final papers, with increased opportunities for differentiated instruction based on the level of challenge the students wanted.

When students were asked at the end of the program, "Do you feel that this program lived up to your expectations?", all graduates agreed that it had (Figure 19). Comments reflected that students were looking for a challenge, and found one, "Yes, I was challenged beyond my expectations;" "I came in with no pre-conceptions. I knew that it would be challenging and I was right."

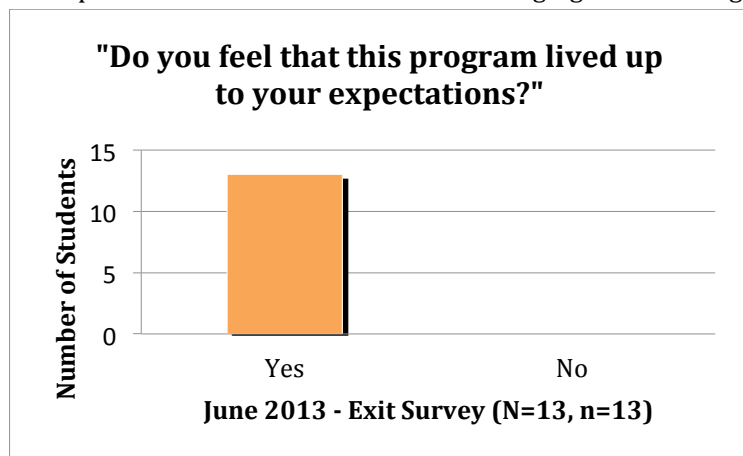


Figure 19. Program Met Graduates' Expectations

Developing a course curriculum that pushed each student to the appropriate degree was a challenge. Despite the apparent comfort with the level of difficulty in the program, eight of the original twenty-two students who enrolled did not complete the program. Furthermore, instructors' informal comments suggest that particular aspects of program content that had not previously been developed in students' skill sets, including locating peer reviewed journal articles and writing critical reviews of academic work were areas that required particularly high levels of hard work to master. Within any group there are bound to be varying levels of both academic ability and desire to be challenged. Furthermore, the decolonizing approach to program

delivery meant that multiple standards of excellence were invoked, including Inuit/non-Inuit; instructor-driven/student-driven approaches. Within this context, instructors needed to consciously encourage university standards for graduate-level work and provide additional support to struggling students, particularly in areas of academic English reading, writing, and discourse. These results provide a reminder that each person within the program must continue to be taught according to their unique abilities. Individualized supports and challenges can help students to stay with the program and reach higher levels of achievement. The students themselves also need to reach out and ask for and seek feedback and support in order to improve their levels of functioning when necessary.

Recommendation 40. Students should be given individualized support and instruction to help each person to reach their full potential and achieve the academic standards required for a course-based MEd level.

Perseverance

Graduates from the program demonstrated the Inuit values of *sapiliqtailiniq* and *suqusijuinniq*, perseverance and endurance. The educators who enrolled in the MEd led full lives, with demanding commitments to family, work, and community. The reality for all students was that the MEd was one more thing on top of an already full plate of responsibilities, even if some students received support from family and workplaces to make room for the program. Often working alone in their home communities, perseverance, self-motivation, and the ability to work with minimal supervision became vital attributes in the distance education courses.

When students were asked to identify the greatest challenge they experienced during the first five courses in the Nunavut MEd program, they pointed strongly to the challenge of studying while managing competing demands for their time. Almost half of the group, 7 of the 16 respondents, felt that keeping up with the workload, while also performing adequately in their other roles, was their most difficult task. Students commented, “Completing a lot of work assignments, reading and responding, leaving family [is difficult],” and “Working full time and caring for family is very hard...I am not young like I was before where I could tackle everything all at once.” Students faced high pressure as they juggled multiple priorities:

[I find the greatest challenge is] keeping up with the pressures and expectations of the program and keeping a high standard of my personal course work while maintaining a family, house, job and serving as a volunteer within my communities in a variety of capacities.

Students struggled with feelings of inadequacy and depression when it seemed that no aspect of their lives was receiving enough attention:

My procrastination tendencies come in the way when I attempt to keep up with other family, personal, work and home duties. In other words, trying to fulfill and meet the deadlines of [my work] on top of schoolwork with other duties can make me unhealthy when they all come at once. For example, my laundry and housework is so behind that [it] sometimes will make me depressed.

Another student echoed the feeling of doing all she could, but fearing it wouldn't be enough:

I enjoy the program on-line, but at the same time with my huge family and the workload, it can be a challenge and I am always aware that I never want to anyone to think that I am lazy or don't have time to work on my assignments because of that reason.

Despite the late nights writing after children had gone to bed, despite the frustration of missing family or community events, despite feelings of inadequacy when they struggled to balance life and studying, and despite the risk of burnout from having so much to do, the graduates endured and persevered.

Students were thankful for the program and committed to finishing what they started, so they found ways to continue. The students' mere presence in class, the completed assignments, and their participation online indicated that they persevered through the obstacle of competing demands on time. They found creative ways to carve out niches in their homes to get work done, “The challenges I face in the program are having a large family and the work load [of my job], but I can manage the work load when I find a quiet place to work.” Graduates felt a sense of accomplishment as they worked through the challenges to complete each course:

I struggle[d] with the course[s] many times throughout the year because it is, “One more thing” on my already overflowing plate of things to do. But I also realize the sense of accomplishment I feel every time we get one step closer to the end of the program. Thank you all for this opportunity.

At least one student thanked the instructors for persevering alongside her, until the goal was reached:

When I have had a busy time doing my courses and I have been busy with work, the accomplishment of completing a course is so rewarding each time. The last time I had a tough time focusing on my course work because of work being so busy, at the same time I was thankful that you and all the instructors were patient with me and understanding. I was able to dance when I came home after handing in my paper.

Students overcame many challenges to dedicate time to study and write, whether they completed just a few courses or all ten, and graduated in 2013. Students were pushed to their limits with the quantity and quality of work required for the MEd. Many students struggled to meet the expectations while also balancing busy lives outside the program. Each was tempted to give up at some point, but those who graduated persevered until the end.

Recommendation 41. Coordinators and instructors need to keep in mind that students are challenged to maintain their family, working, and community lives while studying at the graduate level.

The last four sections have explored many factors which contributed to students’ positive academic and non-academic outcomes. These included: an emphasis on partnership, community and respect; the program’s decolonizing approach; the importance of place; and the value of preparation. Ultimately it was students’ perseverance, their commitment to putting forth a full effort in each course, building knowledge with their peers through informed dialogue, refusing to give up, and stubbornly holding onto this opportunity to complete the MEd program offered by UPEI and the GN, that made the Nunavut MEd program successful.

Ongoing Challenges

In some ways, the program's greatest strengths also presented its greatest challenges. Ongoing feedback and evaluation made it possible for program organizers, instructors, and students to assess and address challenges as they arose. Minor challenges in otherwise successful components of the course, such as negotiating roles in co-teaching, or maximizing the benefits and minimizing the challenges faced in the program's face-to-face and online components, were already addressed under 'Success Factors' in this report. However, three particular areas of contention presented ongoing challenges that could have affected the overall success of the program. These ongoing issues are presented here as open questions, with the goal of creating an open dialogue about how to best understand and address these challenges in future programs.

Communication between Partners

The partnership between the Government of Nunavut and the University of Prince Edward Island, with the administrators, coordinators, instructors, and students who committed to the program, was a definite strength of the program. In most areas, partners were able to negotiate and compromise as the program evolved and the partnership was effective. However, a few barriers hindered the flow of communication in one or two key areas when partner priorities differed.

A challenge raised by a representative from the Department of Education focused on the desire for more transfer of the MEd students' ideas back to the Department. The GN was motivated to hear from and learn from these emerging educational leaders about their perceptions of education in Nunavut, their vision of educational leadership, and their assessment of what needed to change to improve educational outcomes. Representatives from the Department of Education explained, "The other reason why the Department of Education wanted the Masters [program to be offered], was to learn more about what the participants thought needed to change," and "The kinds of conversations that were had in the program need to be promoted in other contexts, in order for things to move forward. Because if you don't know what people are thinking, you can't address it." To these ends, the Department of Education staff wished for more access to the courses and classes in the program and also wanted to read students' work and hear them present their papers at the end of courses.

At the same time, instructors were motivated to create and maintain a safe, non-threatening learning environment where students could express themselves freely. Instructors struggled with how maintain students' confidence and growth as they expressed concerns about communicating directly with government representatives during their limited learning time in the MEd program. Some students felt that an audience of administrators could stifle the feeling of safety. On the other hand sharing knowledge remains an important principle in any intellectual endeavour, including graduate programs in education.

Opening students' submitted assignments up to GN representatives also presented a challenge as students expressed reluctance to do so and intellectual property rights had to be respected. Professional protocols required instructors to maintain the confidentiality of students' work, unless explicit consent had been provided to allow publication and sharing of specific assignments. Instructors and students put a great deal of effort into shaping written work so it was ready for sharing in a public venue. This took place when final research reports and presentations were shared at a research symposium. However, the focus on public sharing put a great deal of pressure on the students. In the end, the request to share written work or hear the end of course papers was not addressed. Neither of the partners felt that a satisfactory resolution had been reached. A representative of the GN regretted that, "We've really missed in both [rounds of the Nunavut MEd] programs an opportunity to learn more about what their thoughts have been about things that need to change [in Nunavut]."

Communication between students, a university program, and the funding partners needs to be carefully considered, particularly when the partner representatives are in positions of authority over participants in their professional careers beyond the program. In university programs funded by a government sponsor, where there is a desire to learn about participants' perspectives, a strategy should be carefully developed with program administrators and core instructors and then shared with the students for their approval at the program's outset. One way to increase the transfer of ideas from leadership program participants to education stakeholders that has been discussed by instructors and program administrators could be to have designated times during face-to-face courses for facilitated dialogue with the sponsoring government department.

Another strategy would be to hold open and public presentations at the end of each course. Students gave presentations at the end of most courses with a limited audience of instructors and peers. Gradually opening these presentations to partners, family members, and larger audiences, concluding with the presentation of final research papers at a public symposium, would provide many opportunities to hear students' opinions and open public dialogue on important educational topics. It could also positively impact students' confidence and presentation skills. Equipping students to speak up and contribute their voices to public debate on educational issues even when they fear negative judgement was a desired, and important outcome in the MEd program, which could be further enhanced by more adeptly balancing students' need for privacy in course work with the need to hear what these educated Inuit educational leaders have to say.

Recommendation 42. In programs where there is a desire for students' ideas and work to be shared publicly, instructors and administrators should develop a strategy for such sharing prior to the program, and obtain student written approval of the plan.

As a final note on navigating more difficult decisions between partners, and ensuring that decisions are made in a timely and collaborative manner, it was suggested that communication between organizations should happen between individuals who have a similar level of seniority and authority, "If it's going to be truly a partnership, [then the two main contact people within each institution] should be at an equal level, and so that the two that are talking together the most, have the same kind of knowledge." This would make the best use of each person's time, as the main communicators would have the same authority to make decisions within their respective institutions. This communication needs to be determined at the start of the program because, as observed, all individuals involved in planning the program delivery need to meet together on a regular basis because open discussion and collaboration between all levels in any partnership promotes program success.

Recommendation 43. Develop a strategy for communications between partner organizations, including respective contact persons.

Academic and Professional Writing by English L2 Students

Increasing students' voice, orally and in writing, in Inuktitut and in English, is a documented strength of the program. All students left the program more comfortable and skilled at writing for public audiences than when they entered the program. However, the program did not bring all students to the point of independent writing in academic English that was consistently grammatically accurate and stylistically appropriate. Nor did the program intensively teach students all of the genres and formats of writing for public audiences that they might need as educators, administrators and educational leaders. Even as students graduated, instructors, students, and partners questioned what the most appropriate expectations would have been with respect to the types and levels of academic and professional writing required for English second-language (L2) speakers and writers. In this section, we evaluate the writing goals pursued in the program and the strategies used to improve students' writing, and we explore other options for reaching goals related to strong academic and professional writing produced by English L2 students.

As program instructors, coordinators, and partners reflected on students' writing, concerns were raised about the levels of support required to support academic writing in English at a graduate level. Questions were asked about what it meant to offer a bicultural, bilingual program to Indigenous students when most assignments were clearly focused on reaching levels of academic writing that merited peer review and sharing with the public. Instructors walked a fine line to draw out, refine and shape students' public written voices in ways that remained authentic for Inuit graduate students and also accurately and precisely expressed their ideas in English, their L2. Past imposition of English as a strong assimilationist force in education kept instructors wary as they insisted that students acquire and conform to English grammatical and stylistic standards in work aimed at public audiences. Students and instructors balanced such caution with a commitment to developing and exercising a written voice that would be received as credible and respected by English first language audiences at the university and their workplaces.

Part of the strategy to develop writing skills was to offer a writing-intensive program. According to evidence-based promising practices in university education, the Nunavut MED adopted a "Writing across the Curriculum" approach in which advanced literacies are taught within content courses (Bazerman et al., 2005). Students improved as writers by receiving and responding to feedback, instructions, and corrections in assignments designed for specific content areas. For example, none of the courses focused exclusively on writing. Instead, students were coached as emergent academic writers as they completed course assignments, including longer research papers over 20 pages that were required in most courses. Instructors would guide students by breaking down the writing process into concrete steps. One instructor said to approach writing they started by, "Breaking it down into steps: Day One is the question, Day Two is 'what are you going to bring into it?' Day Three [is] the draft." In online courses, the timeframes were longer, usually involving weekly writing assignments and instructors helped students to improve their English writing skills. One instructor said that students wrote, "Multiple drafts of the research papers. In addition, each paper was peer reviewed and edited by a second instructor". Instructors would help students work through what they wanted to say and support the process of expressing it accurately in written English, a member of a teaching team explained that, "Instructors try to develop writing skills by editing and sometimes track editing papers."

These approaches of breaking writing down into manageable chunks, requiring multiple drafts, and modeling an editing and revision process with students, were all considered effective strategies. However, instructors worried they were not enough. Instructors struggled to find time to help students shape the academic content of *what* they wanted to say while also focusing on *how* they were saying it. An instructor explained, "...[I]t's hard to make a difference 'on the fly' when content and layout [or structure] are more important." The tight timeline required in face-to-face courses limited how much editing and revision students and instructors could manage. One instructor reflected that, "[A week] is really too short a time to have it [a large paper] done without some intensive work while they're there." Many instructors shared the sentiment that during courses it was challenging to determine how much time should be spent on helping students through the writing process if it came at the expense of time spent on academic content. Online courses had the benefit of having 12 weeks to focus on one major piece of writing. Instructors thus had the time and space to focus on improving the writing skills of the participants. However, the back and forth of writing and editing online and discussing papers on the phone was exhausting and time consuming. Instructors wondered whether successive editing of such long papers was the best approach to equip students to independently express themselves in English as scholars and educational leaders.

Recommendation 44. Help guide students' writing by naming each of the steps in the process, and checking in on students' progress throughout the development of an assignment.

Finally, some students entered the program with relatively little experience writing academically or professionally in English.²⁸ Such students did not seem adequately supported by the writing across the curriculum approach. One instructor commented, “A couple of people really got away from me [without continuous guidance through the writing process].” Another comment suggested:

[T]here seemed to be people with very weak organizational and writing skills and they needed more individual one-on-one guidance. I guess we would have had to check in or add [an] extra hour at the end of the day where people would stay to work and we could check it.

It was felt that more time was needed, face-to-face, to specifically help students with writing, “I’m not a big fan of adding more evening sessions but somehow we should have made check-ins.” Another instructor commented, similarly, “[I faced] the problem of helping students with academic work... What was hard to get a handle on and I still don’t know how to do [it], was [making] more tutorial time to help people shape their papers.” Specific writing tutorials were needed, but there was little time in the intensive face-to-face courses to add in yet another task.

Recommendation 45. Keep in mind that many of the target participants for advanced learning opportunities in Nunavut use English as a second language. Extensive and specialized supports are necessary to enhance students’ academic and professional voice in their second language.

Based on this feedback, and feedback from the 2006-2009 Pilot Project, efforts were made to build in writing tutorials and workshops during face-to-face gatherings, “With this in mind, [the program] provided a writing workshop for the second cohort but [it] was limited by time and available resources.” Still, instructors questioned the workshops’ value when they were provided after a long day of class time. One instructor reflected, “The writing workshop was not wasted but it didn’t go well. People didn’t get going on what they needed to.” Tutorials and workshops were organized around shaping students’ course work (following a writing across the curriculum approach), which often required students to arrive with a first draft of their paper to work on through the week. Even when time to complete that first draft was worked into course schedules, instructors found that students did not arrive at the stage of writing where tutorials could be useful as the papers were often outlines and needed to be expanded:

I think the part that didn’t work was the independent time that was given to the students to do their writing, because it didn’t get done...When you take people from their home and put them in the capital and they’ve got family and other people to visit and it’s [for] five days I’m not sure there’s enough time to get them into the mode of, “OK, I’ve got to sit down and get right to it [the paper].” It ended up, they had the time to get going on it and get feedback but they didn’t have anything written to get feedback on.

One of the disadvantages of face-to-face courses and workshops was the short time frame did not allow room for students to make up for any time that was missed or not well spent. When resources were available to help students with their writing, most students were not yet ready for the kind of help offered. Though evening writing sessions were not always effective, they were used successfully by some instructors.

Recommendation 46. Build on students’ writing by editing and improving texts prepared in advance by the student.

²⁸ For example, although all were NTEP graduates, some would have graduated prior to NTEP’s introduction of the foundation year program in 2004, which added an extra year to the program in order to help students build core academic competencies such as advanced writing in English.

Efforts to improve students' writing focused on English grammar, style, and structure in the genres of writing covered by course assignments, largely in research-related papers. Some genres of writing, which graduates may need to produce in their workplaces, such as reading and writing policies or briefing notes, or preparing proposals, were not included in the Nunavut MEd. A representative from the GN recognized that many, "Long term teachers or BEd [Bachelor of Education] graduates ... are in senior management" positions." It was suggested that teaching a wider range of professional writing genres would serve the program's purpose of building leadership capacity, "[Students] can write research papers and do the research, [but] there's then letter writing, briefing note writing--All the administration". This administrator believed that teaching students these writing formats would be useful because:

When you take on the leadership positions within our government, because our government is so small, we expect principals, superintendents of schools, and executive directors to be able to write the briefing notes, possibly submit the proposals that they want, it's very administrative in nature...They should start looking at policy, policy development, how policy is written, looking at legislation, seeing how legislation is developed, enacted, implemented. Because that's all part of process in terms of government leadership.

These comments recognized that graduates are future leaders in the GN as well as in the education system, and acknowledged that writing and other outcomes of the MEd program were transferable to various leadership roles, "the transference of your leadership in learning into leadership positions within government... I think being in a bachelors and a masters has a lot of transferable skills." However, the Nunavut MEd was an academic graduate-level program aimed towards increasing the critical reflection, discursive skills, and knowledge in specific fields including leadership, curriculum, and research. Suggestions that Nunavut MEd students should learn the administrative writing skills needed for leadership roles within education at the government level was not compatible with the focus of a graduate program. Some of the ongoing learning needs with regard to academic and professional writing may be effectively addressed in programs that are complementary to the Nunavut MEd. For example, the Certificate in Educational Leadership (CELN), formally called the Educational Leadership Program (ELP), and offered at a 500 professional level, could provide a location for skill development in professional and academic writing, as well as for practical leadership training.

Students, instructors and GN representatives believed that a continued and increased focus on polishing and expanding student's writing would be desirable, including exploring a variety of alternative ways to provide writing support. When students were asked which aspects of the program they would have liked to have spent *more* time on, the second most popular response (7/13 responses) requested more time for learning academic writing skills (See Figure A-1, Appendix I).

One suggestion to overcome some of the challenges students and instructors faced is to offer a writing intensive course, at the start of future programs, focused entirely on academic writing competencies. Such a course should be credit-based maintaining high expectations for the levels of written work and establishing a standard for the program. Providing such a writing-specific course could help address some of student's distinct challenges with academic writing faced in the program, including APA requirements, rules of grammar, the writing process, and how to organize and bring consistency and flow to an academic paper at a graduate level. A writing-specific course might also address specific genres of professional writing. Offering this course at the beginning of a program would help to improve writing skills which could then be further refined within all remaining courses.

An alternative might be hiring a dedicated writing coach to be with the students through the duration of the program, similar to the role of the counsellor. Another suggestion was to reduce the length of formal papers required of the students, and focus instead on developing students' academic voice in shorter pieces. The body of literature in supporting students whose mother tongue is not English in finding and using an English academic voice is growing (Canagarajah 2002; 2013) and is something to continue to build on in subsequent graduate program offerings to Inuit students. Part of continuing to build the academic voice of Inuit

students will be continuing to balance Inuit and English languages, including finding ways to include assignments written in Inuit languages as key components in the curriculum.

These recommendations may help to alleviate the challenges expressed by the students and instructors in the 2010-2013 Nunavut MEd Program. However, the solution may also involve re-evaluating what can be done in a three-year program. Such re-evaluation could include an assessment of goals for the program: which types and levels of English and Inuktitut literacies are necessary and appropriate standards for graduation? What levels of additional support are appropriate to help students' reach these levels? Keeping in mind part of the purpose of the program is to make graduate level education accessible to Inuktitut L1 students, how much English language teaching can a content-focused program offer?

Another recommendation was for a future program similar to the Nunavut Master of Education to include a leadership intern or co-op program, in which skills related to government-based forms of leadership could be developed. Such a mentorship program could take place either as part of the curriculum or as an added opportunity provided to interested individuals. Whether in additional graduate level, stand-alone courses, or in a mentorship program, students could explore alternative forms of leadership through additional training, tailored towards learning the skills and knowledge necessary for working within the upper levels of a governmental organization, including administrative types of writing.

Incorporating a writing-specific course, developing new strategies to support development of academic voice in English L2 students within core courses, and ensuring other opportunities are available for these emerging scholars and leaders in Inuit education to improve their writing skills, are three strategies which could be considered in the future.

Recommendation 47. Offer an additional writing intensive course, at the start of future programs, focused entirely on academic writing competencies but based on specific areas of education within the particular MEd program.

Recommendation 48. Support students and graduates to access further learning opportunities to develop their writing beyond the MEd program.

Student Retention

Retention of students in the program was an ongoing challenge. Everyone involved in the program was committed to seeing students get the maximum benefit from all the courses. However, in the end, only 14 of the original 22 students enrolled in the 2010-2013 program graduated with MEd degrees. While this completion rate (63%) is not unusual in Nunavut-based advanced training programs²⁹, it was nonetheless disappointing to a team dedicated to developing and putting in place the necessary supports and structures for graduate level education to be fully accessible in Nunavut.

Each student who left the program had her own unique reasons. In some cases, leaving was a positive personal choice. One student chose to pursue a campus-based MEd in southern Canada. Others recognized at various points in the program that family, health, or work needed to be their top priority and thus stepped back and decided not to continue the program. Others had to withdraw from the program when they had difficulty keeping up or meeting the academic standards. For all, even partial completion of the Nunavut MEd program left participants with greater levels of competence as educational leaders in Nunavut. However, the question remains open as to what more, if anything, the program could have done to support each student right through to the convocation stage.

²⁹To contextualize, the completion rate of students enrolled in the Northern Teacher Education Program (NTEP), 2001-2010 was documented at 47%. Completion rates of Nunavut Arctic College's Language and Culture Certificate Program were documented at 53.6% (At the time of documentation, 24.5% of the students in NTEP and 12% of students in the Language and Culture certificate program were considered "in progress", so the actual rates of completion are probably somewhat higher, but still in line with completion rates seen in the Nunavut MEd.) (Office of the Auditor General of Canada, 2010, p. 25). Completion rates in the first Nunavut MEd cohort 2006-2009 were somewhat higher, at 77%.

The “Success Factors” chapters in this report have explored ways in which the program worked to acknowledge and address students’ needs as holistic learners in order to keep the program accessible. Student retention was increased by providing high levels of support, working to keep students motivated, and maintaining a sense of community. The cohort model was ideal in many ways for this special program, because it allowed students to support one another and progress together as a community of learners. However, the model also created a number of moral dilemmas with regard to student retention, since all courses were only to be offered once and in one place. The Nunavut Master of Education Student Handbook indicated that when a student *missed a course* they must make it up at their own personal expense, though they could formally write to the Department of Education to request funding for a make-up course, that they had arranged themselves. If a student failed a course, “the student needs to make their own arrangements to complete the course at their own expense and on their own time” (Faculty of Education, n.d., p. 15).

Maintaining this policy was a challenge due to the variety of personal, health, professional, and logistical issues that got in the way of students either attending a course, or fully engaging in the course they were attending. For example, one student joined the cohort late and missed the first course because of medical concerns that required hospitalization, another student was receiving medical treatment during a face-to-face course, a third student travelled south to care for an acutely ill family member for an extended period of time on Medical Travel, and in another situation a student was unable to commit to an online course because she was busy handling an ongoing safety crisis which affected everyone at her workplace. While all of these students were committed to completing their MEd degree, the cases above demonstrate that students encountered obstacles that had the potential to mean they might get off track in their studies and making up for missed courses provided logistical and financial challenges. In each of the cases mentioned above, students successfully completed the program due to flexibility of the program, and their commitment to their studies.

Isolation in communities where only one student was completing the MEd program and limited access to reliable communication technologies were also issues. While enrolment numbers are too small to draw statistically significant conclusions about student retention and attrition, mapping of student retention in this particular cohort suggested that students in the most remote communities struggled more, as a group, than students closer to the regional centres. The students in the communities furthest North and furthest West travelled the furthest from home in order to attend in-person courses. They also had slower, less reliable, and more expensive Internet infrastructure (at least compared to Iqaluit, the capital). We ask if geographical distance from the capital of Nunavut could have impacted student retention rates and suggest future programs work to mitigate this factor, including by alternating locations of face-to-face courses.

The program was designed to be completed while students lived in their home communities, worked at their full-time jobs, and supported their families. Several times obstacles arose as a result of work, community, or family commitments and students required additional supports to overcome these challenges. In many cases, students were able to successfully graduate due to the additional supports that were provided, often by the Nunavut Department of Education who agreed to find additional funds to cover the costs of offering make-up courses. In a few cases where students were not successful in completing a course to the program standards, students then needed extra time to get back on track and complete the required coursework through directed studies offered via distance education. This placed extra demands on these students, as well as on the instructors. In other cases, students needed to retake the course entirely with the help of an instructor, usually the Program Coordinator but other instructors and experienced Nunavut educators provided assistance, as well.

Offering make-up courses provided an additional challenge for the instructors, for the students, and for the Government of Nunavut. The course instructors, who were often carrying other work-related responsibilities, put in many hours of extra teaching, often going above and beyond normal expectations, and the students had to complete a course without the support of the cohort and usually during a tight time-frame. The nature of the MEd program over the three-years meant that there were few periods of time when students were not taking a course, thus leaving little time for make-up coursework. The Nunavut Department of

Education was very generous with financial support for students who required additional courses or needed support in special circumstances.

In other cases, personal, professional, or academic challenges meant that students chose to withdraw or were unable to continue within the MEd program. When a student was unable to meet course requirements for two of the courses in the program, UPEI requires withdrawal from the program and the Nunavut Department of Education could no longer financially support participation

(<http://www.upei.ca/programsandcourses/phd-educational-studies-and-master-education-leadership-learning>). Some students also chose to leave the program for a variety of reasons, but in every case the Program Coordinator contacted them personally prior to making any final withdrawal decisions.

Attrition was seen throughout the program. For example, one student withdrew right at the beginning, and two other students withdrew for personal and health reasons after the second course. However, program withdrawals spiked at the halfway mark, in the January-April 2012 term, as students worked on the sixth of ten courses in the program, ED 616 *Action Research*. The withdrawals following this course are discussed as a case-in-point of the issues presented above.

Action Research was an online course. Students were supported in groups of five, with a dedicated instructor for each group. For students, the academic expectations were very high and required major pieces of polished professional writing to gain approval to move forward with their original research projects. Several students were travelling for extensive periods of time during the 12-week course. Traveling for work, to receive medical care, or to support a family member who had to travel outside the community for medical care was hard on students, and it also provided a challenge for instructors who worked to support and encourage participants to complete academic requirements while away from their homes. Long absences from home sometimes meant that students passed in assignments late creating stress for instructors and sometimes requiring extensions that meant permission from the Dean of Education had to be secured.

After the course finished and the papers had been marked, several students were unsuccessful in meeting the course requirements. One third of the class, five of the 16 students enrolled, failed to achieve the minimum grade of 70%. At this late point in the program there was very little time left for students to re-take this demanding course. For some students this involved a second course failure and UPEI regulations required a withdrawal from the program. For other students, there simply was not enough time to repeat a course while remaining with the cohort to graduate. The pending withdrawals posed moral dilemmas for many people involved who were torn between the desire to see these students graduate (after completing half the program) and the realities of program policies and requirements. Only two of the five students were ultimately able to make up for the failed course by completing a directed studies course in October 2012. These were difficult decisions, made in careful consultation with the program administrators, and ones that left the program team wondering if a more flexible cohort model could better foster student retention and success.

It is recommended that program co-ordinators acknowledge that over a three-year period of time students may encounter barriers to their participation in courses and accommodations need to be made. Organizers should anticipate this and plan a budget and a corresponding six-week window within each year where students have time to complete or repeat necessary courses. A clear policy should be written about whether this option is a one-time only offer per student, or whether access might be available on multiple occasions. Students should be aware of these options before they enrol in the program.

Recommendation 49. Incorporate a six-week window each year, within cohort programs, in which students may complete or repeat necessary courses.

Recommendation 50. A clear policy should be written regarding access to make-up course options. Students should be informed of these options and limitations before they enrol in the program.

The Nunavut MEd created life-changing results for participants, but the ongoing challenges faced by instructors and partners in order to make it work for all participants involved provide valuable learning for the future. Partners sometimes held conflicting visions of how to reach the program's desired ends, which left both parties unsatisfied. Students struggled to succeed and instructors and partners endeavoured to support them, but sometimes this was just not enough. Context specific graduate-level education holds strong promise for Indigenous communities, and these ongoing challenges merit further consideration and dialogue to maximize benefits for all parties.



PART 4

KEY PIECES OF ADVICE

Lessons Learned

Many lessons were learned by observing, asking questions, and listening carefully to students, instructors, and partner organizations, and these lessons are recorded throughout this report. Over the three years of the program, the team of partners and instructors worked to create an environment that was caring, welcoming, safe, and challenging for students and to deliver courses where knowledge and skills could be acquired and personal growth could take place. The following list summarizes key pieces of advice should a future program be offered in Nunavut. These suggestions could also be used as starting points to guide similar programs in Indigenous communities in other locations.

1. **Teaching:** *The ideal teaching team in a similar program includes a bilingual Inuit instructor with experience teaching adults and a degree at a master's level, as well as a university-based professor who has lived and worked in a relevant educational context in the North. Involving an experienced counsellor, possibly from Nunavut or with Nunavut experience should be considered. Guests, including Inuit Elders and Inuit leaders who present on topics relevant to each course add invaluable perspectives. Instructors need to be prepared to care for students' well-being, as well as their academic success.*
 - a. Northern experience is an asset that cannot be underestimated when choosing instructors and other program staff. Administrators and instructors require a deep level of understanding about the history, background, challenges, and opportunities related to education and life in the North.
 - b. Inuit instructors are invaluable in a program offered in an Inuit context. Co-teaching offers valuable opportunities for mentoring and modeling based on instructors' experience and expertise which includes: teaching adults; teaching at the graduate level; teaching according to Inuit values, pedagogies, and communication styles. Inuit instructors need to be encouraged to teach in ways that reflect and respect their culture, teaching practices, and use Inuit languages for communication, as well as written academic work.
 - c. Instructors need to be willing to go the extra mile for students. Each instructor needs to be an advocate for students and an encouraging motivator and mentor when challenges take place. Instructors should be motivated by achieving positive change for education in Nunavut, rather than seeing their instructional position as simply another teaching assignment. Intense levels of support and commitment are required, and motivation to teach in an Inuit context must be strong.
2. **Community:** *A strong learning and leadership community built among participants, instructors, Elders, guests, and administrators from partner organizations favours program success.*
 - a. Use the cohort model of program delivery where all students begin and end the program together.
 - b. Teach using a collaborative learning approach that includes many small group projects and in-class discussions.
 - c. Create a safe virtual space where students can connect and communicate with one another when they are not physically together in courses.
 - d. Encourage students to share their learning broadly throughout the program within a variety of professional contexts, schools, and communities.
3. **Administration:** *Partner organizations must plan and work cooperatively to ensure that the program maintains academic rigour, and also reflects Inuit culture, languages, and teaching practices. Organizations must exercise flexibility as they work together to deliver a program with conditions conducive to Inuit student success.*
 - a. Southern institutions need to be prepared to make special provisions and arrangements to ensure needs of remote Indigenous students are addressed. University administrators cannot expect that a program can be offered in a northern context in exactly the same way as it is offered in the South, in fact this should not be desired. Flexibility, creativity, and adaptability

- are required for programs to run smoothly in northern contexts. Thinking creatively and outside the box is necessary in order to find solutions to challenges.
- b. Awareness of technological limitations when working in the North is needed. Low internet bandwidth alternatives are required for distance communication with students living in the northern communities. Changes may take place in the future, but at this time, the challenges are significant.
 - i. Technology such as video or audio conference calls, and large downloads cannot be expected at this time for students or instructors working from communities in Nunavut.
 - c. Students in Nunavut working in a second language and culture require much more support than first language students attending southern institutions in Canada. Special provisions must be made to ensure supports are adequate, and are equitable for all students.
 - i. Additional instructors are advised even for small groups or courses with low enrolments.
4. **Logistics:** *A program grows and changes as it is delivered. Organizers need to be aware that changes may be preferable or necessary to make things work better for students, instructors, or partners. Feedback should be encouraged at all stages as a program evolves, as it is never too late to change, or to change future offerings.*
- a. Build in multiple opportunities and methods for students/instructors/administrators to raise questions, make comments or suggestions about the program throughout the duration of the program.
 - b. Research a program as it evolves in order to increase and share knowledge of what works, and make recommendations for future programs. Given that Indigenous education at all levels is a very high priority in Canada, it is judicious to conduct research as new programs are offered. Ensure feedback is always reported anonymously as in a very small territory, safety and confidentiality are concerns. Ethics requires that the identity of participants in any program be protected as much as is possible.
 - c. Attention to small details helps a program to succeed. When everyday needs are met so students can comfortably focus on studies then a program can be delivered successfully. This includes choosing locations for courses carefully, arranging accommodation ahead of time, developing budgets that are realistic for the context, clarifying arrangements and dates for students' arrivals and departures, and providing some refreshments and/or meals if they cannot be purchased easily in the course location.
 - d. Including time on campus at the university home campus ensures students can experience learning in a southern context. The benefits include access to libraries, technologies that may not be available in all locations in the North, and interactions with other graduate students who are completing classes at the same time..
5. **Wellness:** *Student well-being is a priority. Programs for Indigenous students must build in mechanisms to support students psychologically while they are completing academically challenging and emotionally difficult course content that is related to colonization.*
- a. Have a full time support person available during class time to monitor the day's events and help in the moments when a participant needs space and time to process a painful memory or experience.
 - b. Wellness components should come at a time of the day that enables participants to decompress and relax, or deal with any issues that arose during classes.

6. **Culture:** *Embracing and promoting students' culture within classroom spaces, in person and online contributes to relevant and decolonizing learning experiences. Students benefit from inclusion and promotion of Inuit traditions such as welcoming and gathering to share food. Including cultural activities and skills in the class enriches learning experiences.*
 - a. Ensure that respected Inuit Elders are given time and space to share wisdom with students. When Elders are invited into the course, ensure that enough time is given to allow everyone to relax and the fully receive the knowledge shared.
 - b. The full incorporation of Inuit knowledge, practices, and traditions into courses, including the use of northern texts and writing, dialogue in Inuit languages, the lighting of the *qulliq* each morning, and beginning courses with a feast of country food, as well as driving to the airport to personally welcome each participant helps to balance the southern content and academic expectations and provide courses that are Inuit-focused.
 - c. Instructors need to be prepared to respectfully embrace the differences between cultures, and realize that ways of knowing, being and, doing may be very different across cultures. Teaching and learning techniques in a northern context may also differ.
7. **Languages:** *Indigenous students can be encouraged to use their first languages in the program for discussions and writing. Inuit co-instructors can facilitate and encourage this dialogue. Non-Inuit language speakers in the classroom space need to respect Inuit-language times, without translations being provided.*
 - a. Support Inuit language use as much as possible by encouraging the use of Inuktitut/Inuinnaqtun for class discussions.
 - b. Create Inuit-language-only times when participants, guests and Elders can share language while passing on stories and wisdom to students.
8. **Decolonizing the Program:** *Advanced learning opportunities in the North must create decolonizing learning environments. This is achieved by first acknowledging the history and effects of colonialism, then working towards offering a program that does not unconsciously perpetuate colonialism, or neo-colonialism and instead consciously promotes decolonizing approaches, dialogue, and methodologies. Non-indigenous instructors need to be conscious of how power relations and voice can operate as re-colonizing forces.*
 - a. Teach about the impact of colonialism in the very first course. This course is often the most emotionally challenging, but will help students in every other course they complete.
 - b. Continue to raise issues related to colonization and its effects throughout the course, to draw connections between history and present conditions.
 - c. Create a safe space for participants to share their ideas, concerns, and issues. There needs to be space to discuss racism, power dynamics and the impact of colonialism. Participants need to be free to ask and answer tough questions and freely discuss their personal family histories in a supportive environment.
9. **Increased Focus on Teaching Writing:** *Students look to advanced learning programs as an opportunity to develop as writers in Inuktitut and in English. Programs must develop innovative approaches to meet students' desires and needs for increased writing instruction.*
 - a. Formal academic English writing: Include a course at the beginning of the program that focuses on English academic writing and includes APA requirements, rules of grammar, the writing process, and how to organize and bring consistency, and flow to an academic paper at a graduate level but this course should also focus on relevant program content.
 - b. Formal writing skills in Inuktitut: Create opportunities to allow students to complete assignments in Inuit languages, including more lengthy papers.

- c. Consider having a skilled, part-time support Inuit Elder as part of the teaching team. This person could provide cultural, linguistic, and personal support and guidance as the program was planned and offered. Given that several MEd graduates are now Elders, it may be possible to have Inuit instructors who are also Elders and may have an interest as well as time to spend supporting students.

Conclusion

On Saturday, June 1st, 2013, students, family members, instructors, University officials and representatives from the Government of Nunavut celebrated the culmination of the second Master of Education program offered in Nunavut, for *Nunavummiut*. Thirteen Inuit educators walked across a convocation stage in Iqaluit, Nunavut, surrounded by their family and friends. Nunavut Premier Eva Aariak and UPEI President Alaa Abd-El-Aziz conferred upon students their hard-earned MEd degrees. Graduates shared the stage with Inuit Elders Donald Uluadluak and in absentia Rhoda Karetak, receiving honorary doctorates from UPEI in recognition of their extraordinary contributions to knowledge through *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*. On May 10th, 2014, a fourteenth graduate crossed the convocation stage on UPEI campus, after completing an masters thesis.

Graduates reflected pride in Inuit culture, knowledge, and values intertwined with academic achievement of graduate level credentials. Graduates proudly wore exquisite traditional Inuit regalia; some of them had spending months sewing, preparing for this day; others received the garments as special graduation gifts; and others wore treasured items loaned or passed down from extended family.

These women celebrated their success alongside their instructors, including their UPEI professors, some of whom had been their school teachers in earlier days; and their Inuit instructors who were the MEd graduates and colleagues who went before them, graduating from the 2006-2009 cohort. The Dean of Education also travelled to Iqaluit to participate in the conferring of the degrees and acknowledge the students' perseverance, initiative, and success in this innovative program. Representatives of the Government of Nunavut also celebrated the climax of a program that had been a dream, now brought to fruition.

As the valedictorian, Becky Tootoo spoke, she reminded students of their journey over the past three years. She reminded graduates that it started by seizing the opportunity offered by the Government of Nunavut and University of Prince Edward Island to pursue a graduate level program while living in Nunavut. Through five face-to-face courses in Nunavut, two courses at UPEI, and three distance courses, students had recognized and shared depths of latent knowledge earned over their years as Inuit educators, and learned to wrap academic theories and terminology around these experiences. They had learned from international experts as well as local experts, including esteemed Inuit Elders. They had supported each other and been supported as they struggled with working in English as a second language, finding time to complete coursework amidst busy lives, and embracing personal healing through the process of decolonizing practices. Tears were shed: tears of sadness as graduates remembered losses over the three years; tears of relief after reaching the end of what some experienced as a grueling journey; tears of joy having achieved a significant personal and professional goal.

The program partners from UPEI and from the GN who participated in the convocation ceremony certainly thought back to when they had first agreed to work together to offer an accessible, decolonizing graduate program for experienced educators in Nunavut. As they built and maintained this program over its three years, both partners worked hard to ensure that students were receiving the best quality education possible during the part-time bilingual and bicultural program. The program had been collaboratively developed and was delivered in a way that was accessible to students. The program location, content, and whole person approach, paired with sufficient funding, opened doors for students to achieve academic success in a context that supported and challenged them in their unique identities as Inuit educational leaders in Nunavut.

The day following the convocation ceremony, students presented their research papers at a public research symposium held at a local school. As their friends, family, cohort members, instructors, program administrators, and university officials listened, they identified the research questions chosen with care, including: Why are young men in particular struggling, and how can we reach out to them? Why are our children still struggling with Inuktitut and English, even now that bilingual education is being implemented? As

they shared their presentations, their emerging capacity as researchers was evident. As graduates presented results, audience members glimpsed the impact that a growing body of Inuit researchers can start to have on pressing educational issues in Nunavut.

Above all, the personal transformation of the graduates shone through as they reflected critically on what they had seen, heard, and experienced. Graduates spoke in front of a public audience, sharing their original work. Increased confidence and personal voice were evident.

All graduates had changed over the three years in the Nunavut MEd program. Those who had invested so much into the program, including the graduates, asked themselves, how will these transformed individuals would impact the educational systems and communities in which they work and live? While these women had embraced a personal process of decolonization, they were going back to systems in which colonizing practices were changing very slowly. Would this cohort of women, who had provided such strong support to each other throughout the program, find ways to continue to support each other and maintain the sense of community they built in the cohort? Would they continue to tap into professional connections with instructors to fill their desire for ongoing learning? Would they find further learning experiences to continue growing in areas such as their writing? Would they find support to voice their knowledge in public debates? How would their new knowledge and skills transform their work and their community leadership? A representative from the UPEI Faculty of Education said the Nunavut MEd program gave graduates, “increased education which in turn should provide more access to leadership opportunities and potentially further education.” Which opportunities would open for graduates, and how would they continue to increase their leadership abilities?

There was great hope for the future of the North when 13 students graduated from this program in June 2013. The Nunavut Master of Education in Leadership in Learning 2010-2013 was the second offering of a groundbreaking program that delivered high quality, bilingual and bicultural graduate level education to a group of experienced Inuit educators. There are now 37 graduates with UPEI MEd degrees from Nunavut and Nunavik.

Feedback provided above from Inuit educators who successfully completed this graduate level program is clear: they accessed and completed this program because it was offered in Nunavut with Inuit colleagues. Research results indicate that if the program had not been offered in the North, most Inuit educators could not have completed the degrees due to employment and family demands. Delivering a masters level program in such a geographically broad territory while maintaining cultural authenticity alongside academic rigour presented challenges, these characteristics also led to students’ success.

The Nunavut MEd graduates are role models for education in the Territory. These graduates have shown that they value their education. School and community-based educational leaders have demonstrated that attaining a graduate degree was possible. This group also showed their families and communities that this level of education is possible in Nunavut. The Government has also demonstrated their significant commitment to providing education at a graduate level to Inuit educators in Nunavut.

Innovative approaches to support Indigenous educators in Canada to achieve the highest levels of university credentials, such as the Nunavut MEd are much needed. Over the three years of the Nunavut MEd a Research Manager gathered quantitative and qualitative data from program participants, instructors, and from stakeholders from the Nunavut Department of Education and the UPEI Faculty of Education to document and evaluate the process and outcomes of this program. This report has detailed the successes and the challenges encountered by students, instructors, and Department of Education administrators. It is hoped that the comments included in this report may help further understanding of the experiences of students within a program such as this, and can help future program administrators to shape future programs. There is great optimism that this report may inform others and to help organize and deliver graduate programs that reflect the culture, language and identities of the students in other Indigenous contexts.

Postlogue – Student Gratitude

One of the strongest themes in the program documentation and evaluation process included students' gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the Nunavut MEd. As the program moved from one course to the next, students began to express their desire to take time to give thanks, and to say, *koana*, *matna*, or *qujannamiik* for the opportunity to participate in this life-changing program. Every survey completed by Nunavut MEd students for program evaluation purposes included a space for students to express additional comments. Students were never asked to express thanks directly to the Department of Education, to their families, communities, colleagues, or instructors, yet without fail they continued to use the space for additional comments to send their clear messages of gratitude to those who made this program possible, for as one graduate stated, "I am always so thankful to be in this university and always so thankful that I have had the chance to study with the cohort."

Students expressed their gratitude to the Department of Education and the Government of Nunavut for the funding, and the University of Prince Edward Island for its efforts in pioneering the unique program. Gratitude expressed for the opportunity to participate in the program was one of the strongest themes emerging when free space was provided for comments. The depth of students' gratitude, and their own recognition of personal and professional transformation are indicators of the impact of this program.

What a privilege to be a participant in the Nunavut MEd program. The efforts that go into delivering such program [are] invisible so I want to take this opportunity to thank [the] planning team that has made this program available to us. Thanks to the [Nunavut] Department of Education for looking after the funding, the UPEI members for allowing us to experience this kind of learning. Qujannamiik! Others echoed, "I love the program. Thanks Dept. of Ed for providing funding for us to participate." "I would like to say thank-you to UPEI for allowing me the opportunity to gain my Master of Education and especially on Leadership in Nunavut."

Students expressed that the Nunavut MEd filled a felt need among educators for higher education in Nunavut, "[The MEd] is something very beneficial to have in such an 'isolated' place. It is something we need[ed] in Nunavut and I feel fortunate to have been a part of it. Thank you for having me in the program!" They recognized that they were part of a high quality, innovative program, "I think this whole MEd is a prime example to have for all the other jurisdictions...It has been a model program." "Maybe I am being biased, but I think the delivery of this program is an exemplar that will help other circumpolar regions to set up similar programs for other Indigenous groups."

Students were grateful for the opportunity to be validated as learners, leaders, and intelligent people: I have this incredible feeling of appreciation from the bottom of my heart that feels like it's going to burst if I do not show it, to the UPEI Faculty [of Education] for the opportunity to experience this program and be validated as a person with intelligence. I was so impressed when the president told us that ... we are the representatives of UPEI. It felt like we were role models to other students. THANKS! They were grateful to participate in a high quality program that equipped them as leaders:

As I told my aunt when I just started the program in 2010, "Pilluaviktut" this is a REAL LEADERSHIP program, really preparing you as a person to take on a leadership role...I have truly enjoyed taking the program and feel so privileged to have been a part of it. Thank you!

They were grateful to have become part of a group of women working together to transform education in Nunavut:

I am very THANKFUL to be a part of this program. I feel honoured to be a part of such a strong group of women. I believe education is a gift and can be used for the greater good and I believe that is what this group of women will do throughout their lives. Educate others with the knowledge they have always had and continue to build through this program.

The program was received as a gift that students intended to continue using and building on.

The messages of gratitude were most pronounced following the graduation ceremony from the program. Below are the unedited comments from graduates of the 2010-2013 MEd program, They are the final pieces written by the students who became graduates of the MEd program³⁰.

- Many thanks which will never seem enough. Thanks to every single one person involved because it would not have happened if even one of you were to quit or not take on the responsibility. That is encouraging me to help be part of something new, work together with a team!
- Thank you again so much! You all have made it happen. You have helped us. Thank you.
- Thank you for trusting in me, for believing in me, thank you for being patient with me.
- Thank you so much for being on my side for 3 years.
- Excellence and an honour.
- Deeply appreciate the time given by our instructors they were precise and helpful. Thank you for making me balance my academic life and personal life needed it more. Reflection [on] personal life healed us all.
- Thank you so much! UPEI professors for believing in Inuit. You have the most wonderful professors!
- Thank you all Faculty, [Nunavut] Department of Education, UPEI for making this possible for me to be part of this privilege!
- Thank-you very much.
- Wow! It has been an amazing experience. Thank you for allowing me to have been a part of it.
- Thank you for this opportunity! I feel very honoured & privileged to be a part of this amazing group of strong, capable, confident women. Thank you for accepting me, keeping me, encouraging me, supporting me & pushing me to be the best me I can be!

Without a doubt, the gratitude students felt for the opportunity to participate in the program was one of the strongest themes from students' free space for comments. The depths of students' gratitude to be able to complete such a program in their home territory, and their own recognition of personal and professional transformation, are indicators of the program's impact.

³⁰ Of the 13 graduates of the program, two chose not to give any additional feedback.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

BEd	Bachelor of Education
GN	Government of Nunavut
IQ	<i>Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit</i> (Inuit knowledge)
MEd	Master of Education
NRI	Nunavut Research Institute
REB	Research Ethics Board
SSHRC	Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council
StFX	St. Francis Xavier University
UPEI	University of Prince Edward Island



— APPENDICES —

Appendix A – IQ Principles

Respect

- The social context, history, identity, lived experience, and culture of the Inuit participants are respected and valued as foundational.
- Respect for Inuit Uqausingit (Inuit languages) is central in teaching and learning, and the program is considered to be multilingual.
- Personal and professional aspects of knowing, being, and doing are respected and regarded as integral to learning that focuses on leadership in education.

Harmony

- The common good, as collectively defined in consultation with partners, Elders, and students, guides ethically based decision making and leadership in education promotes harmony. Individual and collective well-being and health of the participants are sustained and strengthened throughout the program.
- Harmonious community building is central in all courses.
- Facilitative and conciliatory abilities are developed.
- Power relations are revealed, considered, and ethically negotiated.
- Issues relating to the inclusion of all voices are discussed in order to support harmonious discourse that includes all opinions.

Resourcefulness

- Exploration, creativity, innovation, and passion are encouraged.
- Self-reliance and confidence grow through problem-solving opportunities integrated into the program.
- Issues in education are explored through case studies and stories drawn from the lives and experiences of the participants as well as from texts and resource materials written in both Inuit Uqausingit and English.

Serving and Sustainability

- Application of knowledge in real contexts serves educational change and promotes responsible leadership.
- Clarity of direction as an educational leader is based on self-knowledge and ethical judgement fostered through consultation with community members (including Elders).
- Caring and connectedness are fostered as they build strong and sustainable relationships that serve communities.

Inclusion, equity, social justice, and diversity

- Learning focusses on building equitable and just relationships and practices.
- Intentionally welcoming, healthy, and caring communities based on mutually respectful relationships enable and facilitate learning.
- Diversity of perspectives, opinions, and open-mindedness promote vibrant, challenging growth for learners.

Learning

- Inuit ways of knowing, being, and doing are articulated and explored in all courses.
- Academic excellence, critical explorations, and intellectual challenge and rigour are actively promoted and encouraged in all learning experiences in Inuit Uqausingit and English. Critically informed reflection is developed and applied in educational practice.
- Deeper readings and analyses of text, stories, media, sociocultural context, educational history, and institutional practices are fostered.
- Theoretical foundations and practical applications are investigated and interrogated.
- Experience and context are researched through investigation, reflection, discourse, and writing.
- Confidence and clarity emerge through sustained multiliteracy practices in Inuit Uqausingit and English.
- Reading the world expands awareness and wisdom.
- Feedback from instructors and self- and peer-evaluation promote growth and foster ownership of learning.

Creativity, exploration, and aesthetic appreciation

- Participants develop and expand creative approaches to education as they explore a variety of perspectives, options, representations, and choices.
- Fostering and encouraging aesthetic expression through a variety of modalities and ways of representing experience is seen as central in learning at a graduate level.
- Educational research at a graduate level explores difficult questions in many different ways to reveal a variety of truths and perspectives.

Master of Education: Leadership in Learning (Nunavut)

Overview

Introduced in 2006, the Master of Education: Leadership in Learning has provided for the very first time an opportunity for experienced Inuit educators, with Bachelor of Education degrees, to complete a graduate program in Nunavut. Through a highly successful partnership between the University of Prince Edward Island's Faculty of Education, Nunavut Department of Education, St. Francis Xavier University's Faculty of Education and Nunavut Arctic College, the first cohort of 21 Inuit women graduated on July 1, 2009. With their new qualifications, these graduates are prepared to provide much-anticipated leadership as agents of change in the Nunavut education system. Planning is underway to offer the program to a second cohort of students.

The program was collaboratively designed to meet the professional needs of experienced Inuit educators by combining Inuit Qaujimajatuqagit (Inuit Traditional Knowledge) and Inuit languages with all the elements of a mainstream graduate program.

Objectives

- develop Inuit educational leadership within Nunavut
- increase the capacity for Inuit research in education
- contribute to the creation of an Inuit education system in Nunavut

Innovation

- graduate program that combines *Inuit Qaujimajatuqagit* (Inuit Traditional Knowledge) and mainstream knowledge delivered in Nunavut
- combination of face-to-face and distance courses taught by professors with extensive Nunavut teaching experience
- Elders, Inuit co-instructors and a trained counsellor on the instructional team
- local mentors to assist with all aspects of distance education courses
- Inuktitut and English used as modes of communication and expression

Benefits

- infusion of Inuit education leaders in Nunavut
- increased options for educational research by Inuit



CONTACT

Fiona Walton
Associate Professor
University of PEI
550 University Avenue
Charlottetown, PE
C1A 4P3

Tel: 902.566.0351
Fax: 902.566.0416
E-mail: fwalton@upei.ca

Appendix C – Ethics Approvals



550 University Avenue
Charlottetown
Prince Edward Island
Canada C1A 4P3

February 8, 2011

Dr. Fiona Walton
Faculty of Education

Dear Dr. Walton,

Re: REB Ref # 6004023

“Pursuing a Dream: Inuit Education Leadership in Nunavut, 2010-2013.”

The above mentioned research proposal has now been reviewed under the expedited review track by the UPEI Research Ethics Board. I am pleased to inform you that the proposal has received ethics approval. Please be advised that the Research Ethics Board currently operates according to the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* and applicable laws and regulations.

The approval for the study as presented is valid for one year. It is your responsibility to ensure that the Ethics Renewal form is forwarded to the ORD prior to the renewal date. The information provided in this form must be current to the time of submission and submitted to ORD not less than 30 days of the anniversary of your approval date. The Ethics Renewal form can be downloaded from the ORD website
http://www.upei.ca/research/reb_forms

Any proposed changes to the study must also be submitted on the same form to the UPEI Research Ethics Board for approval.

The Research Ethics Board advises that **IF YOU DO NOT** return the completed Ethics Renewal form prior to the date of renewal:

- Your ethics approval will lapse
- You will be required to stop research activity immediately
- You will not be permitted to restart the study until you reapply for and receive approval to undertake the study again.

Lapse in ethics approval may result in interruption or termination of funding.

Notwithstanding the approval of the REB, the primary responsibility for the ethical conduct of the investigation remains with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads 'Lori Weeks'.

Lori Weeks, Ph.D.
Chair, UPEI Research Ethics Board

Appendix D – Informed Consent Form

Pursuing a Dream: Inuit Educational Leadership in Nunavut
REB Revisions: February 2, 2011

Appendix A: Information Letter/ Consent Form for Participants

Fiona Walton
411 Memorial Hall
University of Prince Edward Island
550 University Avenue
Charlottetown, PE

Dear Participants,

As the Principal Investigator of the research project entitled, *Pursuing a Dream: Inuit Educational Leadership in Nunavut*, I am inviting you to participate in program evaluation and research related to the Master of Education Program.

The intention of the program evaluation and research related to the Master of Education is to evaluate the strengths of the program, and the areas that need to be improved, to evaluate the degree to which your goals are being met, to contribute to academic research, related to graduate programs in Nunavut, and to make recommendations for the future for similar programs.

Our intention is that you, as student researchers and participants, will be shaping the research as your program evolves. The methods of evaluation will be developed based on the principles of participatory research and through negotiation with the Master of Education cohort as a group and facilitated by the UPEI Project Manager, Lisa MacDougall. Your participation in this study, including the completion of the surveys, interviews and focus groups is not expected to take more than three hours per year beyond your normal educational activities.

Your participation is completely voluntary. You may refuse to participate in the evaluation and research or withdraw your permission to use your contributions, or any specific contribution, at any point during the program. All contributions will remain confidential unless permission has been attained. Despite this, you should note that because of the small number of people involved in the project, and in the educational community in Nunavut in general, absolute anonymity cannot be guaranteed. This is no different from your participation in any other educational context in Nunavut where you are known as an educator or leader. Your participation in the evaluation and research related to the Master of Education does not, in any way, affect the evaluation of your performance in the program.

The goal setting and brain storming activities that you have participated in November will be used as a baseline from which to measure progress. Similar activities, surveys and informal interviews will be used on annual basis throughout the program to discuss your goals and opinions and identify how the program is meeting those goals.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this research project or the consent form please contact:

Lisa MacDougall
Project Manager - Research, Evaluation
lmacdougall@upei.ca
(902) 566 - 0351

Yours truly,
Fiona Walton, EdD
Associate Professor/Principal Investigator
fwalton@upei.ca

Signature Page

Title: *Pursuing a Dream: Inuit Educational Leadership in Nunavut*

Names of co-investigators: Dr. Fiona Walton, Dr. Alexander McAuley

To be filled out and signed by the participant:

Please check as appropriate:

I have read the letter of information.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
I have received enough information about the study.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
I have spoken to the researchers and they have answered my questions.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

- At any time
- Without having to give a reason
- Without affecting my future status

I agree to take part in this study.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
I agree to have the interview audio-recorded and transcribed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
I agree to allow the researchers to use the transcript of my 2011	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Interview for the purposes of this research and dissemination.

I agree to allow the research team to use the following information for research purposes:

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • The goal setting and brain storming activities in November, 2010 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • The summary of learning for each course | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • Course evaluations | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • Mid-Point survey data | | |
| • Autobiographies and personal reflections | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • Photographs taken during orientation and courses | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • Contributions to knowledge forum | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • The transcript of my interviews | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • Anonymous quotes | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

Signature of Participant

Date

You will be provided with a signed and dated copy of the informed consent form.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this research project or the consent form please contact:

Lisa MacDougall
Project Manager - Research, Evaluation
lmacdougall@upei.ca
(902) 566 - 0351

The Research Ethics Board of UPEI has approved this research project. If you have any difficulties with, or wish to voice concern about, any aspect of your participation in this study, or the ethical conduct of this study, you may contact the UPEI Research Ethics Board, for assistance at (902) 620- 5104, Imacphee@upei.ca

Appendix E – Student Autobiographies

Vera O. Arnatsiaq

I was born in Iqaluit when Iqaluit was still known as Frobisher Bay, though it is in Igloolik that I have lived the most of my life, leaving only to complete post-secondary education. I have had the pleasure to have spent the majority of my teaching career thus far guiding grade one students, however, recently I was presented with an opportunity to instruct several grade six classes. It was reflecting upon my own experiences as a student at that age that interested me in this new challenge. I have enjoyed teaching grade six for two years now.

I live in Igloolik with my husband, Ayaruaq, our four children, (Linda, Simoe, Qumangaapik, and Nelleke) and four dogs. I am fortunate that we are a close family who enjoy being on the land fishing and seal hunting, but most of all we just love spending time together.

Rhoda Cunningham

I was born in Pond Inlet, Baffin Island in Nunavut. I have three names by which I am known, Arnaujaq, Sigluk, and Inattiaq. My father Joanasie Benjamin Arreak was a Special Constable with the RCMP. This caused us to move quite a bit, though we spent spring and summer on the land no matter where we were living. I am now settled in Iqaluit with my husband Duncan. We have three grown children and have a granddaughter, Grace Arnaujaq, and grandson, Conner James.

I have held several positions in the education field from a classroom teacher to school administrator. During that time my colleagues and I had the pleasure of being a part of rewarding experiences, as well as having to cope with some difficult incidents and tragedies. However, I treasure the experience of working as part of a team and knowing how strong we can be as a community when we come together. It is both the rewarding and painful paths that have shaped the person I am today and I feel that is possible to find solutions to almost anything if we work together.

Mary Etuangat

I was born in Pangnirtung, N.W.T. to Mosesee and Oleepa Qappik, I am their third child of six. I spent a good time with my grandparents here in Pangnirtung and then in Coral Harbour when they moved. I have taken the NTEP with a certificate in 1995 and a Bachelor of Education in 2008. This is my fifteenth year as a teacher at Alookie School and Attagoyuk Ilisavik. 2011 is my second year as principal of Alookie School. In education I have had different roles: grade 1 teacher, a kindergarten teacher, Student Support Teacher, Vice Principal, a grade 6/7 teacher and have been in different in-school committees. I have been taking some time off from Youth Leadership at our church which I have enjoyed doing, I have found that youth have so much to give, they just need someone to guide and they are so open to share their strengths and abilities. I enjoy going out on the land in the summer, fall and spring, I enjoy reading and I enjoy learning. My husband Tommy and I have four children, Luke, Bonnie, Anne and Rosie, our youngest Tye is our five year old grandson whom we adopted from our son Luke and his girlfriend Lynn. They have two children Alison and Andrew. Their youngest child Jonah, who is now one year old, is adopted by a teacher friend in Iqaluit.

Louise Flaherty

I was raised by two sets of parents, my parents Johnny and Leah Joanas and the other parents were my late grandparents, Natanine and Mary Kautuq of Clyde River. Living with my grandparents, we would be on the land from April to beginning of September, living off the land. I would be the first one to leave school and come in late for the beginning of the school year.

I am married to William Flaherty and we have two children, Kenny and Andrea. I moved to Iqaluit in 1990 to pursue teacher training. I graduated in June 1992 with my Certificate in Native and Northern Education from McGill University, and then completed my Bachelor of Education from McGill University through Nunavut Arctic College in May 1993. In 2003 I completed the Certificate of Eligibility as Principal through Educational Leadership Program.

My first teaching assignment was in the fall of 1993 at Joamie School in Iqaluit as an Intermediate Teacher, and also as a transitional grades teacher. I have taught both in Iqaluit and Clyde River until 2001. In 2001 I accepted a position with the Nunavut Arctic College's Nunavut Teacher Education Program as the Community-based Coordinator. I have also taught the Inuktitut courses mainly in our community based-

programs. I've taught Curriculum Development, Orientation to Education, and Language Arts in Inuktitut, Reading and Writing in Inuktitut, and Orthography and Grammar. I've also taught Intensive Inuktitut courses with Adult Education.

My main interests are in researching our Inuit language, terminology, culture, and history and how it can be incorporated with programming within the Nunavut Arctic College. Currently, I sit as the Vice-President of the Nunavut Bilingual Education Society, producing teaching resources targeting Primary schools right up to the College level. I have helped produce over 15 books.

And this is who I am.

Lizzie Iblauk

I was born in Churchill, Manitoba, though I spent my formative years in Arviat, Nunavut, where I attended school. I am the youngest biological child in my family and the first of my six siblings to graduate high school. It wasn't until I began studying teaching in Iqaluit that I knew I had found what I was meant to do. Initially I left after three years with my certificate so that I could return home to help support my parents. I taught for five years before returning to finish my degree. Arviat has the fastest growing population in Nunavut and I have proudly added to that number by adopting a child from Pond Inlet. He is a wonderful boy of nine years old and I love him dearly.

Bertha Iglookyouak

I was born and raised in Baker Lake, Nunavut, the geographical center of Canada and the most inland community in Nunavut. I am the eldest of five children and the only daughter. I received the majority of my education at home until leaving to go to Rankin Inlet for grade eleven. I left early and returned to Baker Lake to finish my GED. This led me to attend the Kivalliq Teacher Education Program and I once again left to further my education. This time I traveled to Iqaluit where I graduated with my Bachelor of Education two years later. I am currently teaching at the elementary school in Baker Lake where I have become increasingly more involved within the educational system. I am on several committees and have served as a school representative for the Nunavut Teaching Association (NTA), as well as the Math Representative for our school.

The main reason I became a teacher was because of my love of being around children. This includes my two nieces and two nephews. I enjoy crocheting, knitting and cross-stitching. I have just recently (and finally!) learned how to use a sewing machine. I also enjoy being outdoors during the spring and summer months.

Mary-Joanne Kauki

I currently live in the town where I was born and raised, Kuujuaq, Nunavik. I began school the year the Kativik School Board took over the educational system from the government. Even though I spoke no English, school was really an enjoyable experience and secure environment for me. I then went on to CEGEP in Montreal. I found myself without direction, never finding the right program that excited me. I missed family and the simplicity of northern life, so I moved back home. It wasn't until I returned home and began substituting that I ignited a passion; the joy of working with children in a professional environment.

After studying part-time in the teacher training, I made a bold move to study full-time in Montreal. Upon the completion of my degree, I returned to Kuujuaq, and took on the newly implemented grade 3 Inuktitut class. From there I moved into a more leadership role as Vice-Principal, until I went on maternity leave, and during that time I was elected as school commissioners and Vice-President of the school board. At this level I know that this program will only help me make the best possible choices on behalf of the Education services for Nunavik.

Adriana Kusugak

I was born in Winnipeg, the daughter of two teachers and the oldest of three children. I was raised in Rankin Inlet where I completed all of my school except for a year when I lived in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, with my grandmother. Near the end of my high school career I became pregnant with my son, Qaritaq. I left the following year for university, but returned home after my first year. I switched to distance education as I was much too homesick for my son, who I had had to leave behind.

My husband, Pujjuut, my son, and I moved to Iqaluit so that I could attend the Nunavut Teacher Education Program (NTEP), where I graduated four years later with my Bachelor of Education. After graduating I began teaching and continue to do so today. I loved being a student at NTEP, which led me to apply

for this Master's program. It is my hope that this program will help me be the educational leader within my community and Nunavut that I want to become.

Saimanaaq Nester

I was born in Coral Harbour, Southampton Island. My family welcomed me, and I was named Saimanaaq Qinnuq Maatai and Uliniq by my three grandmothers and the priest who baptized me named me Patricia. I lived in Coral Harbour until the age of twelve, when I left to attend school in Churchill, Manitoba. Although, my time away came to a premature halt; three years after leaving, while I was home during the holidays, it was announced that I was arranged to be married. From that marriage I have been blessed with four children and 10 grandchildren who I love immensely.

I have been working as an Educator and leader within the education field and currently hold the position of Curriculum and School Services Acting Manager in Arviat. Throughout my lengthy career I have been an advocate for Inuktitut to be the language of instruction in Nunavut schools, not only with the ones that I have personally been involved with, but in all schools in Nunavut. I am a strong believer that Inuit *Qaujimajatuqangit* is the breath and life of the Nunavut Government and will continue to work towards this goal until it is accomplished.

Eva Noah

I was born at a nursing station in Baker Lake, NWT, where I was raised one of six children. My parents are strong traditional believers in their Inuit culture and we were raised in the same summer camp for years. Although, I received some instruction in Baker Lake, I left home at an early age in order to receive an education; it was not a choice. My father believed that we needed an education to survive in the western world. Soon after I completed my Education degree, I began to move into a leadership role within in the community. I was asked to attend committee meetings and train as an administrator within the school, dealing with disciplinary issues, as well as a liaison with the public. I have spent the last seven years as a Nunavut Teacher Education instructor. I am excited to be doing this MEd program and be a part of this new challenge.

Jeela Palluq-Cloutier

I currently live in Iqaluit with my husband, Stephane, and our four wonderful sons. My husband has another son of whom we are also very proud, he lives in Igloodik, which is actually where I was born and raised. It was here where I began my education, though I was sent to Iqaluit at the age of 16 to complete high school. Upon entering high school I became cognitive of and interested in the multiplicity of Inuit dialects surrounding me.

Throughout my life I have been quite fortunate to have been surrounded by strong Inuktitut language teachers who have given me an appreciation and understanding of our rich and unique language. I have spent my career promoting the quality teaching and use of the Inuit language. Studying Inuit language and culture is my passion. One day I hope to see that all our teachers in Nunavut will have the right guides and resources to teach at the same quality level as any other language taught in schools across the globe.

Maggie Putilik

Currently, I work for the Government of Nunavut under the Department of Education as a Teaching and Learning Centre Consultant. Prior to this position I was the Inuktitut Program Coordinator for Kivalliq Divisional Educational Council (KDEC). It was during this time I was introduced to the production of the "Inuuqatigiit" curriculum and had the opportunity to work with some wonderful people. Just recently, I received my Bachelor of Education Degree and I truly enjoyed being a student again. Advancing my education was the best decision I could have made and I am excited to participate in the next level of learning.

I was born and raised in Chesterfield Inlet by both parents, Leonie Pittausaaq and Leonard Putulik, as the fifth child with nine other siblings. My husband, Brian, and I have three children and raised them in Chesterfield Inlet. When we left Chesterfield Inlet it was to further our education. Once I received my teaching certificate we moved back to Chesterfield Inlet where I taught for a number of years. Our family then relocated to Rankin Inlet, so that our children could attend high school and it is here that we still reside.

Susan Tigullaraq

I was born in a family camp, southwest of Pond Inlet. My earliest years were spent traveling with my parents between Pond Inlet and Igloolik. The majority of my schooling was completed in Pond Inlet, after high school I worked in the offices of both schools in the area, as well as being an Office Manager for the Community Education Council, which is where I became interested in teaching. After my family moved to Iqaluit for my husband's work, I entered into the BEd program and am currently teaching here in Iqaluit. In addition to conventional education, I have also obtained education in traditional Inuit training from my grandmother, mother and other elders in child rearing, hunting, cooking, seal skin cleaning and Inuit values and principles that are important to having a happy family life.

I love the outdoors and being with my family, my husband, Joe, our son, Solomon, and our children who are grown. I enjoy cooking and baking, especially when our kids from out of town are visiting, I like making meals for large groups. I have a great interest in art, oil painting or water based colours are my preference when I have the time to spare.

Becky Tootoo

I was born Rebecca Simailat Iyago at the Military Hospital in Fort Churchill Manitoba into a large family of twelve. My name was later changed to Becky, like the character in "Tom Sawyer" after one of my older sisters had read the book. I attended primary, elementary and junior high school in Baker Lake before being sent off to Yellowknife for my senior high school years. Shortly after high school graduation, I applied and got accepted into Eastern Arctic Teacher Education Program (EATEP) in Frobisher Bay. It took two years to obtain a certificate from McGill.

Upon graduation in 1985 I interviewed for a position in Baker Lake and was successful. My first teaching job was as a special needs teacher which I found very challenging. I then went on to teach in the primary grades K, 1 and 3. I found myself moving up the grades as the years went on. After teaching grade 5, I worked as a co-principle. I was then transferred to the high school as the Inuktitut teacher for grades 10-12. I'm passionate about empowering youth – I like to give them their voice and I love to listen to what they to say if the youth have no voice then how can they possibly become the successful Nunavut citizens that we want them to become?

Appendix F – Course Syllabi

University of Prince Edward Island
Master of Education Leadership in Learning (Nunavut)
ED 631N Leadership in Postcolonial Education
Instructors: Fiona Walton, Nunia Qanatsiaq and Elizabeth C. G. Fortes
September 13 – December 10, 2010

Decolonization, once viewed as the formal process of handing over the instruments of government, is now recognized as a long-term process involving the bureaucratic, cultural, linguistic and psychological divesting of colonial power.

Linda Tuhiwai Smith, 1999, p. 98.

Course Description

In this course, students consider postcolonial history and key texts as they critically examine a variety of theoretical frameworks within postcolonial education. The postcolonial context of education within particular Indigenous and colonized societies provides a major focus for the course. The role of educational leaders in negotiating complex change in specific contexts is considered.

Instructors' Contact Information

INFORMATION REMOVED FOR PRIVACY

Specific Focus

Welcome to your first course in the second iteration of the Nunavut Master of Education (MEd) program. You are starting a new adventure as a graduate student, one that should be exciting and challenging as well. This first course considers Inuit identity and subjectivity within the context of education in Nunavut and Nunavik as emerging postcolonial, Inuit societies in Canada. A premise of the course is that education has the potential to act as a force for positive change and can be shaped by the educators and educational leaders who carry a clear vision for the future of Inuit societies in Canada. That vision, and your role in creating the future, will remain a major focus in all the Nunavut MEd courses over the next three years, but in this course we will consider the postcolonial quest and what this means for Inuit education.

Your personal experiences as educational leaders with the ability to influence change will shape our discussions related to postcolonial education. The development of a critical and decolonizing personal framework, as it is applied within education in Nunavut and Nunavik, is an important outcome for the first course and will be an ongoing process in the remaining courses. The course offers a reading and writing intensive experience providing opportunities for you to consider how you have arrived at this point in your life and where you are going in your career as an Inuit leader. The course acts as a foundation for your future professional growth by providing an opportunity to use a postcolonial lens as you reflect on the readings, write about what they mean for you and engage in dialogue and critical discourse with your colleagues and instructors.

This course outline will evolve and change as we consider the topics, engage in the reading and dialogue and consider the Inuit educational context at this time.

Course Format

The course includes some reading and reflections during the months of September and October, as well as a full week of face-to-face engagement from Wednesday, November 10 at 1:00 p.m. until Wednesday, November 17 at 12:00 p.m. We are using e-mail for our communication until we meet at the Orientation. At the Orientation, you will be introduced to Knowledge Forum, the online database we will use for distance learning over the next three years.

The ability to work on-line using your own personal laptop computer will greatly facilitate your learning and easy access to the dialogue generated by your colleagues and instructors, both at home and while you are travelling and studying. Your laptop computer can store course materials, your writing, papers and your course files where they will be accessible and available as you complete this course and the other nine courses in the

program. The Nunavut MEd is designed to be an integrated program with continuity between the courses and follow-up from one course to the next.

The face-to-face component of the postcolonial course takes place immediately following the orientation to the MEd, offered from Monday, November 8 at 6:00 p.m. until Wednesday, November 10 at 12:00 p.m. Final presentations from the participants will close the classroom-based section of the course on the evening of Tuesday, November 16. Individual debriefings with the instructional team, for approximately 15 minutes with each participant, will be scheduled following the closure of the course.

Purpose of the Course

- To critically reflect on, discuss and write about the formation of Inuit identity and subjectivity within education.
- To read about and critically analyse postcolonial theories and themes as they apply to the historical development of Inuit sociocultural, political and educational structures within government, society and schooling.
- To examine and write about themes and concepts in postcolonial education as they apply to present day processes of decolonization and globalization.
- To consider and engage in reading, critical dialogue and writing related to educational history and change in Nunavut and Nunavik through a postcolonial lens.
- To start developing and expanding a reflexive position on your life and career as an Inuit educational leader.
- To articulate, critique and express your vision for Inuit education in Nunavut and Nunavik.

Key Questions

- What is postcolonial theory and how does it apply to education in Nunavut and Nunavik?
- Why, how and when did this theory emerge and how is it impacting emerging and established Indigenous societies globally?
- How are Inuit educators, writers, artists, journalists, film makers, activists and politicians expressing their postcolonial consciousness, particularly with respect to education, and how does this compare with other Indigenous societies globally and contribute to an understanding of postcoloniality and decolonization in Nunavut and Nunavik?
- What are the implications of decolonizing and anti-colonial approaches in education for Inuit educational leaders in Nunavut and Nunavik?
- How are recent changes in educational legislation, policy and programs in Nunavut and Nunavik impacting the possibilities for an Inuit postcolonial society?
- How can the national strategy on Inuit education affect postcolonial identity and education in Nunavut and Nunavik?
- What is your role in creating a decolonized, Inuit postcolonial educational system in Nunavut and Nunavik?

Course Texts and Readings

1. Amagoalik, J. (2007). *Changing the face of Canada: The life story of John Amagoalik*. Iqaluit, Nunavut: Nunavut Arctic College Press.

This text is available from Nunavut Arctic College or the Community Learning Centres in Nunavut.

http://www.arcticcollege.ca/news/News_eng.aspx?ID=43

It is also available at the Arctic Ventures bookstore in Iqaluit. It is sold at a very reasonable price. You may be able to borrow a copy of the text from your library. The text is also available to read on line, arranged by chapters with helpful comments.

<http://www.tradition-orale.ca/english/changing-the-face-canada-b33.html>

2. Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples*. London: Zed Books. This text is available from Amazon. **Please order this book immediately because it will take time to reach you by mail. It is essential that you bring this book to the orientation and classes in Iqaluit in November.**

<http://www.amazon.com/books-used-books-textbooks/b?ie=UTF8&node=283155>

3. Additional Readings

A variety of additional readings drawn from a variety of sources will be provided during the face-to-face part of the course. Whenever possible, these readings will be available for electronic access on Knowledge Forum, the on-line data base we will use for our distance learning in the MEd.

Assignments

Please note that instructors will discuss the marking of assignments in some detail at the beginning of the face-to-face course.

1. Brief Autobiographical Sketch

Before **September 12, 2010**, write a brief autobiographical sketch right in the body of an e-mail and send it out to everyone who was sent the course outline and class list for this course. All you need to do is hit **Reply All** and everyone will learn a little bit about you very quickly. The instructors will also write autobiographical sketches and send them out to the group.

The brief introductory sketch should be no more than 200 words to let the class know who you are. The following notes can guide your writing though you do not need to follow the suggestions if you want to write a different introduction. Please only write about aspects of yourself that you feel comfortable to share. You will have plenty of time to get to know each other when we meet face-to-face. If you do **not** feel comfortable writing the sketch, or you want to talk about the assignment before you start writing, please contact Fiona Walton.

Tell the group a little about:

- Where were you born and lived as a child?
- Any other places you have lived.
- Something about your family and community.
- Your educational background.
- Your experience as an educational leader.
- Any other interesting things that you would your colleagues to know about you.

2. *Changing the Face of Canada* by John Amagoalik

John Amagoalik's book provides a gentle beginning to your studies in the MEd program with a focus on reading approximately seven short chapters in September and seven in October. The chapters are short and easy to read and you can make some notes on each chapter as you are reading.

John's book serves three purposes. The first involves reading and commenting on the autobiography of an Inuit leader who has shaped the history of Nunavut. The second is our ability to use this text as an example of autobiographical writing as you reflect on your personal life experiences and document and consider aspects of your own careers and experiences as educational leaders. The third provides our class with an opportunity to discuss John Amagoalik's life and experiences in light of the evolution of Inuit society and education in Nunavut, and to talk about the interesting themes and political events recounted in the text. Amagoalik, and the land claim process he helped to negotiate and implement, influenced the emergence of Nunavut as a postcolonial, Indigenous society and this has implications for Inuit education in Nunavut and elsewhere. We want you to enjoy reading John's book and to write down some of your ideas and reflections as you are reading, just as you will do with many other books over the next three years.

You are asked to read seven chapters from John's book in the month of September and send a short personal response to these chapters and John's story to Fiona Walton by September 30, 2010. Your response should be between 200 – 300 words (approximately one page of double-spaced text using 12 point Times New Roman font). The response can be typed into the body of the e-mail or attached as a Word document. A description of a personal response is included below.

You are also asked to read seven chapters of John's book in October and write a critical reflection based on your reading. Please send this critical reflection to Fiona Walton by October 31, 2010. Your critical reflection should be between 200 – 300 words (approximately one page of double-spaced text using 12 point Times New

Roman font). The reflection can be typed into the body of the e-mail or attached as a Word document. A description of a critical reflection is included below.

A suggested schedule for reading and posting responses and reflections is below as a guide, but if you want to send responses to Fiona before the dates on the chart, please just go ahead.

Date	Chapters	E-Mail Response to: fwalton@upei.ca
Sept. 6 – Sept. 30	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	Send a personal response to Fiona on or before Thursday, September 30.
October 4 – 24	8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 14	Send a critical reflection to Fiona on or before Sunday, October 31

3. Thinking About *Decolonizing Methodologies* by Linda Smith

This important text will be used in three courses in the program and will become your close companion over the years of the MEd. Take a close look at the Table of Contents and the chapter headings that lay out Linda Smith's arguments. Who is Linda Tuhiwai Smith and why do you think we are reading her book? Google **Linda Tuhiwai Smith Maori Scholar** and see what you can find out about her contributions to education. What does *Decolonizing Methodologies* mean to you at the start of this program? Just think a little bit think about the concepts and ideas that Linda is proposing in this book and then it will be easier to start reading the book when we are together. Here is one site that tells you a little about Linda, but you will find others.
<http://news.tangatawhenua.com/archives/4683>

A guided reading of the Introduction to *Decolonizing Methodologies*, and some other sections of the text, will take place during the first days of the course in November and you are **not expected to read any chapters in Linda Smith's book before the course starts.** Instead, just take some time to open the book, dip into the text and think about what it means. The language in the book may seem difficult, but after your first course you will begin to feel comfortable reading and enjoying Linda's book, and other books that are going to part of this graduate program.

4. Critical Reflections and Responses on the Classes and Readings (A more detailed description of this assignment will be provided on the first day of the course.)

This assignment will involve reading and writing each evening during the face-to-face course and it can become quite intense. By the end of a week you will have written far more than you expect and you will start to find your own voice as a graduate student who is engaging with some very interesting and challenging concepts and readings related to postcolonial education. Inuit writers or Elders will be the authors of several readings. Your instructors will be available in the evenings to support your work.

It will be very helpful to clear your evenings from 6:30 – 10:00 p.m. from Monday, November 8 – Wednesday, November 17 to enable you to complete the evening reading and the writing assignments.

5. Collaborative Groups

Throughout the course participants will work in a variety of collaborative groups as they get to know each other and work on activities and tasks together. In a graduate program that stresses the development of leadership skills, everyone will be involved in leading small groups, presenting information and expressing their opinions on the topics of the day.

6. Final Presentation or Performance

In groups of three, you will prepare a final presentation or performance related to your learning and insights during the course. Taking up issues of postcolonial identity, subjectivity and leadership in Inuit education, the presentations and performances provide space for creative interpretation of the themes we are considering in the course. Using decolonizing frameworks and methodologies, the evening of presentations and performance will be organized and facilitated by the graduate students participating in the course. The presentations may be in *Inuit Uqausingiit* or English, or a combination of both. Guests may be invited to the final presentations and performances, but this will be collectively negotiated with the class.

7. Personal and Professional Growth

The Nunavut MEd provides the opportunity for both personal and professional growth. Educational leaders are called upon to take responsibility for shaping the future of Inuit education and their personal health and well being are vitally important in managing the complex challenges involved in this process. Opportunities to reflect on your own strengths and needs are provided during this first face-to-face course and you will have time to think and write about your growth as a person and a leader. The instructors are available to respond to your writing and questions and facilitate your personal as well as professional growth. The community of emerging scholars and learners in the MEd program will also provide support, encouragement and critical feedback in your personal and professional growth over three years.

Description of a Personal Response

Writing a personal response often means that you will be drawing on your own life and career experiences as you consider the chapters in *Changing the Face of Canada*. You may know the communities Amagoalik is writing about or the people he refers to in a particular chapter. You may have relatives who were involved directly in the schools John attended or in the land claim process itself. You may also relate to the stories and experiences that John writes about and how they affected you personally, or some of the people you know. Reading a chapter may raise emotions that include surprise, anger, delight, happiness, outrage, wonder, resentment, to suggest just a few possibilities. Your writing may explore some of these emotions as you respond to the experiences and the ideas. How do you feel about the changes that Amagoalik, and other key Inuit leaders, were able to bring about for Inuit society? Why do you feel these changes are important? Is there anything that worries you about the chapters you are reading?

A personal response needs to be planned so it flows well and clearly carries your thoughts and feelings to the readers. Drafting the response in terms of the main ideas you want to write about will help you to create a response that presents your ideas more persuasively.

Re-read your response and make any changes that help it to flow and send it to Fiona Walton at fwalton@upei.ca on or before September 30, 2010.

Description of a Critical Reflection

A critical reflection tends to take up the ideas and larger questions raised in the chapters and write about them in a way that analyses, compares or contrasts them to reveal or expose issues and problems, or solutions and challenges. When you write critically you may be exposing the way Inuit were treated when they were removed from their homes and relocated, or commenting on the kind of colonial power that radically changed Inuit life. You may want to write about what it means to be a Ward of the State. You may consider the issues related to residential schools or regional high schools that required students to leave their families and communities to complete their education to the Grade Twelve level. In your writing you may want to write about the steps that took place over time as the struggle continued at the political level. Inuit leaders sometimes paid a high price as they struggled to create their own territory and fight for self-determination. You may also want to write about the impact of the land claims in Nunavut, or Nunavik, since the implementation process has taken place.

A critical reflection benefits from planned writing. Lay out your ideas in a simple plan that may present an argument or substantiate your writing. The plan will then guide the writing process. In a critical reflection you are sharing your ideas, more than you are writing about your experiences, memories or feelings.

Re-read the critical reflection carefully to ensure that it makes sense. Each sentence needs to flow logically from the one before it and your punctuation can be used to stress your points. Once you are satisfied with the critical reflection, send it to Fiona Walton at fwalton@upei.ca on or before October 31, 2010.

Online Sites Related to Postcoloniality and Topics Considered in the Course

<http://ipcs.org.au/index.html>
<http://postcolonial.net/about/>
<http://faculty.pittstate.edu/~knichols/colonial2.html>
<http://www.postcolonialweb.org/>
<http://www.usask.ca/education/postcolonial/battiste.htm>

<http://www.usask.ca/education/people/battistem.htm>
<http://www.itk.ca/blog/mary-simon>
<http://www.itk.ca/inuktitut-magazine>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sheila_Watt-Cloutier
<http://communications.uvic.ca/edge/aboriginal-science.html>
http://www.pauktuutit.ca/home_e.html

Emerging Bibliography of Texts, Readings and Websites

Note: This bibliography will expand and grow as each course is completed. While the texts, journal articles and websites are mainly focussing on the postcolonial field, they will have relevance in your other courses. You will not be reading all these books, but you will be carefully considering selections or chapters drawn from many of the texts as well as the interesting ideas and concepts raised by the authors.

Publications from the Nunavut Department of Education, Nunavut Arctic College and the Kativik School Board will be used in all the courses offered in the Nunavut MEd.

- Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G. & Tiffin, H. *The post-colonial studies reader*, 2nd Edition, Routledge.
- Arnaquq, N. (2008). *Uqaujuusiatic – Gifts of words of advice: Schooling, education and leadership in Baffin Island*. Unpublished Master of Education thesis. University of Prince Edward Island.
- Battiste, M. (December 11, 2008). *Animating Indigenous Knowledge in Education: From Resilience to Renaissance*. World Indigenous People's Conference in Education (WICPE): Melbourne, Australia.
- Battiste, M. (2008). *The Decolonization of Aboriginal Education: Dialogue, Reflection and Action in Canada* in Pierre R. Dasen and Abdeljalil Akkari (Eds.). *Educational Theories and Practices from the Majority World*. New Dehli, India: Sage Publications.
- Battiste, M. (Ed.), (2000). *Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision* Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.
- Bhabba, H. (1994/2005). *The location of culture*. New York: Routledge.
- Fanon, F. (1967). *Black skin, white masks*. New York: Grove Press Inc.
- Fanon, F. (1963). *The wretched of the earth*. New York: Grove Press Inc.
- Hall, S. & duGay, P. (Eds.). (1996). *Questions of cultural identity*. London: Sage.
- Hooks, B. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as a practice of freedom*. New York: Routledge.
- Hooks, B. (1988). *Talking back: Thinking feminist, thinking black*. Toronto, Ontario: Between the lines.
- Memmi, A. (1965). *The colonizer and the colonized*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Minh-Ha, T. (1989). *Woman, native other: Writing postcoloniality and feminism*. Bloomington, IA: Indiana University Press.
- <http://dithyramb.org/readings/Minhha-grandma's%20story.pdf>
- Mohanty, C. T. (2003). *Feminism without borders: decolonizing theory, practicing solidarity*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Qitsualik, R. A. & Tinsley, S. A. (2007, October). *Nunataaq: The new land: Ilira*. Native journal. Retrieved from: http://www.nativejournal.ca/pages/2007%20sections/*2007.11.sections/2007.11.Rachel.html
- Rizvi, F., Lingard, B., & Lavia, J. (2006). *Postcolonialism and education: negotiating a contested terrain*. *Pedagogy, Culture and Society*, Vol.14, no. 3, pp 249-262.
- Said, E. W. (1993/1994). *Culture and imperialism*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Simon, M. (1996). *Inuit: One future one Arctic*. Peterborough, Ontario: The Cider Press.
- Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples*. London: Zed Books.
- Spivak, G. C. (1999). *A critique of postcolonial reason: Toward a history of the vanishing present*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Spivak, G. C. (1990). *The post-colonial critic: Interviews, strategies, dialogues*. New York: Routledge.
- Tester, F. J. (2010, June). *Can the sled dog sleep? Postcolonialism, cultural transformation and the consumption of Inuit culture*. *New proposals: Journal of Marxism and interdisciplinary inquiry*, 3, 3, 7-19.
- Watt-Cloutier, S. (2007, May). *The strength to go forward*. Retrieved from http://www.cbc.ca/thisibelieve/essays/may23_Sheila_Watt-Cloutier.html
- Williams, P. & Chrisman, L. (Eds.). (1994). *Colonial discourse and postcolonial theory: A reader*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Ed 611N Introduction to Research Methods in Education

Course Syllabus

Instructors

Each of the three instructors has responsibility for specific communities. They will maintain “office hours” on Skype during stated times and be available by email at other times. In normal circumstances you can expect a response to a phone or email inquiry to an instructor within 24 hours.

Sandy McAuley
email: amcauley@upei.ca

Jessie Lees

Nunia Anocce

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Office Hours

Each instructor will post office hours during which time he/she will be available to consult with students. Although each instructor will be primarily concerned with the students in his/her home group, all instructors are more than willing to talk to any student in the course. Email requests or postings to Knowledge Forum will receive replies in 24 hours or less.

Note that PEI time = Qikiqtani/Nunavik + 1 hour = Kivalliq + 2 hours = Kitikmeot + 3 hours

Calendar Description

In this course, students are introduced to a variety of methods that are appropriate for conducting research in educational settings. Students develop an understanding of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. Students are introduced to the process of planning, conducting, and reporting research on learning and instruction, and to the critical analysis of current studies reported in educational literature.

Course Format

Ed 611N will be offered online over a 12-week period from January to March, 2011. Each instructor will have a primary responsibility for a group of 7-8 students. The course text will be supplemented with online readings and multimedia resources.

Course overview: Educational “Re-search”

Research in general and education research in particular may have various meanings to various

different people. To some it may seem a mysterious and arcane art beyond the understanding of mere mortals. Others may see it as providing insight and understanding that can guide the development of better schools. Still others, particularly those from an Indigenous perspective such as Linda Smith (1999), see research as “probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world’s vocabulary” (p. 1) because of its inextricable links to such things as imperialism and colonization. Each of these perspectives emerges from particular ways of living in and making sense of the world.

The fundamental goal of Ed 611N is to explore conceptions of research in order to develop the capacity to interpret, conduct, and apply research appropriately in Nunavut contexts. On one fairly superficial level, this simply means “looking again” carefully and systematically at a problem or an issue and reporting the results clearly. Rigorously and thoughtfully done, this has the potential to extend and deepen our knowledge of education, inform good policy decisions, and improve educational practice. Poorly done or misused it can contribute to the opposite. A good understanding of how to interpret, apply, and conduct educational research is therefore essential for educational leaders.

At a deeper level, however, “looking again” also requires that we interrogate the extent to which our research practices reflect how we live in and make sense of the world. As the reference to Smith points out, one culture’s way of living in and making sense of the world may be a tool to dominate or oppress another. This is critical in a context such as Nunavut where rich bodies of Inuit knowledge have been ignored or dismissed as “superstition” or “unscientific”. At the same time, while there are undoubtedly similarities between Inuit and other Indigenous cultures, there may be differences as well. The second goal of Ed 611N, then, is to invite participants extend and critique mainstream and Indigenous research paradigms within the context of Inuit culture in Nunavut and/or Nunavik.

Ed 611N Introduction to Research Methods in Education is the first of three research courses in the Nunavut MEd. Drawing on the critical lenses and topics from across the program, it leads directly to Ed 616N Action Research and the final course in the program, Ed 618N Leadership and Reflective Practice. In Ed 611 students will begin to develop an understanding of and appreciation for research in education that speaks both to Inuit cultural values and the wider national and global educational research communities.

Course outcomes

In this course you will:

- discuss individual and collective beliefs about and attitudes towards research;
- explore principles for ethical research in different communities;
- develop skills for informed and critical reading of qualitative and quantitative research in published studies;
- gain familiarity with a variety of data-gathering methods;
- identify individual areas of research interest;
- examine the necessary steps in the research process, including:
 - 1) identifying a problem;

- 2) reviewing the literature;
 - 3) specifying a purpose;
 - 4) collecting data;
 - 5) analyzing and interpreting the data, and;
 - 6) reporting and evaluating research.
- explore the relationship between “indigenous” and “mainstream” methodologies.

Resources

Core Resources

Creswell, J. (2008). *Educational research: Planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies*. New York, NY: Zed Books.

Supplemental Resources

Wilson, Shawn. (2008). *Research is ceremony*. Black Point, NS: Fernwood Publishing.

Other supplemental materials will be supplied in electronic form during the orientation session in Iqaluit in November, 2010 and/or online during the course itself.

Online Resources

Because this course will be conducted at a distance, online resources will be integral to your participation and success. These include:

Knowledge Forum <http://kforum.upei.ca>

The companion website for *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*: <http://www.prenhall.com/creswell>

Course requirements

Ongoing contributions to the course database through:

1. Readings. Assigned readings should be completed in advance of the class in which discussion begins. Readings will be supported by online multimedia prereading presentations. The course readings will form the basis of much of the online discussion throughout the course.
2. Weekly contributions to the online discussions in the course database. Record your questions, reflections, and responses to readings and coursework in the appropriate views of Knowledge Forum. In addition to your own entry, you will be responsible for reading contributions from your peers and making a substantial response to the work of at least one colleague each week.
3. Preliminary and final statement of a research question. In the November orientation session you put together some initial thoughts on an educational issue that you'd like to explore in more depth. You may wish to begin with this question, or you may have thought of something else since then. In either case you'll be thinking and writing about these questions--and perhaps changing them!--over this course and throughout the MEd program.
4. Individual written critique of one published research study selected from those supplied, or an alternative approved by the instructors.
5. Selection and application of a research design appropriate to your question.
6. Hands-on data-gathering and data analysis experience. In co-operation with a colleague, you

will apply data-gathering techniques of interviewing, observation, questionnaire use and the identification of educational artifacts.

Details for weekly readings, assignments, and reflections will be posted in the appropriate view in Knowledge Forum Tuesday prior to that week's work. In addition, details for each major course assignment will be supplied in a separate document prior to the due date. These documents will outline the specific expectations for each assignment and assessment criteria.

Assessment

Marks for assignments will be assigned according to the following breakdown:

	Description	Due Date	Per cent
1.	Weekly readings and responses	Weekly, with suggested deadlines: Reading complete and initial posting: Sunday Initial response(s) to peers: Monday Follow-up responses: Tuesday	25
2.	Preliminary Question	January 12	5
3.	Article Summary and critique	January 26	10
4.	Participant Observation	February 2	5
5.	Thick Description	February 9	5
6.	Questionnaire	February 16	5
7.	Interview Transcript	March 2	10
8.	Draft Paper for feedback	March 9	15
9.	Final Paper	March 23	20
	Total		100

Note: A final mark of 70% or better is required to successfully complete a graduate course. Ten per cent of each assignment's grade is given for timeliness.

If extenuating circumstances (sickness, family responsibilities, etc.) interfere with your ability to keep up with the course, please inform your instructor as soon as possible. Extensions will be given only for exceptional and serious circumstances.

Course schedule

	Week Begins	Research Process	Topic/Activities	Readings	Notes
			Begun at November orientation		
1	January 5	Identify a problem	Introduction to course Beliefs about and ethics of research IQ and research Identifying your areas of interest	Smith, Chapter 6	Weekly discussions begin
2	January 12	Specify a purpose	Defining and classifying educational research The research process Problem statements, research questions and hypotheses	Creswell, Chapters 1 & 2	Preliminary problem statement due
3	January 19		Identifying areas of interest. Problem statements, research questions, hypotheses and significance	Creswell, Ch. 3 & 5	Research questions and significance
4	January 26	Review literature	Theory and literature What is a literature review?	Creswell, Ch. 4	Article summary/critique
5	February 2	Collect data	Overview of Qualitative research	Creswell, Ch. 8 & 9	Participant observation
6	February 9	Analyze and interpret	Overview of Quantitative research	Creswell, Ch. 6 & 7	Questionnaire
7	February 16		Critiquing published studies	Smith, Ch. 7 & 8	Thick description
8	February 23		Practicum week	Alternative readings (if applicable)	Interviewing
9	March 2	Report and evaluate research data	Reporting research	Creswell, Ch. 10	Data collection: reflections and sharing. What have you learned about your question?
10	March 9		Designing research. Select one of your questions and build on what you've learned about educational research to prepare a draft research proposal.		Draft paper
11	March 16				Revise paper

Page 5

12	March 23		Summary and reflections		Final paper
	March 30		Course ends		Course reflection. All assignments submitted successfully for credit.

University of Prince Edward Island
Master of Education - Nunavut
Education 614N Theories of Research and Learning
May 16 – July 16, 2011

This course is delivered online and face-to-face by a team of instructors including Fiona Walton, Naullaq Arnaquq and Elizabeth Fortes. This outline primarily addresses the on-line and Western-European theoretical focus within the course.

Instructor Contact Information

THIS CONTENT HAS BEEN REMOVED FOR PRIVACY REASONS

What is Theory?

Theory calls one to abandon or negate aspects of one's personal or professional identity. Theory is disruptive.
Roger Simon

Theories shape our contemporary educational world and graduate education provides an opportunity to interrogate, disrupt and question their impact and influence. In Nunavut, theories drawn from the Western-European and North American traditions bring with them what is referred to in the postcolonial literature as a colonization of the mind (Fanon, 1952/1986; Said, 1993; Freire, 1970; Spivak, 1990). We are challenged in this course to examine, integrate, understand and critique several Western-European theories, but also bring our critical gaze to Inuit theories of research and learning as we continue to develop research proposals that raise questions about education in Nunavut.

Roger Simon's quote highlights the mixed feelings we often have towards theory. It is common for teachers to find theories difficult or even irrelevant unless they are related to their lives and experiences. Theories can question cherished beliefs and resistance or frustration may result. This discomfort can lead to transformational moments of personal and professional growth as we start to understand the importance of theoretical frameworks in education and research.

We are entering a dialogue together in both Inuktitut and English as we develop a theoretical awareness that can open our eyes to some of the deepest questions and issues in education. Theory involves learning a new language and it can feel a bit like walking through the dark, but we are not alone. Our colleagues and instructors are available to offer support in our on-line dialogue and in the face-to-face section of the course.

Required Textbook

Dimitriadis, G. & Kamberelis, G. (2006). *Theory for education*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Please note: This text was to be ordered from Amazon some time ago. It costs approximately \$28.00.

Participants are encouraged to read all chapters in this small text though only seven chapters are assigned as pre-course reading.

The assigned chapters in this text are to be carefully read and commented on before the face-to-face classes begin on campus. Take notes as you read, including page numbers for quotes. It will not be possible to complete this course successfully without finishing the on-line readings and the assignments before you arrive on PEI. Starting this work now will enable you to fully enjoy your on-campus experience.

Course Description

This course primarily addresses postmodern, postcolonial and Inuit theories of research and learning. The aim is to familiarize participants with theoretical frameworks used by educational scholars and researchers to make sense of today's realities in education.

Course Design

The first interactions in this course take place by distance on Knowledge Forum as the pre-course assignments are completed each week between May 16 and June 30. Fiona Walton will act as the lead instructor for the on-line section of the course.

The class then meets together for the face-to-face component of the course on Sunday, July 10 at 6:00 at our assigned classroom on the UPEI campus. This classroom space has not yet been assigned.

Classes take place from Monday, July 11 until Saturday, July 16. Dialogue and writing will continue to be supplemented by interactions on the Knowledge Forum website.

Naullaq Arnaquq facilitates the Inuit theories section of this course during our face-to-face time together at UPEI. More details about this section will be provided by the end of June when the on-line part of the course is complete.

Elizabeth Fortes provides a workshop on Paulo Freire and Bell Hooks and reviews decolonizing, feminist and postcolonial theories. Elizabeth also facilitates discussions related to the integration of theoretical perspectives in education and she provides student support throughout the course.

On-Line Section of the Course - Monday, May 16 – Friday, July 1

The on-line section of the course starts on Monday, May 16. After you read this course outline, please go to kforum.upei.ca and log in using your usual user name and password. You will find a new view dedicated to this course.

The first assignment involves reading seven chapters in the text and contributing notes and some comments on your colleagues' work on Knowledge Forum. This takes place over four weeks from May 16 – June 12 (there is just one chapter for the first week and then two chapters a week for the last two weeks). The description of this assignment is posted in Knowledge Forum. Individuals who may wish to move through the chapters at a faster pace are still responsible for commenting and responding to their colleagues' work until June 12. Everyone is expected to keep up with the readings and responses in order to maintain our learning community.

The second assignment involves preparing a five-page draft paper based on your own ideas and responses to the theories you have read and learned about in the seven chapters from the text as well as your readings in the Postcolonial and Research courses. The paper also integrates your perspectives about Inuit theories you are already familiar with in Nunavut and Nunavik. Drafting the paper as a personal quest to identify your own theoretical beliefs brings a deeper meaning to this assignment.

The draft of the five-page paper needs to be sent to Fiona Walton by e-mail on or before June 30. It is essential that the draft paper be submitted by this date in order to provide a focus for the first two days of the face-to-face course. Fiona will contribute detailed feedback and suggestions to your paper to enable you to continue writing; editing, refining and expanding the paper after you arrive on campus at UPEI.

Please do not fall behind in any of these pre-course assignments. You will lose marks and there will be no time available to catch up after you arrive at UPEI.

Face-to-Face Learning at UPEI (Subject to Change as the Course Evolves)

A routine for each day is designed to bring a sense of continuity and connection to our community during the face-to-face part of the course. Each day begins from 8:30 – 9:00 with a welcome and reflection led by Elizabeth Fortes and participants. This welcome provides an opportunity to start the day together with some special time to connect and focus. It brings Tunnunarniq into each day.

Class starts at 9:00 and continues until 12:00 with a short nutrition break at 10:30. Drinks and snacks are available for purchase on campus and everyone is responsible for looking after their own needs.

Lunch is offered at the Wanda Wyatt Dining Hall from 12:00 – 12:45. Afternoon class resumes from 1:00 – 3:00. From 3:00 – 5:00 participants usually dedicate themselves to their reading, writing or small-group work. Supper at the Wanda Wyatt is served from 5:00 – 6:00 with evening activities scheduled from 6:15 – 8:00. Most participants are living in a residence called Andrew Hall, which is right on campus. The library is close by and when the weather is nice you can read or meet together outside.

Daily Course Schedule (Subject to Change)

Sunday, July 10

6:15 – 8:00: Qulliq lighting, welcome and discussion of student support

Monday, July 11

8:30 – 9:00 Opening activity organized by Elizabeth Fortes with the participants

9:00 – 12:00 Historical overview of theoretical positions and their impact on research and learning in education (Fiona Walton)

- 1:00 – 3:00 Review of critical, decolonizing, poststructural and feminist perspectives and lenses (Fiona Walton)
- 3:00 – 5:00 Time to work on the theories paper
- 5:00 – 6:00 Supper
- 6:15 – 8:00 Writing workshop

Tuesday, July 12

- 8:30 – 9:00 Opening the day (Elizabeth Fortes and participants)
- 9:00 – 12:00 Concluding activities for the Western-European theoretical section of the course (Fiona Walton)
- 1:00 – 3:00 Opening activities for the Inuit theories section of the course (Naullaq Arnaquq)
- 3:00 – 5:00 Time to work on the Inuit theories assignment
- 5:00 – 6:00 Supper
- 6:15 – 8:00 Library workshop

Wednesday, July 13

- 8:30 – 9:00 Opening the day (Elizabeth Fortes and participants)
- 9:00 – 12:00 Inuit epistemologies, ontologies, world views and perspectives in education (Naullaq Arnaquq)
- 1:00 – 3:00 Inuit theories continue (Naullaq Arnaquq)
- 3:00 – 5:00 Time to work on assignments related to Inuit theories
- 5:00 – 6:00 Supper
- 6:15 – 8:00 Writing workshop

Thursday, July 14

- 8:30 – 9:00 Opening the day (Elizabeth Fortes and participants)
- 9:00 – 12:00 Inuit Theories continue (Naullaq Arnaquq)
- 1:00 – 3:00 Bringing Inuit and Western-European Theories together (Naullaq Arnaquq, Fiona Walton and Elizabeth Fortes)
- 3:00 – 5:00 Discussion with Ian Mauro, Canada Research Chair in Human Dimensions of Environmental Change, Mount Allison University. Dr. Mauro is the co-director, with acclaimed filmmaker Zacharias Kunuk, of the documentary film, *Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change*. The documentary was viewed in the recent research course. It was hailed as “groundbreaking” by the *Globe and Mail*.
- 5:00 – 6:00 Supper
- 6:15 – 8:30 Time for assignments

Friday, July 15

- 8:30 – 12:00 Exploration of Freirian, feminist and postcolonial theoretical perspectives (Elizabeth Fortes)
- 1:00 – 4:00 Presentation of final papers. A respondent comments on each paper

Saturday, July 16

- 8:30 – 9:00 Opening the day.
- 9:00 – 12:00 Participants continue presenting final papers with a respondent commenting on each paper
- 1:00 – 1:15 Electronic submission of final papers to Fiona Walton
- 1:30 – 4:00 Participants present representations of Inuit theoretical frameworks
- 4:00 – 4:30 Closure of course and completion of course evaluations
- 4:30 – 6:45 Individual 15 minute meetings with participants and instructors start
- 7:00 Lobster Supper

Sunday, July 17

- 7:30 – 12:00 Individual meetings with participants and instructors continue
- 1:00 – 3:00 ED 615N Educational Leadership starts

Evaluation and Assignments – Fiona Walton

Please note that this section of the course carries 60% of the marks. The Inuit theories section will carry 40% of the marks. Elizabeth Fortes is not involved in the evaluation of assignments.

1. Readings, Responses and Critical Reflections

Participants are asked to read seven chapters from the text. There is one chapter to read the first week and two chapters to read for the remaining three weeks. The chapters are:

Theorist	Dates
1. Bell Hooks	May 16 - 22
2. Jerome Bruner	May 23 - 29
3. Edward W. Said	May 23 - 29
4. Michel Foucault	May 30 – June 5
5. Pierre Bourdieu	May 30 – June 5
6. Judith Butler	June 6 - 12
7. Gayatri Spivak	June 6 - 12

After reading a chapter, participants come to the Knowledge Forum website to post their short written personal response and/or critical reflection on the chapter. Responses and/or critical reflections need to be at least 150 words long. Please use key quotes from the text and your own insights and opinions to interpret the particular theories as they apply in Nunavut or Nunavik, or to frame your questions and comments. This process creates our on-line dialogical community and introduces us to the theories.

Reading, thinking, questioning, speculating, pondering and hypothesizing are central in this course as we create an intellectual dialogue about many different theories in education and research. Participants take up the readings and ideas in the spirit of intellectual engagement and challenge, relating them to their own lives and socio-cultural context.

2. Drafting a Theories Paper

A first draft of a five-page paper considering the theories you have read and researched over the period of four weeks will be prepared before you come to UPEI. You may draw on any aspect of the theories you found interesting and provide reasons for your choices. You are encouraged to draw on theories from the postcolonial course, particularly Linda Smith's decolonizing frameworks and any of the concepts you found compelling in your first research course. The theories may be compared, contrasted and critiqued from your own educational perspective and Inuit literature or Inuit theories can be woven into the draft paper as desired. A more detailed description of this assignment with suggestions about how to design this paper will be posted on the Knowledge Forum site.

The aim of this assignment is to design and create a paper that uses the theories you have read about to interrogate your understanding of education, leadership, research, and learning in relation to education in Nunavut or Nunavik at this time and to describe your own theoretical position. You may draw on quotations from texts in the Theories course, or from any websites, texts or readings you have encountered in other courses. This draft paper offers you the opportunity to identify your beliefs and values about education in Nunavut and/or Nunavik and consider your own role as a leader in an educational process that takes place in an Inuit-majority educational context in Canada.

The five-page draft of this paper will be submitted by e-mail to Fiona Walton on or before by June 30. This leaves you three and a half weeks to work on this assignment. Feedback, suggestions and comments will be provided as soon as possible before you arrive at UPEI and time will be allocated while you are on campus to expand, edit and polish the paper. The paper will be read at the end of the course to your colleagues and possibly some guests invited by the participants.

We know that school closures create additional work for many participants in this course, but the workload is designed carefully so it is manageable as long as at least three to five hours are allocated to the course each week from May 16 – June 30.

3. Participation

All voices are encouraged to express ideas and respond to the opinions of colleagues, share insights, ask questions and animate the discussion on Knowledge Forum. Marks will be assigned for each build-on

contribution (up to a maximum of three, see below). We are all interested in understanding the theories and one interpretation does not reflect any fixed truth; rather, our discussions will represent many truths and opinions shared in the spirit of intellectual exchange as the group comes to terms with the ideas presented in the text.

4. Presentation of Final Paper

Each participant will present aspects of their papers at the end of the course. Your own emerging theoretical and personal position as well as your approaches to research and education need to be evident in what you present. This presentation incorporates your ideas about theories from your readings in the on-line section of the course with your own perspectives about education.

Please consult with Fiona, Naullaq, Elizabeth and your colleagues as you determine the focus and approach you are planning to use for this presentation. Presentations should take between five and seven minutes.

Overall Evaluation

Assignment	Due Date	Marks Allocated	% of Final
Responses/Critical Reflections	Sundays of each week	10 for each theorist. 70 marks to be converted to a mark out of 80	33%
Draft and Final Paper	Draft (June 30) Final Paper (July 16)	50 for the draft 50 for the final paper	21% each
Participation	During on-line and face-to-face classes class	40	16%
Presentation of Paper	End of the course	20	9%

1. Readings, Responses/Critical Reflections: A personal response and a critical reflection are contributed each week for the two theorists, except in the first week when there is only one chapter to read and you may choose one or the other. For example, in the first week you may write either a personal response or a critical reflection about bell hooks. In the second week you would write both a critical reflection and a personal response. It is up to you to choose which one you will write for either Jerome Bruner or Edward Said. Seven marks are available for this response/reflection and an additional three marks are allocated for your build-on comments to your colleagues. The three marks are available for the build-on notes you contribute. Annotations will not earn marks but they can be added at any time to encourage or support your colleagues. A total of 70 marks are available for this assignment and this will then be converted to a mark out of 80. Assignments submitted on time and addressing the criteria will be marked accordingly.

Readings, Responses/Critical Reflections - Marking

Date	Theorist	Mark	Comments	Theorist	Mark	Comments
May 16-22	Hooks	10		N/A	N/A	
May 23-29	Bruner	10		Said	10	
May 30-June 5	Foucault	10		Bourdieu	10	
June 6-12	Butler	10		Spivak	10	

2. Theories Paper: The theories paper is assigned 100 marks. 50 marks are available for the first draft and 50 for the finished paper. Criteria for the draft and finished paper are outlined below.

Criteria for Draft Paper

1. A plan for the paper and a logical argument is presented in clear writing.	10
2. The draft takes up theories and ideas from the required text.	10
3. The draft incorporates Inuit theoretical understandings and experiences.	10
4. References to decolonizing frameworks (Linda Smith) and approaches to research (Creswell) are included when appropriate.	10
5. Personal opinions, ideas and perspectives on theory, education, research and learning are expressed in the draft.	10

Criteria for Final Paper

1. The paper and argument are presented in clear writing that flows as it presents concepts and ideas. An accurate APA reference list is included.	10
2. Theories and ideas from the required text are skillfully incorporated into the paper.	10
3. Inuit theoretical conceptions, understandings and experiences are integrated into the paper.	10
4. Decolonizing frameworks (Linda Smith) and approaches to research (Creswell) are included when appropriate.	10
5. Personal opinions and perspectives on theory, education, research; learning and life are central and well expressed in the paper.	10

3. Participation

Participation and engagement in any course makes a very big difference in the quality of learning and the creation of connections and relationships. In the Nunavut MEd, active participation signifies a high level of participant ownership within the course. The marks in this section of the evaluation are designated for more than the contribution of academically strong assignments, they acknowledge dynamic dialogue that involves all participants and helps to make everyone feel invited, included and part of an ongoing engagement with the ideas. The marks are therefore assigned for the promotion of lively and engaged participation that is evident both in Knowledge Forum and during classes on campus.

4. Presentation of Final Paper

The presentation of the final paper is allocated 20 marks. More information about the presentation will be available during the first days of the face-to-face course.

Description of a Personal Response

Writing a personal response often means that you will be drawing on your own life and career experiences as you consider the ideas and concepts raised in the chapters from the text. Our professional life reflects our personal beliefs and values. Parker Palmer suggests that we teach who we are (1998). So who are we? How are our beliefs and values reflected in our words and actions? Why is it important for each of us to develop a personal and a theoretical position that is somewhat congruent? What happens to us when our professional lives do not reflect our theories about learning? Reading a chapter in the text may raise emotions, opinions and questions that you can write about in the response.

The personal response needs to be planned so it flows well and clearly carries your thoughts and feelings to the readers. Drafting the response in terms of the main ideas you want to write about will help you to create a response that presents your ideas more persuasively.

Re-read and edit your personal response before posting it to Knowledge Forum.

Description of a Critical Reflection

A critical reflection tends to take up the ideas and larger questions raised in the chapters and write about them in a way that analyses, compares or contrasts them to reveal or expose issues and problems, or solutions and challenges. When you write critically you are raising questions, concerns or opinions about the chapter and backing them up with quotations or references from the text.

A critical reflection benefits from planned writing. Lay out your ideas in a simple plan that may present an argument or substantiate your writing. The plan will then guide the writing process. In a critical reflection you are sharing your ideas, more than you are writing about your experiences, memories or feelings.

Re-read the critical reflection carefully to ensure that it makes sense. Each sentence needs to flow logically from the one before. Check over the critical reflection before posting it to Knowledge Forum.

Education 615
Educational Leadership
Summer 2011

Lena Metuq, Elizabeth Fortez, and Joanne Tompkins Contact information removed for privacy

*"There is great power in **knowing what is to be done**"*

(Graham Smith, 1999)

Course Description: What '*needs to be done*' in schools in Nunavut? And what does leadership look like from an Inuit perspective that can help '*get things done*' for students in Nunavut? In this course we explore Inuit educational leadership for Inuit schools and consider the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are necessary for effective leadership within Nunavut.

Course Intentions: Three key ideas guide this course. Each learner will

- 1) **(re) explore and articulate the vision for Nunavut education.**
- 2) **practice knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to enhance leadership.**
- 3) **develop working definition of educational leadership and an assessment of current practices with a view to identifying strengths and articulating needs.**

Course Readings:

McComber, L. & Partridge, S. (2010). *Arnait Nipingit. Voices of Inuit Women in Leadership and Governance*. Iqaluit, NU: Nunavut Arctic College.

Glanz, J. (2006). *What every principal should know about cultural leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Course Assignments:

- 1) **Journals – Due July 18, 19, 20, 2011. 30%**

A central premise of this course is that as critical educators we learn from in-class readings, discussion and dialogue coupled with self-reflection and introspection. To best capture the on-going and continuous work in this course a journal format will be used as one major assignment.

Each day you will respond to one or two key ideas presented from the class and/or the readings. This journal is highly autobiographical and a place in which you can write to learn, write to uncover your thinking. The central question you will keep writing around is how all or any of what we are doing is helping to unlearn, learn and relearn ideas about educational leadership.

The journal will serve four main functions.

- a) **Firstly it will be a tool for self-reflection in the course and allow you to write autobiographically and pedagogically about the main questions that frame each day's course theme.**
- b) Secondly it will create an opportunity for dialogue and feedback between you and the instructors about your emerging understanding of these themes and questions.
- c) Thirdly it provides a place where you can think and assess your intrapersonal, interpersonal and communication skills which play a central role in our effectiveness as educators.
- d) And lastly, the journal will provide the basis for the final entry which will be a synthesis of key learnings in the course related to the five key questions in the course.

The key qualities we will be looking for in the daily journals will be:

- Your ability to write autobiographically about the main questions that frame each day's course theme
- Your ability to make links between who you are as educator, the leadership practices you use and the larger context of schooling
- Your ability to 'push your thinking' and challenge 'taken for granted assumptions' about schooling (evidence of critical thinking)
- Your ability to write in a flowing, conversational style that is easy for the reader to follow

Assessment of student work continues to be one of the most important and challenging aspect of our work as educators. We continue to journey towards what we hope are more thoughtful, respectful, and educative forms of assessment in our practice. Below are the *qualities* of graduate work that we hope to help you achieve in this course.

Consistently makes autobiographical insights and links to the main questions that frame each day's course theme. You write in a **flowing conversational style**. Your work demonstrates you have **pushed your thinking** and challenged 'taken for granted assumptions' about who you are as an educator and leader, your practices, and the larger context of schooling. **Writing is outstanding.** **99-85**

Displays **at least two of these** qualities and often demonstrates the others -**makes autobiographical insights and links** to the main questions that frame each day's course theme. **flowing conversational style; pushed your thinking** and challenged 'taken for granted assumptions' about who you are as an educator and leader, your practices, and the larger context of schooling. **Writing is excellent.** **84-80**

Displays **at least one** of these qualities and often demonstrates the others; **makes autobiographical insights and links** to the main questions that frame each day's course theme.; **flowing conversational style; pushed your thinking** and challenged 'taken for granted assumptions' about who you are as an educator and leader, your practices, and the larger context of schooling. **Writing is very good.** **79-75**

Beginning attempts at demonstrating awareness of the relationship **between one's own personal experiences and issues raised by classmates and readings**. Has some examples of evidence of these qualities **makes autobiographical insights and links** to the main questions that frame each day's course theme.; **flowing conversational style; pushed your thinking** and challenged 'taken for granted assumptions' about who you are as an educator and leader, your practices, the nature of knowledge and the larger context of schooling. **Writing is good** **74-70**

Is moving towards evidence of these qualities; i.e. **makes autobiographical insights and links** to the main questions that frame each day's course theme. **flowing conversational style; pushed your thinking** and challenged 'taken for granted assumptions' about who you are as an educator and leader, your practices and the larger context of schooling. **Writing is minimally acceptable.**

Journal 1 - July 18

Journal 2 - July 19

Journal 3 - July 20

Journals are due on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and are worth 10% each for a total of 30% of the course mark.

2) Reading reflections - 20% Daily. Each day you will be asked to read pieces of text and reflect on them using a Save The Last Word For Me (STLW4M) strategy, Post It notes or other literacy strategies. These will be collected on a daily basis and will allow you to show how these texts resonates with your ideas of, and experience with leadership.

3) Final Synthesis Paper – 50%. Due July 22, 2011

During the course you will be synthesizing ideas and theorizing about leadership practices for Inuit in positions of educational leadership. As a final assignment you will synthesize your learning into a paper between 5-8 pages that address the three course intentions. You will use your on-going reflections, notes, conversations and journals throughout the course to build your final synthesis paper. On the final day you will be invited to share your key ideas with people in a small group setting.

615 Educational Leadership Name _____

Ability to write autobiographically answering the questions "Who am I as an educator/leader"? Able to name the experiences that have shaped your understanding of leadership. Able to show awareness of one's own personal experience and issues raised in class.

Outstanding	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Acceptable
9.9.....8.5	8.4.....8	7.9.....7.5	7.4.....7	6.9.....6.0

Able to critical reflect upon and weave insights about leadership from an Inuit perspective from course readings, experiences and class discussions.

Outstanding	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Acceptable
9.9.....8.5	8.4.....8	7.9.....7.5	7.4.....7	6.9.....6.0

Able to reflect on the knowledge and particularly the skills and attitudes necessary for effective leadership (self-awareness, communication skills, awareness of power and privilege, team building and relationship skills)

Outstanding	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Acceptable
9.9.....8.5	8.4.....8	7.9.....7.5	7.4.....7	6.9.....6.0

Able to critically reflect upon the context of schooling in Nunavut and the articulate the vision of education for Nunavut.

Outstanding	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Acceptable
9.9.....8.5	8.4.....8	7.9.....7.5	7.4.....7	6.9.....6.0

Able to articulate a working definition of what educational leadership for Nunavut schools

Outstanding	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Acceptable
9.9.....8.5	8.4.....8	7.9.....7.5	7.4.....7	6.9.....6.0

Ability to write in a flowing, conversational style that is easy for the reader to follow.

Outstanding	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Acceptable
9.9.....8.5	8.4.....8	7.9.....7.5	7.4.....7	6.9.....6.0

Sunday July 17, 2011 *How do we get ready to learn together?*

- Community circle – introductions
- Charades – ice breakers, relationship building
- Base groups –
- Community agreement
- Brainstorm about leadership
- Problem-solving activity
- Course outline

Homework

- Sharing Pioneering Change (Sheila Watt-Cloutier) STLW4M
- timeline of leadership

Monday July 18 – Day 2. *What is the vision for Nunavut schools*

- Qulliq lighting
- Elizabeth check-in
- Community circle
- Sharing timelines – pulling themes, sharing commonalities with others. (small group – large group)
- Sharing Pioneering Change (Sheila Watt-Cloutier) – Quick Write
- Vision for Nunavut schools – Jigsaw Background/IQ Philosophy, IQ Principles and Language Protection Act
- Education Act
- In-class reading and Circles Activity – Life stories of Inuit Leaders: Inuit Voices in the Making of Nunavut and article by Zebedee Nungak (from Nunavik: Inuit-Controlled Education in Arctic Quebec)
- Video clip from Arnait Nipingit
- Experiential Activity #2 and debriefing and *leadership log entry*
- Reflection and individual Quick Write

Homework

- Reading Balancing Traditional and Modern Values (Donna Adams p. 19) and do 1 STLW4M
- Jigsaw activity- Pick an article to read from Arnait Nipingit and write a STLW4M.
- Journal #1

Tuesday July 19- Day 3 *What are the knowledge, skills and attitudes that create effective leadership – communication and self-awareness*

- Qulliq
- Elizabeth check-in
- Community circle
- Sharing Balancing Traditional and Modern Values (Donna Adams p. 19)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication skills – Partner, small group, role playing • Self –knowledge and awareness (Leadership and Self-Deception)– some tools (MI, Myers Briggs) • Experiential activity #3 and debriefing and <i>leadership log entry</i> • Sharing Jigsaw reading from Arnait Nipingit <p>Homework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Chapter 1 & 2 from <u>What Every Principal Should Know About Cultural Leadership (3 Posts It)</u> • Journal #2.
<p>Wednesday July 20 – Day 4 <i>What are the knowledge, skills and attitudes that create effective leadership – awareness of power, cultural capital and team-building</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qulliq • Elizabeth check-in • Community circle • Sharing chapter readings • Flower of power and cultural capital • Team-building activities • Experiential activity #4 and debriefing and <i>leadership log entry</i> • Revisit autobiographical timeline with deeper self-knowledge <p>Homework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 3, 4, 5 in <u>What Every Principal Should Know About Cultural Leadership (3 Posts It)</u> • Journal #3
<p>Thursday July 21 – Day 5 <i>What are the knowledge, skills and attitudes that create effective leadership – self-care and support systems? What is my evolving working definition of leadership for Nunavut schools?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qulliq • Elizabeth check-in • Community circle • Chapter sharing from <u>What Every Principal Should Know About Cultural Leadership</u> in class • Reading The <u>Art of Connecting People</u> (Elisapee Sheutiapik) and sharing. • Quote from <u>A Single Shard</u> • Wellness – why it is important given colonialism, and why it is particularly important in leadership. • What are stressors, how do we deal with them? Why is self-care important in leadership? What has been helpful in terms of dealing with stress. • Support systems – sharing strategies • Shared leadership and sustainability (managing energy, recognizing gifts) • Looking ahead – planning course celebration • Review and brainstorming for final synthesis paper – • In class Writing Workshop <p>Looi</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4:00 IQ and High Schools video <p>Homework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working on final synthesis paper – open evening session with instructors if necessary
<p>Friday July 22 – Day 6 <i>What is my evolving working definition of leadership for Nunavut schools?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qulliq • Elizabeth check-in • Community circle? • Unpacking IQ and High Schools video • Linda Smith – <u>25 Decolonizing projects</u> • Sharing of synthesis papers in affinity groups • Large group sharing • Course evaluation • Celebration
<p>Individual Check –ins and feedback 3:30 -5:30 on Friday 9-12 on Saturday morning</p>

Course Topics:

- The interplay of the key concepts within critical theory, critical pedagogy and critical thinking
- The role of power and agency within curriculum development and the teaching/learning process
- The role of community, language and culture in schooling from sociocultural and sociostructural perspectives
- The possible connections between Critical Pedagogy and the educational practices of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit
- Critical Autobiography as a practice of educational freedom

Key Questions:

1. How have my own schooling experiences shaped my worldview and more specifically my educational practice and my beliefs about teaching and learning?
2. What knowledge counts and what counts as knowledge?
3. In looking at selected educational/research texts, situations, or lived experiences who is speaking, from what place and with what power and to what effect?
4. What are the possible ways in which I can work more equitably as an educator, leader, and community member?

Assignments and Assessment:

Where appropriate, students will be assessed using the M.Ed. rubric (see attached). Each assignment will be assessed using the criteria listed. A letter grade plus comments will be provided.

A passing grade for ED 619N requires:

- successful completion of all assignments listed below
- preparation for and active participation in all pre-course work and face-to-face classes

A. Pre-Course Work

1. Reader Notebooks (based on the course text: *Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom* by bell hooks.)

DUE: October 31st

Choose a small bound notebook for this assignment. The main part of the notebook is for book chapter reflections and the back of the book is for keywords/concepts that you need clarified.

- Please read the following Teachings (chapters) from the bell hooks text: *Introduction, Teaching 1-5, Teaching 7-11, Teaching 14-18, Teaching 32.*
- Mark up your bell hooks text as you read in whatever way works for you to remember the good bits for writing in your notebook and discussion later. (I am a bit of a highlighter queen but perhaps you like margin notes?)
- After reading a chapter write a short 1/2 page reflection or response to bell hooks in your reader notebook. Write back to the author. What questions do you have? What memories do her stories stir up for you? What connections, personal or professional can you make between her life and yours?
- At the back of the notebook, write down any key words/concepts (and the page number beside them) that you would like clarified.
- A complete assignment has **17** Reader notebooks entries (corresponding to the chapters listed above)

Assessment Criteria: Quality and quantity of notebook entries based on questions noted above in assignment description.

2. Reading and Knowledge Forum Participation

Please read <http://www.psu.edu/dept/jrre/articles/22-7.pdf> *Discourses of Cultural Relevance in Nunavut Schooling* by M. Lynn Aylward and respond on Knowledge Forum. In addition to your own contributions, be sure to make attempts to further the learning of your classmates.

The following questions are meant to guide your thinking/reading/responding processes.

- What does culturally relevant schooling mean to you in your practice?
- What might “place-based” education efforts offer Nunavut education?
- What does it mean to truly engage in community-based education?

Assessment Criteria: Quality and quantity of active contributions to the online forum based on a comprehensive consideration of the reading.

B. Critical Pedagogue Chat: Discussion Group Facilitation

DUE: Sign Up for dates will be completed at our first meeting. Small group discussions will occur daily

In your small group, lead a discussion based on your chosen quotation from an optional bell hooks “Teaching” chapter (Teaching 6, 12,13,19-31), Paulo Freire excerpt (choices will be available in class), or other relevant critical pedagogue excerpts (references will be provided).

The assignment consists of your preparation and facilitation of the group discussion.

- Choose a text from the above-mentioned resources, read it and select a key quotation that you think might ignite conversation.
- Copy your quote on chart paper for display
- Write up some key questions to begin the discussion (also include these on your chart)

- Initiate and facilitate discussion amongst your group members

Assessment Criteria: choice of appropriate text, preparation of key questions and active facilitation of the small group.

C. Critical Autobiography

DUE: Final draft due: November 6, 2011

As educators we know the power of stories and oral history has played a significant role in the establishment of Indigenous knowledges worldwide. As bell hooks states in your text,

Stories help us to connect to a world beyond the self.... what becomes evident is that in the global community life is sustained by stories. A powerful way we connect with a diverse world is by listening to the different stories we are told. These stories are a way of knowing. Therefore they contain both power and the art of possibility. We need more stories [p. 53]

Throughout our week together, we will share stories from our life experience that help ask and answer some of the key questions listed earlier in this outline that are at the foundation of critical pedagogy. Informed by your previous learning (both formal and informal), you will be encouraged to critically reflect on your stories and write up to final edited draft, one particular autobiographical narrative through a process of daily writing, editing and conferencing.

Assessment Criteria: coherence of storyline, connections to critical pedagogy and key questions of the course, quality of the writing/drafting process.

Related Reading (FYI, for your own exploration at another time)

Pedagogy of the Oppressed (2000 -20th anniversary edition), Paulo Freire

Pedagogy of Hope (1992), Paulo Freire

Pedagogy of the Heart (2000), Paulo Freire

Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope, bell hooks (2003)

Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom, bell hooks (1994)

Ideology, Culture and the Process of Schooling, (1981), Henri Giroux

UPEI M.Ed. Grade Guide

The following Generic Holistic Rubric is provided to guide instructors and students in their assessment of performance at the Masters level. This rubric has been researched using examples from other high education institutions and demonstrates coherency to those institutions that also seek to ensure students are capable of high levels of achievement.

A+ (91-100%) - Exceptional work for a Masters student

Creativity and originality: exceptionally creative and original, student very clearly and convincingly articulates how his or her work makes a contribution to knowledge, practice or theory at some level, uses primary sources and does not overuse quotations

Argument: exceptionally thorough, very well-reasoned, very well-argued, insightful, clear.

Writing: very well-written (uses proper English grammar and always adheres to APA style guidelines), writing is exceptionally clear, fluid and cohesive, there is outstanding sophistication in writing style.

Methodology and analysis: methodologically sound (if appropriate) and shows a highly incisive understanding and exceptional evaluation and analysis of salient issues; an exceptional ability to draw relevant comparisons / examples.

Knowledge: exceptional mastery/understanding of relevant content/concepts/issues.

A (85-90%) – Excellent work for a Masters student

Creativity and originality: creative and original, uses mostly primary sources and does not overuse quotations, student articulates how his or her work makes a contribution to knowledge, practice or theory at some level

Argument: thorough, well-reasoned, well-argued, insightful, clear.

Writing: well-written (almost always uses proper English grammar and generally adheres to APA style guidelines), writing is generally fluid and cohesive, there is good sophistication in writing style.

Methodology and analysis: methodologically sound (if appropriate) and shows a highly incisive understanding and excellent evaluation and analysis of salient issues; an excellent ability to draw relevant comparisons / examples.

Knowledge: solid mastery/understanding of relevant content/concepts/issues.

A- (80-84%) Strong work for a Masters student (work is very good but could be improved)

Creativity and originality: mostly creative and original, uses many primary sources but includes some secondary sources and generally uses quotations appropriately, student articulates how his or her work makes a contribution to knowledge, practice or theory at some level but this articulation could be stronger and more convincing

Argument: thorough, well-reasoned, well-argued, insightful, clear.

Writing: well-written (generally uses proper English grammar and generally adheres to APA style guidelines, with a few inconsistencies), writing is generally fluid and cohesive, there is generally good sophistication in writing style.

Methodology and analysis: methodologically sound (if appropriate) and shows a good understanding and evaluation and analysis of salient issues; a strong and consistent ability to draw relevant comparisons / examples.

Knowledge: mastery/understanding of relevant content/concepts/issues.

B+ (77-79%) - Competent work for a Masters student

Work at this level is competent, but neither exceptionally strong nor exceptionally weak. A few errors, inconsistencies, or other problems may be present.

Creativity and originality: often creative and original, uses some primary sources but includes some secondary sources and generally uses quotations appropriately, student articulates how his or her work makes a contribution to knowledge, practice or theory at some level but this articulation could be a lot stronger and much more convincing

Argument: thorough, well-reasoned, well-argued, insightful, clear.

Writing: well-written (generally uses proper English grammar, but there are a few errors; generally adheres to APA style guidelines, with a few errors and inconsistencies), writing is more or less fluid and cohesive, writing style is good.

Methodology and analysis: methodologically sound (if appropriate) and shows mostly adequate understanding and evaluation and analysis of salient issues; adequate ability to draw relevant comparisons / examples.

Knowledge: competence with relevant content/concepts/issues.



Ed 616N Action Research in Education Winter 2012



Calendar Description

In this course, students explore ways in which teachers can systematically examine their own classroom practices using action research strategies. Emphasis is placed on issues such as topic selection, methodology, data collection and analysis, and interpretation of results. This process of inquiry is directed towards reflective practice.

Prerequisite: Education 611 or permission of instructor. Hours of Credit: 3

Instructors

Sandy McAuley Email: amcauley@upei.ca	Shelley Tulloch Contact information has been removed for privacy.	Marg Joyce
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Office Hours

Each instructor has responsibility for a home group of students from specific communities. Each will maintain “office hours” during which s/he will be available by phone/Skype for immediate contact. In normal circumstances outside of “office hours”, you can expect a response to a phone/email/Knowledge Forum inquiry to an instructor within 24 hours. Although each instructor will be primarily concerned with the students in his/her home group, all instructors are more than willing to talk to any student in the course.

Note that PEI time = Qikiqtani/Nunavik + 1 hour = Kivalliq + 2 hours = Kitikmeot + 3 hours

Course Format

Ed 616N will be offered online over a 12-week period from January 3 to March 26, 2012. Each instructor will have a primary responsibility for a group of about 6-7 students. The course text will be supplemented with online readings and multimedia resources.

Course Overview

Ed 611N, Introduction to Research Methods in Education explored a wide range of educational research methods, designs, and techniques. It also critiqued them for the extent to which they

did—or did not—reflect the indigenous values outlined by those such as Linda Smith and the Inuit values put forth in *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*. You completed the course by putting your learning together in the form of a draft research proposal.

Ed 616N, Action Research in Education, goes one step further. As Mertler points out in the preface to the course text, “action research is not simply a means of conducting applied research. It is also a mechanism for engaging educators in reflective practice and customizing professional development opportunities in order to capitalize on the unique interests of individual educators or teams of educators” (p. xiii). In other words, while consistent with the principles of quality research that we explored in Ed 611N, action research is especially suitable for educators looking to make informed decisions to improve their own practice. It will also encourage you to reflect critically on your own research options and choices.

Ed 616N explores how action research differs from other research methods and considers its appropriateness for educational contexts in Nunavut/Nunavik. Based on the work completed in Ed 611N, you will refine your research proposals for submission to the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee at UPEI and the Nunavut Research Institute (NRI) for ethical approval. You will also develop a timeline for gathering and analyzing data prior to writing up the final course project in Ed 618N, Leadership and Reflective Practice, in the winter of 2013.

This is the first course in the program for which your work will be prepared for external audiences, the research ethics boards of the Faculty of Education of UPEI and NRI. Submissions to agencies such as these require the highest standards of writing and the clearest presentation of ideas. As a result, you should be prepared for several rounds of writing, reviewing, and revising as an integral part of this course.

As with other courses in the Nunavut MEd, Ed 616N is consistent with principles of decolonization, *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*, and knowledge building. All of us—instructors and MEd candidates alike—are members of a community in which we take responsibility for contributing to our individual and collective understanding of the ideas and issues we explore, improving, extending and refining them wherever possible. Contributions in Inuktitut and English are equally acceptable, but the final research proposal must be submitted in English.

Course Outcomes

By the end of Ed 616N, you will know and understand:

- similarities and differences between action research and other research methodologies;
- components of an acceptable research proposal;
- the role of ethics in conducting education research;
- processes of ethical review for research conducted in Nunavut/Nunavik;
- role and processes of peer review in conducting research;
- the relationship between action research, indigenous methodologies, and *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*.

You will also enhance your skills in:

- locating and critiquing relevant research literature;

- critically responding to peers' writing;
- incorporating feedback into revising your writing;
- rewriting, revising, and editing to achieve high writing standards using APA guidelines.

Course requirements

To demonstrate your mastery of the learning outcomes for Ed 616N, you will:

1. Complete weekly readings and participate in online discussions and assignments;
2. Prepare a draft action research proposal. The draft proposal may deal with the same research question you proposed in Ed 611N, or it may be something new. If you wish to investigate a topic different from the one you explored in Ed 611N, be prepared to finalize your choice before Week 2 of the course begins on January 10. You are strongly encouraged to discuss a change of research topic with your instructor. As with Ed 611N, the research proposal will be prepared in MS-Word according to APA style and consist of the following sections:
 - Statement of the Problem
 - Significance of the Problem
 - Purpose of the Study
 - Procedure
 - Research Location
 - Participants
 - Data Collection
 - Researcher's Role and Ethics
 - Data Collection Instrument
3. Conduct a review of a peer's action research proposal;
4. Respond to reviews from instructors and peers and use the reviews to revise and finalize your proposal;
5. Submit applications to the Nunavut Research Institute and the Research Ethics Board of the UPEI Faculty of Education, and satisfy all requirements for ethical approval;
6. Develop an action plan and timeline for gathering and analyzing data.

Assessment

Marks for assignments will be assigned according to the following breakdown:

	Description	Due Date	Per cent
1.	Weekly research journal	Each week. Marks are assigned for : <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 initial contribution (3 marks),• reading peers' contributions (3 marks),• 2 follow-up contributions (3 marks), and• timeliness (1 mark). Timeliness consists of an initial posting by Saturday of each week and 2 follow-up contributions by the Monday at the end of each week.	20
2.	Literature Review	January 23	10
3.	Draft Research Proposal for blind peer review	February 13	10
4.	Peer review of proposals	February 20	5
5.	Revised proposal	February 27	25
6.	UPEI Ethics submission	March 5	10
7.	NRI Ethics submission	March 12	10
8.	Action Plan Timeline	March 19	10
	Total		100

Notes

- All assessment criteria are mandatory and each must be completed to a satisfactory level to pass the course.
- A final mark of 70% or better is required to successfully complete a graduate course. Ten per cent of each assignment's grade is assigned for timeliness.
- Successful completion of a graduate level online course requires a minimum commitment of 6 to 8 hours work per week.

It is your responsibility to inform the instructor as soon as possible if extenuating circumstances (sickness, family responsibilities, etc.) interfere with your ability to keep up with the course. Failure to do so may result in a loss of marks. Extensions will be given only for exceptional and serious circumstances.

Resources

Core Resources

Mertler, C.A. (2012). *Action research: Improving schools and empowering educators*, 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Supplemental Resources

Online Resources

Because this course will be conducted at a distance, online resources will be integral to your participation and success. These include:

Knowledge Forum <http://kforum.upei.ca>

Course Text Supplementary Material <http://www.sagepub.com/mertler3study/default.htm>

UPEI Research Ethics Form http://research.upei.ca/files/research/REB_app_2009.pdf

NRI Research Ethics Form

<http://www.nri.nu.ca/apps/forms/displayFormDetails2.aspx?ofd=social2>

Additional resources will be identified and posted in the Knowledge Forum database as necessary.

Course Schedule

Theme	Week/Date	Topics	Reading
Theme 1: Revisiting and Refining Proposals	1 Jan 3-9	Confirm research topic	Mertler, Chapter 1
	2 Jan 10-16	Statement & Significance of Problem Begin Literature Search	Mertler, Chapter 2
	3 Jan 17-23	Purpose of Study	Mertler, Chapter 3
	4 Jan 24-30	Procedure	Mertler, Chapter 4
	5 Jan 31-Feb 6	Researcher's Role & Ethics	Mertler, Chapter 5
	6 Feb 7-13	Draft Proposal Complete	Mertler, Chapter 6
	7 Feb 14-20	Peer Reviews Complete	Peer's draft proposal
	8 Feb 21-27	Begin preparing ethics and revising proposal	
Theme 2: Ethical Concerns	9 Feb 28-Mar 5	Proposal Complete	
	10 Mar 6-12	Ethics to UPEI and NRI	
Theme 3: Looking Ahead	11 Mar 13-19	Action Plan & Timeline	Mertler, Chapter 7
	12 Mar 20-26	Course reflection	Mertler, Chapter 8
Closure	April 5		

Master of Education Leadership in Learning (Nunavut)

ED 617N Issues in Leadership

Instructors: Jukeepa Hainnu, Elizabeth C. G. Fortes & Cathy Lee
(Joanne Tompkins – course advisor)

July 8-13, 2012

(An educational leader for Nunavut) is a person who is willing to learn, relearn, unlearn . . . and be open to all learning. Be an instructional leader. Be able to listen. Be able to empower other people. Be able to build relationships . . . Be open-minded. Be human. Be a role model. Have a vision and when you have a vision convey it to others so that your vision is shared by all. Not only you have a vision but your vision needs to go to everyone to be agreed upon. . . Know your limits and take care of yourself.

Lena Metuq, 2010, p. 1 Nunavut Educational Leadership Reflective Survey

Course Description

ED617N Issues in Leadership

In this course, students will continue to focus on and re-examine the themes explored in the Educational Leadership course taken last summer with a view to further delving into current issues in leadership. Emphasis will be placed on “what needs to be done” in Nunavut/Nunavik schools and what does leadership look like from Inuit perspective in order to “get things done” for Nunavut/Nunavik students. We will explore current issues in educational leadership through the lens of Inuit educational leadership (Inuit ways of knowing, being and doing) for Inuit schools and consider the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for effective leadership in Nunavut/Nunavik.

Instructors' Contact Information

THIS CONTENT HAS BEEN REMOVED FOR PRIVACY REASONS

Purpose of the Course

- to critically reflect on, re-explore, discuss and write about the vision for education in Nunavut
- to practice knowledge, skills and share attitudes required to enhance leadership for Nunavut/Nunavik schools
- to develop a working definition of educational leadership and an assessment of current practices with a view to identifying strengths and articulating needs
- to examine and reflect on current issues in educational leadership for Inuit schools
- to develop a “sewing kit” of strategies and to explore best practices in leadership for Nunavut/Nunavik schools
- to continue to expand on the concept of “voice” and to explore strategies and to practise skills around strengthening and facilitating voice

Key Questions

- What are Inuit ways of knowing, being and doing in relationship to leadership, in particular educational leadership?
- What are Inuit women's ways of knowing, being and doing in relationship to educational leadership?
- What are the current issues in educational leadership for Nunavut/Nunavik schools?
- How as Inuit educators and educational leaders for Nunavut schools will we collectively meet the mandate of the Nunavut Department of Education to support the development of “able human beings”?
- What is your role in creating an Inuit educational system based on Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit?
- How will you work to create a decolonized, Inuit postcolonial educational system in Nunavut and Nunavik and what is your role in this process?
- In what ways will I collectively and personally ensure “voice”?
- How will I develop and sustain a personal and professional support system for self and others?
- How will I put my learning into my practice?

Course Texts and Readings

1. McComber, L. & Partridge, S. (2010). *Arnait Nipingit. Voices of Inuit Women in Educational Leadership and Governance*. Iqaluit, NU: Nunavut Arctic College Press. (text used in last summer course)

2. Grogan, M & Shakeshaft, C. (2010). *Women in Educational Leadership*. Boston, MA: University Press.

This text is available from Amazon.com as an ebook (in download form) for \$14.30 or in paperback form from Chapters.ca for \$29.00. I would recommend getting the ebook. You will need to create an account on Amazon.com and to download a program called Kindle for PC/MAC. **Please order this book immediately and bring it with you to our classes in Iqaluit in July.**

Please also bring a copy of your final synthesis paper from you course last summer with Joanne and Lena as we will be revisiting the paper and reviewing it for further reflection.

Additional Readings

A variety of additional readings from a variety of sources will be provided during this course. If possible, additional readings will be made available on-line through Knowledge Forum as well.

We will share and discuss evaluation of assignments during our first afternoon session.

1. Pre-Course Assignment – Due June 29/12 10% of course mark

Reflection on the your final synthesis paper from last summer's course with Lena and Joanne to be posted on Knowledge Forum

2. Daily Reflections/Learning Journal - Handed in twice over the course –dates to be determined 20% of course mark

A key component of this course is to develop our critical & reflective thinking as educators. This will be done through our readings, discussions, dialogue, special guest presentations, case studies, role playing activities and presentations as well as through self reflection and introspection.

Each day you will respond to one or two key ideas/reflection questions from the class and/or readings. The journal is highly autobiographical and a place in which you will write to learn and write to reflect on our own thinking. The central question you will be writing about is in what ways is our learning helping us to unlearn, learn and relearn ideas about educational leadership.

3. Reading Reflections – Due Daily 10% of course mark

Each day participants will read parts of texts and reflect upon them using a variety of literary strategies such as 1, 2, 3 summary, Leave the Last Word For Me, Post Its, etc. These will be collected on a daily basis and will allow participants to show how the texts resonate with their ideas of and experience with leadership

4. Case Studies/Collaborative Groups 10% of final mark

During the course, we will explore a number of current issues in educational leadership. Through the use of case studies, participants will have opportunities and hands on experiences using various strategies used by school teams in Nunavut schools such as solution circles, solution seeking, appreciative inquiry and school team meetings to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes around critical issues. Participants will work in a variety of collaborative groups as they continue to build relationships, get to know each other and work on activities and tasks together. In a graduate program that stresses the development of leadership skills, everyone will be involved in leading small groups, presenting information, demonstrating critical thinking and reflection and expressing their opinions on the topics of the day.

5. Role Playing Activities 10% of final mark

As with the case studies, participants will have a number of opportunities to take part in role playing activities using the model of a school team and the strategies of solution circles, solution seeking and appreciative inquiry to examine current issues in educational leadership for Nunavut/Nunavik.

6. ELP Phase 2 Presentations Review 10% of final mark

Participants have been invited to learn with and from the students involved in the Nunavut Educational Leadership Program. Phase Two ELP participants have best practices in NU leadership presentation as one of their assignments. You will attend one presentation either on Tuesday June 10/12 or Wednesday June 11/12 and write a review of the presentation to be shared on Knowledge Forum. The presentation chosen to review is to be a topic in relation to your thesis.

7. Position Paper & Sewing Kit Presentation 30% of final mark

Position Paper: Over the course of the week, you will continue to reflect on your views of educational leadership through the lens of the themes and topics presented during the MEd courses and will bring together your learning in a final position paper related to your learning and insights during this course. The position paper will focus on your view of the ideal educational leader for NU/Nunavik schools for Inuit students and how you would see yourself as an educational leader.

Sewing Kit: A central part of learning at the Masters of Education level is critical thinking and the ability to take information, interpret, analyze, synthesize and critically reflect on that information with a view to incorporating that knowledge into one's own practice. The sewing kit has been chosen as an analogy for the journey as an educational leader and as the "tool kit" of strategies required by educational leaders for Nunavut/Nunavik schools for Inuit students. You will create a sewing kit containing items that will be required for your role as an educational leader and will share the significance of the sewing kit and the items you have chosen to put into it. You will prepare a 15 minute presentation to share your sewing kit along with your position paper at the end of the course. Guests may be invited to the final presentations and this will be negotiated with the class. In keeping with our community agreements of use of language of choice, presentations may be in Inuktitut, Inuinnaqtun, English or French or a combination of languages.

M.Ed. Program for Nunavut. Leadership in Learning.

Course Outline

Education 632N Leadership in Languages and Literacies Iqaluit July 2012

Course Instructors: Naullaq Arnaquq, Jim Cummins, and Elizabeth Fortes

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“Language is not an object to be preserved, it is a psychological tool, a way of capturing and organizing the world and one’s experience of it...it is always “language-in-use”.

- Jaypeetee Arnakak

Course Description and Objectives

- This course is intended to support you in developing your leadership practice, both individual and collective, in the field of language and literacy.
- We will examine and discuss what kinds of interactions both in-school and out-of-school are effective in promoting language and literacy abilities in both Inuktitut and English.
- The course will draw on the concrete experiences of “languages-in-use” that you have had and want to share.
- The course will also focus on research and theory that has been developed internationally and in the specific context of Nunavut.
- We will look at these issues from the perspectives of parents, educators, and policy-makers in Nunavut.

Course Instructional Approach using both English and Inuktitut

We would like to model the fact that both Inuktitut and English are legitimate languages within Nunavut by ensuring that they are also legitimate within the course. So we *encourage you to use Inuktitut both in your written responses and in oral communication within small groups and the course as a whole*. There is no shortage of fully bilingual participants who will be able to paraphrase what you have said for Jim and/or Elizabeth who, unfortunately, don’t speak the language.

The Importance of Seeing Ourselves as Knowledge-Generators

One of the “messages” that Naullaq and Jim will bring to the course is that teachers need to create spaces in their classrooms to encourage and enable their students to become generators of knowledge rather than just passively internalizing pre-existing knowledge. The knowledge that exists within our communities and in our own experience is just as important as the research and theory that has been developed elsewhere. True learning happens when we put the two sources of knowledge together to generate new insights and understandings. So in talking about *leadership in language and literacy*, we will emphasize the importance of connecting literacy to students’ lives and creating spaces where students’ identities can be affirmed.

Using Knowledge Forum Before and During the Course

So, again, we would like to try and model this approach within the course. We will use Knowledge Forum (KF) to create a space for interaction before the face-to-face course gets underway. Sometime before June 28th, we would like you to write and post in KF your own ***Language and Literacy Autobiography***. In other words, you would reflect on issues such as:

- how you learned Inuktitut in your home and/or in school,
- how you learned English,
- what your feelings were towards the two languages as you grew up,
- what helped you acquire literacy in both,
- who were the most important influences in helping you become bilingual and biliterate
- what functions do each of the languages serve in your life today, etc.

We will give you some guidelines and examples of language biographies, and both Naullaq and Jim will post their own language and literacy autobiographies in KF by June 24th. Again, you should feel free to use whichever language (or both of them) you are most comfortable in as you write your language and literacy autobiography. It is your experience and your narrative, so use as much or as little space as you want in writing it up.

Before the start of the course, we would like you to read through the autobiographies in KF and respond to one of them. This could be just a paragraph, or longer if you prefer, to connect your own experience with the experiences of one of the other participants in the course.

In creating your language and literacy autobiographies, you are engaging in legitimate research. You are articulating the knowledge that is embedded in your own experience and making it explicit for yourself and others.

It is important to connect this autobiographical research with more formal research, and the theory that comes from this research. Both forms of research are legitimate and we deepen our understanding of how language and literacy develop and can be promoted in homes and schools by connecting our own experience with the more formal research.

So the other major activity that we are asking you to do before the course itself gets formally underway is to read a number of articles and chapters that we will post in KF. We will post two sets of resources in KF. One set (listed in bold at the end of this course outline) we would like everybody to read and reflect on (it's a really good idea to take some notes as you read and write up a very short reflection on the article). The second set are background resources (reports, web pages, articles, books, etc.) which we would encourage you to scan and read in more depth anything that is of interest to you.

If you read and reflect on the major articles for the course before we actually meet, then we can use the short amount of time we have together for serious knowledge building. All of the materials in KF will be available during the course so we can go back to them and perhaps read them more deeply in light of the course discussions.

Assignments

As outlined in the previous section, the five assignments are as follows:

1. Write up your own **language and literacy autobiography** and post it in KF by June 28;
2. **Comment on** someone else's **autobiography** by July 2;
3. **Read the core set of articles** posted in KF and browse through the other materials and resources that are in KF. We will set up views in KF to reflect the issues discussed in the core set of articles and we encourage you to post your reflections on these articles in KF both before and during the course.
4. **BOOK SCAN:** For the first 3 days of the course, take home one of the books that we will make available, scan through it and bring back to class some thoughts or reflections related to the book. We don't expect you to read the whole book– just take about 30-45 minutes to get a sense of what the book is all about and make some notes that you can talk about in small groups in the following day's class.
5. **CONFERENCE PRESENTATION:** Working in pairs, prepare a "conference presentation" for the final day of class. We will provide some time on Days 3 and 4 to enable you to get this conference presentation together. It should be about 15 minutes long and you can present it either as an oral presentation alone, or using PowerPoint or posters to get across your message. We have generated a number of topics that you could choose from, or you could suggest an alternative topic to Naullaq and Jim that you would like to present on. Your presentation should reflect some of the knowledge that you have gained as a result of your own reflections, your reading of course material, and your discussions with other participants and Naullaq, Jim, and Elizabeth. Here are some suggested topics:
 - Create a school improvement plan for your school incorporating an evidence-based bilingualism and biliteracy policy;
 - Narratives of our collective experience: What have you learned about language and literacy development and teaching from your own experience and that of your classmates?
 - Create a bilingual story for elementary school children that incorporates themes relating to bilingualism and biliteracy.
 - Which model or models of bilingual education do you think are most appropriate to develop strong bilingual and biliterate abilities from Kindergarten through high school? Based on the specific conditions in Nunavut and the broader research literature, articulate a plan and its rationale and discuss how it might be implemented.

Publication/Sharing Option

An important aspect of knowledge building is knowledge sharing. We will be doing this within our course community both through KF and face-to-face discussion in class. However, we may also want to share our experiences and insights with others beyond our class. We can do this easily through electronic publication. The goal of all publication is to share experiences and insights with others in order to help them gain their own insights through reflection and "dialogue" with ours.

There are two forms of publication that we would like you to consider:

1. Web-publication of your language and literacy autobiographical narrative; this can be published on OISE's Language-as-Resource (LAR) website which has a special section dedicated to language learning narratives or on some other site of your choosing.

2. Video-taping of your final “conference presentation” that can be archived in KF and made available as a resource for future cohorts of Inuit educators taking the M.Ed. or used as part of a professional development resource package for Inuit educators developing school-based language policies.

Publication through these means is totally optional. But it is very much in the spirit of the course to value our own knowledge and insights and to share them with others.

Evaluation

Evaluation is based on a pass/fail criterion. Passing is based on carrying out the five assignments in a way that develops your own knowledge and shares it with others.

Day 1. Focus—What do we know from our own experience?

- Introductions
- Naullaq and Jim: What we are bringing to the course in terms of our own personal experience, involvement in educational planning, and academic knowledge;
- Small group and whole class discussion of language/literacy autobiographies;
- What we see as the major challenges facing young people in Nunavut today in developing strong bilingualism and biliteracy.

Day 2. Focus—How language and literacy policies have evolved in Nunavut over the past 30 years

Naullaq will take the lead in discussing the major initiatives and programs in the development of language and literacy policies in Nunavut. This will include a review of Inuktitut book creation efforts, the development of curriculum frameworks, external reports, and current developments.

Day 3. Focus—What does the research say about optimal approaches to developing strong bilingual and biliteracy abilities in contexts such as Nunavut?

Jim will take the lead in outlining the major findings of research on topics including bilingual education, language shift, language maintenance and reclamation, literacy teaching, and the role of identity affirmation in school achievement.

Day 4. Focus—What can we as language and literacy leaders do to create effective and inspirational instructional environments that will promote student success?

In both small group and whole class discussion, we will analyze where we are currently with respect to the development of students’ bilingual and biliteracy abilities, where we would like to get to, and how do we move in that direction. We can analyze these issues both with respect to:

- the *content* of the curriculum,
- the kinds of *cognition/thinking skills* we want students to develop,
- the potential ways in which new technological tools might help,
- assessment of students’ progress in both languages,
- the messages communicated to students about the value of their language and culture, and
- the ways in which parents are encouraged to participate in their parents’ education.

Day 5. Conference presentations and course wrap-up.

Key articles and documents that everyone should read:

- Cummins, J. (2001). *Negotiating identities: Education for empowerment in a diverse society*. 2nd Edition. Los Angeles: California Association for Bilingual Education. (Chapters 1 and 3).
- Cummins, J. (2009). Bilingual and immersion programs. In M. Long and C. J. Doughty (Eds.). *The handbook of second language teaching* (pp. 161-181). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Cummins, J. (2011). Literacy engagement—Fueling academic growth for English language learners. *The Reading Teacher*, 65(2), 142-146.
- Department of Education. (no date). *Bilingual Education Strategy for Nunavut: 2004-2008*. Iqaluit: Government of Nunavut.
- Lau, S.M.L. (2012). Re-conceptualizing critical literacy teaching in ESL classrooms. *The Reading Teacher*, (in press).
- Martin, I. (2000). *AAJIIQATIGIINGNIQ: Language of Instruction Research Paper. A report to the Government of Nunavut*. Iqaluit: Government of Nunavut.

Optional resources (for scanning and thinking about)

- Brisk, M. E. & Proctor, C. P. (2012). Challenges and supports for English language learners in bilingual programs. Available at: <http://ell.stanford.edu/papers>.
- Hughes, J. & Robertson, L. (2011). Investigating pre-service teachers’ understandings of critical media literacy. *Language and Literacy*, 13(2), 37-53.
- Hull, G. & Moje, E. B. (2012). What is the development of literacy the development of? Available at: <http://ell.stanford.edu/papers>.
- Quinn, H., Lee, O., Valdés, G. (2012). Language demands and opportunities in relation to next generation science standards for English language learners: What teachers need to know. Available at: <http://ell.stanford.edu/papers>.

University of Prince Edward Island

Faculty of Education

Ed 625 Curriculum: Leadership in Learning

September 8 – October 15, 2012

Instructors: Fiona Walton and Nunia Qanatsiaq-Anoe

Counsellor: Elizabeth Fortes

Facilitators: Cathy McGregor and Darlene Nuqingaq

Telephone: CONTACT INFORMATION REMOVED FOR PRIVACY

Course Location: Rankin Inlet

Time Allocations and Specific Focus: This course includes four weeks of on-line learning using Knowledge Forum, from September 8 – October 8, as well as an intensive, face-to-face, six-day learning experience from October 8 – 14 with six hours of class time scheduled for each day. Classes take place from 8:30-12:00 and from 1:00–4:00 at the Teaching and Learning Centre in Rankin Inlet. Fiona Walton will facilitate the four weeks of on-line learning as well as the first full day of the face-to-face course. During the face-to-face learning experience, Nunia Qanatsiaq-Anoe will facilitate a day and a half of intensive discussion with Elders related to curriculum foundations and priorities in Nunavut. Cathy McGregor and Darlene Nuqingaq will facilitate a day and a half of learning related to curriculum history, development and implementation in Nunavut. They will also focus on some of the most recent directions in curriculum that impact teaching and learning in Nunavut schools.

Elizabeth Fortes will open each afternoon with approximately 30 minutes of reflective time. One hour is scheduled for lunch and 15 minute breaks take place in the morning and afternoon. Evening study halls are planned to include time for reading and working on assignments as well as meetings with instructors.

The group will gather on Monday, October 8 at 7:00 at a location to be identified later in September.

Description

This specialized graduate course in education challenges participants to critically examine curriculum development, implementation, and change from a variety of theoretical perspectives and in light of their past, present, and potential future experiences as educators and educational leaders. The development of a personally and theoretically grounded curriculum position provides a major focus for the course.

Specific Focus

Graduate participants completing *Curriculum: Leadership in Learning* will:

- Compare, contrast, and analyse differing curriculum perspectives and orientations.
- Clarify their beliefs and values about curriculum.
- Relate curriculum to their autobiographies and in particular to their teaching and educational leadership practices.
- Critically examine, analyse and share a curriculum or curriculum initiative.
- Articulate a theoretically critical and personally grounded position regarding curriculum in the context of Nunavut or Nunavik.

Central Questions

1. What is curriculum and how does it impact and shape teaching and learning?
2. Whose perspectives, beliefs and values shape curriculum in Nunavut and Nunavik?
3. Which forces impact the way curriculum and programs are enacted and delivered in Nunavut and Nunavik?
4. What are some of the challenges involved in developing and delivering curriculum based on both Inuit and Qallunaat ways of knowing, being and doing?
5. How can teachers and other educational leaders in Nunavut and Nunavik act as agents of curriculum change in ways that foster and positively influence learners' motivation, engagement, critical capacity, creativity, achievement and well-being?

Required Readings

The following readings will be posted on Knowledge Forum for the first four weeks of this course. A variety of additional readings will be provided during the face-to-face course.

Week One (September 7 - 13):

Eisner, E. (2009). What does it mean to say a school is doing well? In David J. Flinders & Stephen J. Thornton (Eds.), *The curriculum studies reader*. New York: Routledge.

Week Two (September 14 - 20):

Lewthwaite, B. & McMillan, B. (2010). "She can bother me, and that's because she cares": What Inuit students say about teaching and their learning. *Canadian Journal of Education*, Vol. 33 (1), 140-175.

Week Three (September 21 - 27):

Battiste, M. (2000/2002). Maintaining aboriginal identity, language and culture in modern society. In M. Battiste (Ed.), *Reclaiming indigenous voice and vision* (pp. 192 – 208). Vancouver, Canada: UBC Press.

Week Four (September 28 – October 4):

Bishop, R. (2011). Freeing schools and education systems from neo-colonial dominance. In R. Bishop, *Freeing ourselves* (pp. 75 – 120). Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense Publishing.

Four Assignments

- 1. Curriculum Critique:** The curriculum critique offers an opportunity to consider the theoretical framework, development, and implementation of one specific curriculum, program, unit or initiative as well as its potential to meet the needs of the learners it is designed to serve. The critique should be between four and five pages in length (1000 – 1250 words, double spaced, 12 point Times New Roman, APA format). A brief, five-minute summary of the Critique will be presented to colleagues during a presentation on the first day of the face-to-face portion of the course. The Critique is due on Wednesday, October 10 at 8:30am. No extensions will be granted for this assignment that is worth 40% of the marks. A detailed guideline for preparing the critique is provided in Knowledge Forum as well as in the first e-mail about the course.
Allocation of marks: 40
- 2. Curriculum Position – Four Letters:** Four one-page letters (250 words) are completed during the course. These letters provide an opportunity for personal reflection, expression and communication with the instructors and facilitators related to the content of the course. One letter, to be completed after the first day of the course, reflects on the theoretical positions introduced to participants. The second letter reflects on curriculum developed to meet the specific needs of Inuit learners in either Nunavut or Nunavik. The third letter responds to the discussion that will take place with Elders during an intensive, one and a half-day experience during the face-to-face section of the course. Instructors will respond briefly to each of the reflections. The final letter addresses participants' hopes for curriculum in the future and forms a starting position for the Statement of Intent as a Curriculum Leader (see below). Letters may be written to specific individuals, including learners, parents, Elders, school principals, the Minister of Education, to yourself as an educational leader or to your children or relatives. **Allocation of marks:** 20 (5 marks are available for each letter)
- 3. Interaction and Involvement:** Active participation and engagement in small and large group discussions and discourse are considered vitally important elements in this course as the ability to express opinions clearly is a critical element in educational leadership. Each participant will lead and facilitate a small group discussion and contribute verbally within the large group discussions. Participants will maintain a half-page (125 word), daily reflective log for the first five days of the course related to their own participation, interaction and involvement. This log documents engagement and involvement in the course as well as verbal contributions and interactions and reflects on presence and voice during five days of the course. The logs will be submitted to course instructors on day three and day five of the course. The log will be discussed with the lead instructor during the debriefing held with each participant at the end of the course.
Allocation of marks: 20 (4 marks are available for each daily log)
- 4. Statement of Intent as a Curriculum Leader:** This final assignment is presented to the group at the end of the course. It summarizes each participant's intentions in terms of their curriculum leadership in the future by describing the priorities and central focus for their work as an educational leader in the area of curriculum, program, teaching and learning. The statement of intent provides an opportunity for each participant to describe their hopes for the future of curriculum in Nunavut or Nunavik as well as an opportunity to reflect on the role they intend to play in the development and delivery of curriculum in the future. Each participant will have up to five minutes to deliver their Statement of Intent verbally at the end of the course using a presentation format of their own choice. Creative approaches to delivering the Statement of Intent are encouraged. A two-page Statement of Intent will be submitted to instructors but

marks are divided equally between the presentation and the written Statement. **Allocation of marks:** 20 (10 marks for presentation, 10 marks for the paper)

Tentative Schedule for Face-to-Face Course (Please note that this schedule is subject to change)

Monday, October 8: Participants arrive in Rankin Inlet and meet in the evening for a welcome and check-in. The time and location for this welcome will be determined in early September.

Tuesday, October 9 - (Fiona Walton): A discussion related to the questions raised in the course outline will take place and an outline of theoretical orientations to curriculum will be presented. Each participant will share a summary of the Curriculum Critique.

Wednesday, October 10 - (Cathy McGregor and Darlene Nuqingaq): A history of curriculum development in Nunavut will be presented. Issues related to curriculum and implementation of curriculum and programs in Nunavut will be discussed. **Please note that an evening session will take place on Wednesday to discuss the final course in the MEd, ED618 Leadership and Reflective Practice.**

Thursday, October 11 – 8:30 – 12:00: Discussions related to curriculum in Nunavut will continue.

Thursday, October 11 (1:30 – 4:00) and Friday, October 12 (Nunia Qanatsiaq-Anoe with Elders): An intensive day and a half discussion related to the foundations of curriculum in Nunavut will take place.

Saturday, October 13 (Instructional Team): A summary of learning related to curriculum will take place in the morning. Each participant will present a Statement of Intent in the afternoon.

Saturday and Sunday, October 14 (Fiona Walton): Debriefings with the lead instructor, Fiona Walton, will take place on Saturday after classes end and on Sunday at times convenient to participants and instructors. **Thirty minutes will be scheduled with each participant to allow time to discuss the Curriculum course as well as the planned research and final MEd papers.**

Monday, October 15: Travel Day

University of Prince Edward Island
Faculty of Education
ED618N Leadership and Reflective Practice

January 7 –March 31, 2013

Courage is related to voice; it takes courage for some to express their voice. Voice is the use of language to paint a picture of one's reality, one's experiences, one's world....The voice of those who have not been heard is usually embedded with varying degrees of resistance, rage, and a hint of resolve. (Wink, 2005, p. 59)

Instructors: Fiona Walton, Sandy McAuley and Shelley Tulloch
CONTACT INFORMATION REMOVED FOR PRIVACY

Course Description: In this course, participants examine processes of reflective practice such as analytic problem solving and self-assessment. Students research reflective practices that have made positive contributions to learning and leadership.

Organization: This research and writing intensive course is offered by distance using Knowledge Forum. Participants are required to participate in on-line discussions each week and submit portions of their final papers to their instructor on a weekly basis. The final paper for this course is the major assignment and is described in some detail below. This is the last course in the MEd (Nunavut) and marks must be submitted by April. No extensions are possible and all requirements must be met by March 31, 2013. Passing this final course requires submitting and revising both the required writing on Knowledge Forum as well as a section of the final paper each week.

Text: Participants will read Chapter 9 in:

Mertler, C.A. (2012). *Action research: Improving schools and empowering educators*, 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Additional short readings related to the course will also be posted on Knowledge Forum.

Resources Related to Writing: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/1/2/>

Specific Course Requirements

To complete *Leadership and Reflective Practice* you will:

- Develop a draft work plan/progress sheet for your final paper identifying the sections you are planning to write in each week of the course (see the attached template which can be revised to suit each participant).
- Submit your work plan/progress sheet to your personal page on Knowledge Forum by midnight on Sunday, January 13.
- In Knowledge Forum, submit on a weekly basis starting on the week of January 14 - 20, a 150 word critical reflection describing your specific progress with your research and writing (the deadline for critical reflections is midnight on Sunday of each week).
- In Knowledge Form, respond on a weekly basis to two of the critical reflections submitted by your colleagues (the deadline for responses is midnight on Sunday of each week and once a reflection has been commented on twice, you will need to respond to a different critical reflection so that everyone gets some feedback).
- Gather and organize all the information, literature, personal or family experiences, history, background or research data necessary to start writing the final paper based on your research project or chosen topic (final papers are between 20 – 25 pages in length).
- Analyse the data, information, literature, history or experience and prepare clearly substantiated findings, descriptions or narratives that are supported by quotations and opinions.
- Write and submit to your instructor, by e-mail, a section of your final paper each week by midnight on Sunday.
- Edit and revise the writing based on the feedback and re-submit it to your instructor.
- Once your writing is approved by your instructor it can be posted to your personal page in Knowledge Forum where it may be read and commented on by your colleagues.

- Provide constructive feedback, encouragement and support to colleagues who are submitting sections of their papers on Knowledge Forum.
- Towards the end of the course, and in close consultation with your instructor, revise and polish your final paper until it is error-free, clear, logically presented and can be read, understood and enjoyed by readers.
- Present the paper to a carefully selected and trusted colleague or group of colleagues in your community to seek feedback and suggestions for any additional changes.
- Complete final revisions to the paper and submit it by e-mail to your instructor by midnight on March 31, 2013 for final marking.
- Present the paper at the Research Symposium scheduled to take place at Nakasuk School Library in Iqaluit on Sunday, June 2, 2013

Evaluation and Marks: Evaluation and marks are based on the items described below.

- Submit a work plan by midnight on Sunday, January 13 (this is required and no marks are allocated);
- Submit a critical reflection on your weekly progress by midnight on the Sunday of each week of the course (20 marks: Up to 2 marks per week for 10 weeks);
- Respond to two of the critical reflections submitted by your colleagues (20 marks: Up to 1 mark per reflection for 10 weeks);
- Submit a section of your final paper to your instructor by e-mail by midnight on Sunday of each week (APA format is required and no marks are allocated until the final edited paper is submitted);
- Edit and revise the submitted section based on the feedback from your instructor and return it for checking. Once your instructor returns the section of the paper, submit it to your personal page on knowledge Forum. Date all sections and give them a title.
- Submit your final 20 – 25 page paper to your instructor by midnight on Sunday, March 31, 2013 (160 marks).

Publication of Papers: Satisfactory papers will be published on line at UPEI and may also be submitted to scholarly and professional journals or shared at conferences in the future.

Individual Plans and Instructor Support:

In this final course each participant is writing about a different topic and work plans will need to be carefully developed with the guidance of your instructor. These plans will differ for each participant. Instructors will provide direction and support but it is the responsibility of each participant to submit their own work plan for this course by the deadline as well as write, submit and revise sections of their own papers until they reach a standard acceptable for on-line publication.

Guideline for Final Paper: Each paper submitted for credit in this final course will be unique and the content will be different; however, all the papers will share the following common characteristics that will guide instructors in their marking. Please note that the characteristics are based on the rubric you have already seen that is used in the MEd program at UPEI. This rubric is attached to the e-mail about the course and is also posted on Knowledge Forum.

1. **Knowledge:** The paper provides clear evidence that the student is knowledgeable about the topic. The references are up-to-date and relevant and reveal the student's efforts to research the field in order to support the findings in the paper. The concepts and content are based on careful research or reading and knowledge that are drawn from Elders or participants or from personal experience related to the topic.
2. **Theory, Method and Analysis:** The paper clearly describes the purpose, theoretical foundation and methodological approaches chosen for the research and writing. The ethical basis for the research is outlined and the permissions granted for research are mentioned. The methods are carefully described with a rationale for their choice as well as a description of how they were utilized in the research. References substantiate the theories, methodologies and methods that are referred to in the paper
3. **Argument and Structure of the Paper:** The paper presents an argument that is clearly substantiated by the research findings or the narrative. The paper flows logically so that any reader can understand the introduction, the argument or narrative and the conclusions. Headings and sections in the paper guide the reader throughout the paper. The insights in the paper enable the reader to feel they have learned something when they come to the conclusion. A narrative paper is compelling and flows like a story.

4. **Writing:** The paper is clearly written using correct English grammar, coherent paragraphs and follows APA guidelines. The voice of the writer is heard and has a unique tone that is consistent throughout the paper. There is a flow and style to the writing so the reader is engaged and interested in the content or story and enjoys reading the paper. The passion and interest of the writer in the topic is evident in the writing.

To Complete this Course Successfully:

1. Understand that writing requires focused time and a clear plan for your paper.
2. Clear space and time for writing by setting aside two three-hour periods each week. Members of the NTA may be able to allocate PD time for writing
3. Prepare for your literature review by asking Kerri to gather pdf versions of sources and e-mail them to you ASAP. Please contact Kerri immediately. INFORMATION REMOVED FOR PRIVACY
4. Prepare all references in correct APA format right from the start.
5. Ask your instructor for help when it is needed. No questions are too small and no concerns should be set aside when working towards such an important final goal.
6. Write towards the future of Nunavut with the intention of contributing knowledge that is going to be shared with the public.

Groups Established for the Leadership and Reflective Practice Course:

Shelley – Louise, Eva, Susan and Adriana

Sandy – Mary, Lizzie, Rhoda and Bertha

Fiona – Saimanaaq, Vera, Becky, Maggie and Mary Joanne

Appendix G – Course Readings and Resources

Course Book Lists

ED 611N: Introduction to Research Methods in Education *Resources*

Creswell, J. (2008). *Educational research: Planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies*. New York, NY: Zed Books.

Wilson, Shawn. (2008). *Research is ceremony*. Black Point, NS: Fernwood Publishing.

ED 614N: Theories of Research and Learning *Required Text*

Dimitriadis, G. & Kamberelis, G. (2006). *Theory for education*. New York, NY: Routledge.

ED 615N: Educational Leadership *Required Text*

McComber, L. & Partridge, S. (2010). *Arnait Nipingit. Voices of Inuit Women in Leadership and Governance*. Iqaluit, NU: Nunavut Arctic College.

Glanz, J. (2006). *What every principal should know about cultural leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

ED 616N: Action Research in Education *Resources*

Mertler, C.A. (2012). *Action research: Improving schools and empowering educators, 3rd ed.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Course Text Supplementary Material: <http://www.sagepub.com/mertler3study/default.htm>

ED 617N: Issues in Leadership *Required Text*

Grogan, M & Shakeshaft, C. (2010). *Women in Educational Leadership*. Boston, MA: University Press.

McComber, L. & Partridge, S. (2010). *Arnait Nipingit. Voices of Inuit Women in Educational Leadership and Governance*. Iqaluit, NU: Nunavut Arctic College Press.

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Appendix H – Student Research Abstracts

My Grandmother: Amarualik

Vera Arnatsiaq
Igloolik, NU



This paper shares aspects of the life story of my grandmother Rachel Amarualik who lived in Igloolik, Canada from May 9, 1930 until August 24, 2001. She was known as Amarualik and that is the primary name that is used throughout the paper. Amarualik was born on the land called Naujaarjuat, near Repulse Bay and was raised in the traditional, nomadic Inuit way. Amarualik's mother died when she was about four years old and she was raised by her father, Joannasie Uyarak, until he remarried. This paper shares stories told by Rachel Amarualik to her granddaughter, Vera Arnatsiaq. It cover various periods in her life as a young girl on the land, as a teenager who was taken to Arctic Bay to marry a person she had not chosen herself, to life as a young woman, adult and mother living in the community of Igloolik as it grew and developed. The paper contributes to the social history of Igloolik and benefits Rachel Amarualik's family by providing them with a recorded history told in her own words.

Key words: Inuit, traditional, nomadic, social history, Igloolik, Amarualik

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Practices in Entrepreneurship

Rhoda Cunningham
Iqaluit, NU



The research study investigated local Inuit women in business in Iqaluit, Nunavut to explore their uses of traditional knowledge in their private business practice. Data about what *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* principles were applied in the private sector were collected through semi-structured interviews with four participants. They described some of the challenges and positive experiences they have faced as indigenous business owners. Their work practices include efforts to persevere, promote, and revitalize the Inuit language, traditional knowledge, and culture. These practices educate people about the use of *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* in business. The findings show how Inuit women entrepreneurs of Iqaluit have exercised decolonization to overturn misconceptions of how Inuit ways are integrated into the private sector. During this journey, they have created a new business culture.

Key Words: Inuit, women, business practices, *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*, decolonization

***The Different Names of Mosesie
Qappik***

*Mary Etuangat
Pangnirtung, NU*



In the mid-twentieth century, the forced relocation of Inuit from small hunting and fishing camps to larger, more central settlements shattered the longstanding ways of knowing and being that had defined relationships between people and their environment (Qikiqtani Truth Commission, 2010; Nunavut Tungavik Incorporated, 2012). Incorporating family trees, oral history and vivid autobiographical narrative, the author of this paper explores the impact of this relocation in the eastern Qikiqtani on her immediate and extended family. She concludes with the need for healing and the promise that it can happen.

Key Words: Qikiqtani, healing, cultural grief, relocation, Inuit

***Inuit Language Proficiency Courses
at the Nunavut Arctic College***

*Louise Flaherty
Iqaluit, NU*



This study investigates the opinions of Nunavut Arctic College students on the delivery of Inuit language courses. After the advent of the Inuit Language Protection Act and the Official Languages Act, we explore if the only post-secondary institution in Nunavut has enough Inuktitut courses for students to become confident Inuktitut speakers, readers and writers. The study summarizes questionnaire data from the twenty-four current students in the three programs where one Inuit language course is taught. Through the questionnaires, students express their views of their Inuktitut learning opportunities and experience. Drawing on the voice of participants, this study aspires to bring forth the reality faced by students in programs where one Inuktitut course is taught and highlights the reality they face when they leave the program.

Key Words: Inuktitut, language courses, Nunavut Arctic College.

Keeping our Language and Heritage

Lizzie Iblauk

Arviat, NU



Inuktitut remains one of the strongest Aboriginal languages in Canada, a status reinforced by legislation and policy of the Government of Nunavut. Nevertheless, its long-term viability is not without challenges. To understand how they have remained strong in Arviat, a small Inuit community on the western coast of Hudson Bay, the author traces the histories of the people, institutions, and initiatives that have promoted and strengthened Inuit language and heritage from the 1920s to the present. As well being valuable as a community history in its own right, the research may serve as an inspiration for similar successes in other Nunavut communities.

Key Words: Arviat, Inuit language, Inuktitut, Inuit heritage, history

The Role of Songs in Enhancing Literacy

Bertha Iglookyouak

Baker Lake, NU



Students in Nunavut are required to be bilingual and must be fluent in both English and Inuktitut in order to graduate from high school. They must learn to read and write in both languages. The purpose of this research project is to explore the idea of how music can improve or enhance literacy skills in Inuktitut. Participants in this research consist of nineteen grade three students in the Rachel Arngnamaktiq, Elementary School in Baker Lake, Nunavut. I teach this class Inuktitut for a half-day on a daily basis. In this action research project, I gathered Inuktitut children's songs and CD's to enhance the Inuktitut program with music in the classroom for a period of four weeks in February 2013 and maintained a journal documenting the students' responses. Oral aspects of Inuktitut were the most positively impacted, indicating that oracy, as a foundational building block of literacy, can be strengthened by adding music to the program. Strong oral fluency in Inuktitut can lead to improved reading and writing skills. The conclusion of this small study is that listening, speaking, reading and writing could be enhanced by adding music and singing during language arts instruction as a part of the curriculum. Singing songs, especially those with action can also be fun for elementary school aged children who learn best through play.

Key Words: Inuktitut, literacy, elementary level, music, song, dance, oracy

Reflections of an Emerging Inuit Educational Leader

*Mary Joanne Kauki
Kuujjuaq, QC*



This paper provides auto-ethnographic reflections of an Inuk woman detailing her experiences and observations in various leadership roles as an emerging educational leader. The reflections shared in the paper are grounded in mainstream literature and define and describe several forms of unethical leadership practices that do not reflect the collective identity and spirit associated with Inuit ways. The paper includes an analysis of colonial and neo colonial practices that impact Inuit society and education. It describes a personal leadership struggle and expresses hope for decolonization that will lead to more ethical practices that reflect a commitment to the common good.

Key Words: reflection, leadership, unethical practices, colonization.

Pijunnautitaaqpaalliqsimaliqtut: Building Confidence through Cultural and Literacy Skill Development

*Adriana Kusugak
Rankin Inlet, NU*



This paper explores the impact of non-formal, community-based cultural programs with embedded literacy on Inuit participants' confidence. The *Miqqut* program is analyzed as a case study which took place in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut. All participants and Elder instructors are Inuit women. Success factors and outcomes are captured through analysis of participants' and instructors' testimonials. The paper focuses on the impact of confidence that was nurtured during and following the program. It examines how confidence built within the *Miqqut* program enabled the participants to make changes in their lives by enrolling in formal educational programs, entering the workforce and establishing positive, healthy relationships within their families and the community. The paper documents the importance and benefits of non-formal cultural programs with embedded literacy that helped participants gain the confidence and skills to engage in one community in Nunavut in ways they found meaningful.

Key Words: Inuit women, cultural program, literacy, confidence.

Seeking Identity
Saimanaaq Patricia Netser
Arviat, NU



Inuit need to know and understand colonization before they can begin decolonizing. They need to name and recognize the impact of colonization in order to start the process of decolonization. This paper addresses my own need to decolonize by describing some of the colonizing forces that have had a negative impact on my life. These forces include experiences in a hospital while undergoing treatment for tuberculosis as well as my forced attendance at a residential school and the impact of an arranged marriage. It considers my experiences as an Inuit educator in the late sixties and early seventies when the school system focused on an assimilationist agenda. Finally, the paper reflects on my own search for Inuit identity and healing. It describes my work with Elders and how this has enabled me to change, decolonize and understand what has taken place for Inuit over the last 60 years. Many indigenous people all over the world have begun to decolonize and some Inuit in Nunavut are now starting this process, which is prompting a rediscovery and reclaiming of our culture, traditions, and language.

Key Words: colonization, decolonization, Inuit, Nunavut, reclaiming, assimilationist

Sophisticated Cultural Languages of the Inuit in Nunavut
Eva Noah
Baker Lake, NU



This reflection on the loss of sophisticated Inuit oral language is written from my personal experiences while becoming a bilingual Inuk and then making a career as a Nunavut educator. I worked as an Inuktitut teacher, teaching Inuktitut language arts from Kindergarten to the college level (Nunavut Teacher Education Program). The orality of Inuit, especially in Inuktitut language arts, remained rich from generation to generation. Traditional stories have been passed by Inuit from grandparents to their grandchildren. The erosion of Inuktitut has been felt from early missionaries to today's modern working world. Within our transitional society, we are experiencing and living with a transitional language. Changes in families, in schools, in technology, and in culture are leading to the loss of our sophisticated Inuit languages. Language in all areas and fields has a purpose and there were many specific purposes for Inuktitut that no longer exist. Our students in Nunavut need to graduate from high school with pride and a stronger Inuit identity. My goal as an educator and language instructor is to add the more traditional ways of using the oral literature of the Inuit languages into the school system so that we may more effectively teach Inuktitut in Nunavut.

Key Words: Inuktitut, Inuit, language, oral language, loss of language, identity.

The Standardization of Inuktitut in the Education System in Nunavut

Jeela Palluq-Cloutier
Iqaluit, NU



This thesis describes the issues and various efforts involved in the standardization of Inuktitut in Nunavut. It provides a background, history and literature review related to standardization of the language, as well as an autoethnographic account of my own teaching and promotion of Inuktitut. In addition, Inuktitut-speaking teachers across Nunavut were invited to participate by responding to a questionnaire designed to investigate the attitudes of the teachers towards dialectal differences and language standardization in Nunavut. The research serves as a resource to promote understanding and awareness of the seven major dialects in Nunavut as well as provide considerations about which dialect might be most appropriate and readily accepted by Inuit teachers as 'the dialect of instruction' in the future. The survey results provide important information for Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit, the Inuit Language Authority in Nunavut, with a mandate to consider standardization of Inuktitut writing for the Territory. The research also has implications for the Government of Nunavut, and particularly for the Curriculum and School Services Division of the Department of Education and for in-service professional learning for current teachers of Inuktitut. In addition the Nunavut Teacher Education Program and Nunavut Arctic College may find the research useful in their Inuktitut programs. All these agencies have a stake in the successful implementation of new standards for Inuktitut to ensure it is effectively taught to students at all levels across Nunavut. *The National Strategy on Inuit Education* (2011) led by the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami includes the standardization of Inuktitut as a priority across the four Inuit regions in Canada and the results may benefit efforts to implement the National Strategy.

Key Words: Standardization, language, Nunavut, writing, education, Inuktitut

Piniaqsarniq – Practice to Achieve

Maggie Putulik
Rankin Inlet, NU



This paper describes traditional Inuit cultural practices and pedagogy and analyzes historical events that impacted Inuit society on the western coast of the Kivalliq in the central Arctic of Canada. The paper shares childhood memories growing up in one Nunavut community, Chesterfield Inlet (*Igluligaarjuk*), where the author grew up. The paper reflects on various Inuit cultural practices sustained for generations and discusses shifts in values and beliefs that occurred during the early twentieth century as interpreted by the author. This testimonial identifies agents of change who contributed to the colonization of the once nomadic people and concludes with Inuit cultural practices that still exist and are achieved through *piniaqsarniq*. Through the perseverance of core Inuit values and cultural practices, the paper reveals how they can be applied to educational resources that are supporting the cultural survival of Inuit.

Key Words: Inuit, pedagogy, values, practices, *piniaqsarniq*, education.

Bilingual Competencies in a Grade Five Classroom

*Susan Tigullaraq
Iqaluit, NU*



A bilingual education system is a requirement under the current Education Act (Government of Nunavut, 2008) and is supported by many Nunavummiut. Finding effective ways to teach both Inuktitut and English languages needs to be explored and documented. This small research study was conducted with twelve grade five students in an elementary school in Iqaluit, Nunavut. The research combined three methods: observation of students while they were being taught in Inuktitut and English; the completion, by students, of a questionnaire with multiple-choice questions; and a talking circle (focus group) method of asking questions of the participating students. The research revealed that the English language dominates over Inuktitut in classes and homes. It also shows that students have difficulty understanding English at the time they change from primarily Inuktitut instruction to primarily English instruction. Most students prefer to be taught in both languages, because they do not have comprehensive knowledge of either. The current implementation of bilingual education may not be meeting the diverse language-related needs of students in the study.

Key Words Inuktitut, English, bilingualism, Nunavut, Inuit, Grade Five.

Strengthening Young Inuit Male Identity

*Becky Tootoo
Baker Lake, NU*



This research paper focuses on young Inuit male identity and how it is formed, shaped and sustained among Nunavummiut. The research was conducted in Baker Lake, Nunavut in 2013 by holding kitchen table talks with three different groups. The first group included three male Elders and one man in his fifties. This group provided names of young men they deemed to be successful in the community. The second group included the parents of the three young men who agreed to participate in the research. The last group included the three young men who ranged in age from 17 to 26. The discussions with the three groups identified people, projects and supports that enabled the young men to become successful, healthy contributors in our society. The key factors identified as promoting success were relationships with family, friends and other members of the community and wider society. A second factor related to hands-on activities that can be culturally relevant but reinforce and strengthen identity. The final factor was education, either formal or informal. Only one of the young men identified by the Elders holds a high school diploma. Contrary to western conceptions that often identify successful young people because of their formal education, the amount of money they make or even material possessions, the Elders saw that encouraging the potential of the young men to contribute to their families and community as being the first and foremost sign of their success.

Key Words Inuit, young men, parents, Elders, success, identity, relationships, hand-on activities, education.

Appendix I – Graduates' Suggested Priorities for Future Nunavut MEd programs

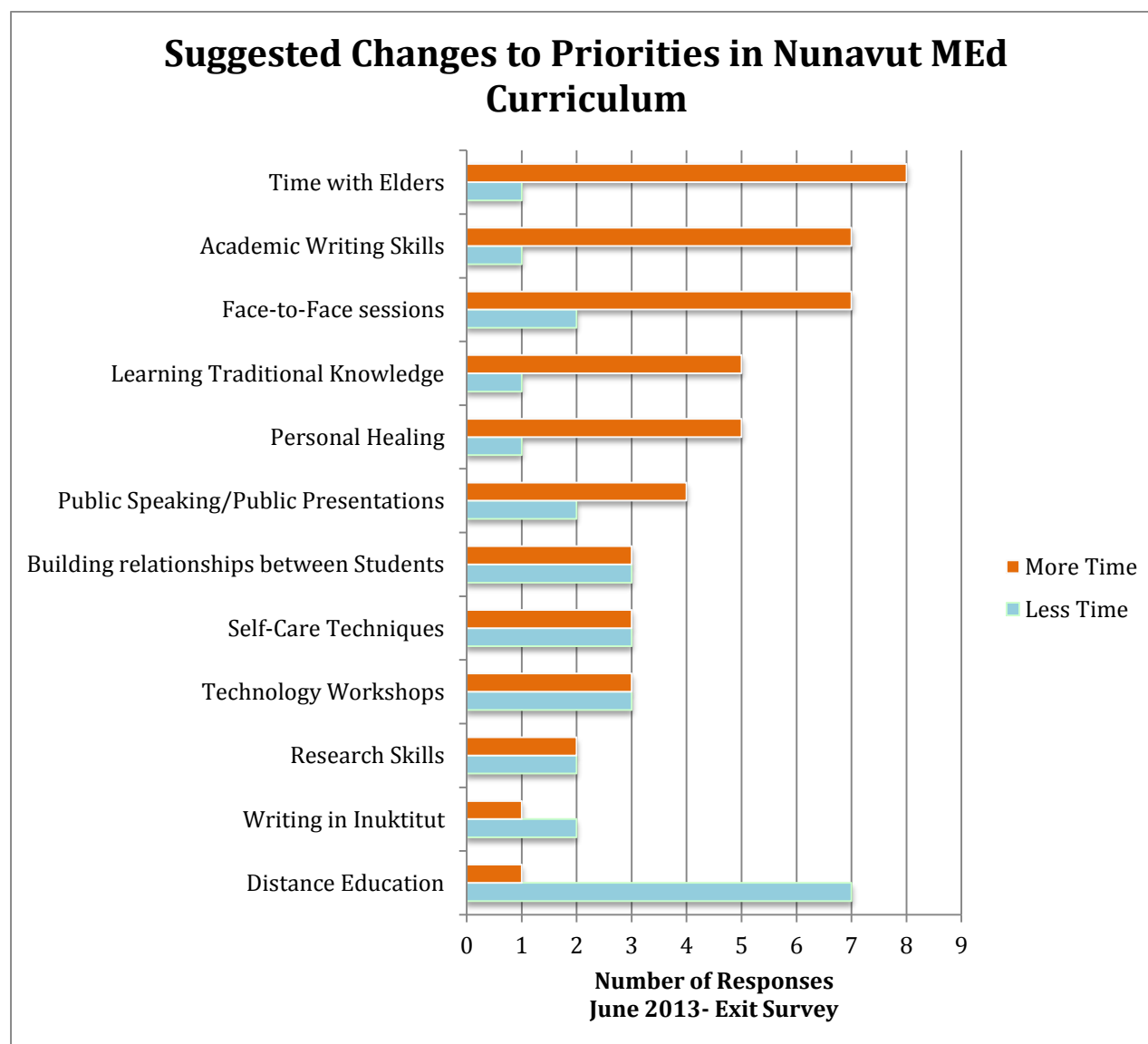


Figure A 1 Suggested Priorities for Future Nunavut MEd Program

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GRADUATES



ሥላሴ ገሰገሥ Susan Tigullaraq
ፌዴራል ጽ/ቤት Iqaluit, NU



Bertha Iglookyouak
Baker Lake, NU



ᐱᓴᓂᑦ Becky Tootoo
ᐅᓄᓂᑦ Baker Lake, NU



Vera Arnatsiaq
Igloodjik, NU



Rhoda Cunningham
Iqaluit, NU



ᓕᓴᓴᓐ ᓐᓴᓴᓐ Saimanaaq Pat Netser
ᓐᓴᓴᓐ ᓐᓴᓴᓐ Arviat, NU



Mary Etuangat
Pangnirtung, NU



ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ Louise Flaherty
ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ Igloolik, NU



Adriana Kusugak
Rankin Inlet, NU



ᐅᐱᐅ ᐅᐱᐅ ᐅᐱᐅ Mary Joanne Kauki
ᐅᐱᐅ ᐅᐱᐅ Kuujuaq, QC




Lizzie Iblauk
 Arvjat, NJ



Eva Noah
Baker Lake, NU



ᐱᑭᑭᑦ ᑭᑭᑦᑭᑦ Maggie Putulik
ᑭᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ Rankin Inlet, NU

The Master of Education Leadership in Learning was offered to a special cohort of Inuit educators in Nunavut by the Faculty of Education, University of Prince Edward Island in partnership with the Department of Education, Government of Nunavut.