



WHAT'S NEXT IS WHAT'S HERE

Okanagan College Aboriginal Access and Services

Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 1

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be an informative newsletter for students, parents, education coordinators and all those involved with or interested in Aboriginal Education at OC. The mission of this newsletter is to update the reader on everything that is happening here at OC that deals with or may affect Aboriginal students and their education.

The newsletter will be published at least twice a semester.

What is *Aboriginal Access and Services*?

Aboriginal Access and Services, or Aboriginal Services for short, is a branch of the Student Services department. Aboriginal Services seeks to enhance the participation and success of Aboriginal students at OC.



Students in the Aboriginal Student Centre, KLO Campus

Welcome!

Welcome and welcome back!

This is the first issue of the Aboriginal Access and Services Newsletter for the 2007/08 academic school year. As always, it is meant to

Aboriginal Services are available to Aboriginal students for support, advice and referral to career or personal counseling. In addition, Aboriginal Services will assist in the development of cultural and social activities and programs for Aboriginal students.



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The Aboriginal Access and Services Coordinator, James Coble, has an office located in Kelowna at the KLO Campus in the Student Services building, room S124A.

In order to ensure that OC is adequately meeting the needs of Aboriginal students, each of the four major campuses, Penticton, Kelowna, Vernon, and Salmon Arm has readily accessible Aboriginal student services.

These services include Aboriginal Student Centers in Penticton, Kelowna, and Vernon where students can come in and relax, use a computer, study, talk with other students or have a cup of coffee. It is hoped that a student center will be made available to students in Salmon Arm in the near future.

Each of the campuses also has an Aboriginal Mentor and/or Peer (Student) Mentors. Aboriginal Mentors at the Penticton, Vernon and Salmon Arm campuses assist Aboriginal students in accessing information about OC programs, courses and support services (i.e. Educational Advising, Financial Aid & Awards, Counseling, etc). They also inform Aboriginal students about the processes required to navigate the post-secondary education system as well as functioning as an advocate for Aboriginal students.

Peer Mentors provide similar support but on a more informal basis. At the moment, Peer Mentors are located on the Penticton, Kelowna and Vernon campuses.

If your new to OC or simply need some advice or information about OC's programs and services, please contact the (peer) mentor at your local campus. Also, please feel free to contact the Aboriginal Services Coordinator at any time.

Who Can Access Aboriginal Support Services?

OC has always encouraged and provided support for Aboriginal students. But who exactly are those services for?

For service purposes an Aboriginal is someone of First Nation (status and non-status), Métis, and Inuit descent or any other individual who claims North American indigenous descent.

To access our services we will not ask you to provide us with any proof. You do not

have to have a status card, citizenship card or any other documentation. Our services are free and are available to anyone who claims Aboriginal ancestry in all its forms.

Getting Oriented with OC

We know how difficult it can be to enter a new environment. In order to make the transition into college a little easier, OC will be offering orientation activities.

Some of these activities are specifically for Aboriginal students and some are not. The best part is that they are all free and if you attend one that is specific to Aboriginal students, you may have a chance to win prizes.

So come on out, meet some new people and make new friends. It can make a world of difference.

To find out what's happening on your campus, please contact your local Aboriginal Student Centre or get in touch with the Aboriginal Access and Services coordinator, James, at 250.762.5445 (local 4322) or at jcoble@okanagan.bc.ca.

Bursaries for Aboriginal Students at OC

In order to make education more accessible and affordable for its Aboriginal students, OC is pleased to offer a number of bursaries specific to Aboriginal students.

A bursary is an award usually based on financial need, whereas a scholarship is an award usually based on academic achievement.

For more information on what awards are available and for how much, as well as information on other awards visit the Financial Awards website at:





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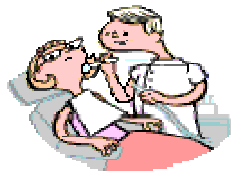
http://www.okanagan.bc.ca/administration/students/financialaid/Okanagan_College_Awards_Applications.html.

Or, the Aboriginal Programs and Services webpage at:

http://www.okanagan.bc.ca/administration/students/aboriginal/Scholarships_Bursaries_and_Awards.html.

Health and Dental Waivers

All Penticton, Kelowna, and Salmon Arm students who are registered in a degree program or two year diploma program are automatically enrolled in the Students' Association Extended Health and Dental Plan (for vocational/trades programs, students must be enrolled in a program of at least 16 weeks in duration).



If you are an Aboriginal student at one of these OC campuses and you have a status card and you are being funded by your Band, you may need to opt out of the Health and Dental Coverage provided by the Okanagan College Student Union.

Band education coordinators will usually not pay for this coverage as you are covered by virtue of having a status card.

To opt out of the OCSU health and dental plan or to get more information please refer to the following link <http://www.ocsu.ca/sites/ocsu/files/newoptout2007-2008.pdf>. Fill it out the form and drop it off at your local student union office. **The deadline for submitting opt-out waivers is September 14, 2007.**

When you are asked on the form to provide a policy number, you should write your status number instead.

If you have any questions or concerns get in touch with the Aboriginal Mentor at your local campus or the Aboriginal Access and Services Coordinator, James, at 250.762.5445 (local 4322) or at jcoble@okanagan.bc.ca.

OC Important Dates for Fall 2007

September 4: Orientation Day for all students.

September 14: Last day to submit grade appeals to Registrar's Office for Summer Session II. Submission and fee must be received by the Registrar no later than 4:00pm.

September 14: Last day to register in a course for the fall semester.

September 14: Last day to receive a tuition rebate for withdrawal from fall semester course.

September 14: Last day to withdraw without record of course registration entered on a student's transcript for a fall semester course.

September 14: Last day to change from audit to credit for a fall semester course.

September 14: Last day to submit a waiver or an addition to the Medical and Dental plan. Forms to be submitted to the Student Union office.

October 8: Thanksgiving Day – Okanagan College closed

October 26: Last day for withdrawal, without penalty, from a fall semester course.

October 26: Last day to change from credit to audit for a fall semester course.

November 9: Reading Break: no classes for associate degree, business, computer information systems, engineering technology and ESL programs.

November 10: No Saturday classes on this day.

November 12: Okanagan college closed for Remembrance Day.

November 29: Last day of classes for regularly scheduled Thursday classes

December 6: Regularly scheduled classes cancelled. Day reserved for Monday classes (at the discretion of the instructor)

December 7/8: Last day of regularly scheduled Friday and Saturday classes.



December 13: Practical Nursing Convocation
Penticton

December 14: Practical Nursing Convocation,
Kelowna

December 21: Last day for submission of final
grades for exams written on or before December
18 to the Registrar's office – deadline 4:00pm

December 21: Last day for submission of final
grades for exams written on or after Dec. 17 to
the Registrar's Office (4pm deadline).

December 24: Christmas: Okanagan College
closed until January 1, 2008.

Websites of Interest

Okanagan College Student Services

Webpage:

<http://www.okanagan.bc.ca/administration/students/aboriginal.html>

Aboriginal Multi-Media Society's (AMMSA)
guide to scholarships and bursaries:

<http://www.ammsa.com/ammsabursary.html>

Student Awards.com:

<http://www.studentawards.com/>

Aboriginal Access and Services Contact Information

James Coble

Aboriginal Access and Services Coordinator

Okanagan College, Kelowna

Office: S124A

Hours: Monday to Friday, 8:30am – 4:30pm

Tel: 250.762.5445 ext. 4322

Fax: 250.862.5496

Email: jcoble@okanagan.bc.ca

Hours: TBD

Tel: 250.492.4305 ext. 3261

Email: TBD

Ethan Baptiste

Aboriginal Mentor

Okanagan College, Kelowna

Office: S124

Hours: Tuesday 8:30am-4:30pm; Thursday

8:30am-4:30pm

Tel: 250.762.5445 ext. 4682

Fax: 250.862.5496

Email: ebaptiste@okanagan.bc.ca

Marilyn Alexis

Educational Advisor, Aboriginal Mentor

Okanagan College, Vernon

Office: A306 (Wed.), D220 (Tues. & Thurs.)

Hours: Tuesday to Thursday, 8:30am – 4:30pm

Tel: 250.545.7291 ext. 2209 (Wed.) ext. 2284
(Tues. & Thurs.)

Email: malexis@okanagan.bc.ca

Aboriginal Mentor, Penticton

To be determined.

Office: A1E Sunoka Building

Caroline Chartier

Aboriginal Mentor

Okanagan College, Salmon Arm

Office: 121

Hours: Thursday 8:30am – 4:00pm

Tel: 250.832.2126 ext. 8237

Email: cchartier@okanagan.bc.ca

**If there are any events that you would like to advertise in the next issue, please contact
James Coble using the contact information above.**