

UBC Certificate in Indigenous Health Administration and Leadership

Program Handbook

Developed in partnership with:

**The UBC Centre for Excellence
in Indigenous Health and**



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Extended Learning

extendedlearning.ubc.ca/IHALP

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Program Overview

Program Vision and Mandate

Strength and Resiliency, Culture and Tradition

The University of British Columbia Certificate in Indigenous Health Administration and Leadership (formerly UBC Certificate in Aboriginal Health and Community Administration) is an innovative program for people working in Indigenous community health, or preparing to work in the field. The program offers the knowledge and skills necessary to provide effective administration for Indigenous community-based health programs and organizations. In 2003, the Aboriginal Health and Community Administration Program was initiated by the former Institute for Aboriginal Health in response to Indigenous community consultation and the BC Ministry of Health priorities. In 2021, the name was changed to Indigenous Health Administration and Leadership program to reflect current socio-political terminology and approaches in the field of Indigenous health.

UBC Extended Learning now delivers the program – that is, the administration and registration of students – in partnership with the UBC Centre for Excellence in Indigenous Health. The Indigenous Health Administration and Leadership Program fits within the Centre’s mandate to provide a single coordinating point for Indigenous health initiatives within UBC, and serve as a contact for community organizations external to UBC. The certificate provides an innovative model of program development and delivery.

The Indigenous Health Administration and Leadership Program is rooted in the core values of resiliency, culture and Indigenous perspectives on health and wellness. This part-time certificate program is designed to support Indigenous organizations and communities to build strengths-based, holistic programming that promotes health and wellbeing. Indigenous communities have their own measures for success and unique cultural and geographical needs. Graduates of this program build and enhance their ability to design, lead and deliver health programming in these communities.

Program Design

The UBC Certificate in Indigenous Health Administration and Leadership is designed to meet the learning needs at the educational and experiential level of the majority of Indigenous administrative staff working in Indigenous communities and organizations.

The program uses cooperative learning strategies to develop team-building skills and shared learning opportunities in a culturally safe and supportive environment. It's designed for people with a passion for making a difference in the health and wellbeing of Indigenous peoples through health care administration, and who have varying skill and knowledge levels: those new to academic learning and those with academic certificates, degrees and diplomas, and those at the beginning of their careers and those with extensive work experience.

The cooperative learning approach assures that all learners have their learning needs addressed. The curriculum is centered on Indigenous approaches and traditional teachings with Indigenous instructors. Students learn to solve problems independently and within group processes. Real life and community-based health care administration scenarios are used to practise the skills being taught.

The curriculum is delivered in five courses that combine online learning and in-person classes. The in-person learning experience develops networks that are strengthened by the online component of cohort group communication and assignments.

The objective of the program is to prepare current and future Indigenous program administrators to be effective in their roles and in their communities by providing:

- the knowledge and skills needed to effectively perform their responsibilities
- opportunities to practise skills and apply appropriate problem-solving techniques
- development of a supportive network of professional colleagues
- the ethical, legal, historical and technical framework within which they will operate.

The program's approach includes developing skills and applying knowledge in case studies. Problem solving is practised in a conceptual framework that includes an understanding of the history of Indigenous communities and traditional models of healthcare systems as well as current policies and practices in effective administration. The program requires individual study and online assignments as well as collaborative and cooperative learning. The assigned readings in the program are a mix of academic writings, Indigenous health reports, real-world examples from Indigenous communities, videos, podcasts, government documents and practical pamphlets. Students are expected to complete all of the weekly readings, and incorporate knowledge from them, as well as from their own knowledge and experience, into the written and group assignments.

Who is This Program Designed For?

The UBC Indigenous Health Administration and Leadership Program has been designed to benefit all people with a passion for making a difference in the health and wellbeing of Indigenous peoples through health programming, administration, and leadership. The program develops knowledge and skills for those with extensive experience in Indigenous health, as well as facilitating employment opportunities for those wishing to begin a career in health and community administration. The certificate is a flexible, part time program that allows students to juggle the program along with work and family commitments.

Program Benefits

The program addresses labour market needs by providing health and community administration training in the health and social services field, which is BC's second biggest service sector employer.¹ The certificate provides students with skills and knowledge specifically focused on the needs of the First Nations and Tribal councils, Friendship Centres, Métis Organizations, and Indigenous health service organizations. The program also provides students with skills and knowledge needed in urban Indigenous and non-Indigenous health and other programs and organizations, and enhances the employability skills of Indigenous learners by providing them with the most current knowledge in the field.

About UBC Extended Learning

In addition to this certificate, [UBC Extended Learning](#) offers a wide range of programs for professional and career development. UBC Extended Learning has won numerous educational awards over the years, and is committed to providing leading-edge educational opportunities for workers in many sectors and professions.

About UBC Centre for Excellence in Indigenous Health (CEIH)

After an extensive one-year consultation process with Indigenous communities, the First Nations Health Authority, educational partners, government and non-profit groups, the [Centre for Excellence in Indigenous Health](#) was formally established at UBC on January 1, 2014. The Centre is a single coordinating point for Indigenous health initiatives within UBC and acts as a contact for communities and organizations external to UBC. The Centre is dedicated to advancing Indigenous people's health through education, innovative thinking, research and traditional practice. The Centre will work to improve wellness, healthcare and patient outcomes, and promote self-determination that includes increasing Indigenous leadership in all aspects of health and healthcare.

¹ Labour Force Survey, BC Stats, 2016.

Awards

The former Aboriginal Health and Community Administration Program has been recognized with the following awards:

- University Continuing Education Association (UCEA) 2006 Outstanding Program Award, Non-Credit
- Canadian Association for University Continuing Education (CAUCE) 2006 Award of Program Excellence

Curriculum

Program Format

The UBC Indigenous Health Administration and Leadership Program is interdisciplinary and focuses on the Indigenous community. The curriculum, centered on Indigenous approaches and traditional teachings, is delivered in a blended format, with online and in-person learning opportunities.

Courses in the UBC Indigenous Health Administration and Leadership Program feature online weekly classes, peer learning and group discussions. Two of the five courses include a mandatory 3-day (Thursday to Saturday) in-person learning session at the UBC Vancouver campus. The final in-person learning session at the end of the program takes place Thursday to Friday and includes a community immersion experience and graduation ceremony. In addition to weekly instructor-facilitated classes, students complete written assignments based on readings and personal experience by posting to an online discussion board. Everyone has access to everyone else's postings. Students' responses to each other and to the instructor are the basis of weekly discussions.

The program uses cooperative, peer learning strategies to develop team-building skills, shared learning opportunities and a supportive environment. Therefore, engaging with peers in online discussions is key to everyone's success. Students require access to the internet for the duration of the course.

The program can be completed in one year as outlined in the program schedule. **For the weekly Friday online classes, it is expected that students block off the morning (9:30am-12pm Pacific Time) from their regular work and routine so they can fully engage in the learning experience. Online classes will not be recorded.**

Courses

The curriculum incorporates communication and leadership, Indigenous health and wellness approaches, Indigenous community and human resource development models, and information management and how technological change can be incorporated into the delivery of effective Indigenous health and community administration.

The following courses comprise the certificate, and the order in which they are delivered is subject to change. All courses provide opportunities to practise critical thinking as well as develop oral, written and electronic communication skills for organizational and interpersonal settings.

Communication and Leadership

Course Goals:

To prepare current and future Indigenous health and community administrators and health staff with communication and leadership skills to be effective in their roles.

Learning Objectives:

- Create a personal definition and understanding of leadership that reflects your cultural values and collective ways of being and leading
- Identify competencies and approaches supportive to facilitating change management
- Cultivate inspired teams who are uplifted by their personal and collective work
- Foster healthy workplace environments
- Find solutions to challenges and problems
- Enhance written and verbal communication with colleagues, leadership, partners, Elders, and community members

Information Management

Course Goals:

To learn to integrate appropriate use of information technology systems for the effective administration of healthcare in Indigenous communities.

Learning Objectives:

- Analyze the ethical and legal issues in health management (e.g., privacy, confidentiality, data ownership)
- Analyze the benefits and pitfalls of technology from a personal, organizational and community perspective
- Assess the opportunities and benefits of implementing technology solutions in their organizations using a project management approach
- Describe the key characteristics and concepts of community Information Management
- Apply the principles of evidence informed decision-making to the planning of technology use in a community environment

Indigenous Health and Wellness

Course Goals:

To learn the relationship of Indigenous history to the health of individuals and their communities, and to learn strategies for effective administration of appropriate healthcare in Indigenous communities using models of traditional health and wellness with mainstream medical approaches.

Learning Objectives:

- Examine historical and current impacts on Indigenous people’s health and wellness including the social determinants of health
- Explain Indigenous concepts of health and wellbeing and traditional healing approaches
- Determine strength-based approaches to mental health and wellness
- Embrace Indigenous harm reduction principles
- Design effective Indigenous health and wellness programming incorporating best practices in Indigenous health programming

Fundamentals of Administration

Course Goals:

To acquire the ability to effectively apply administration knowledge, skills and resources to manage programs and services in Indigenous communities.

Learning Objectives:

- Strengthen understanding of health governance in First Nations structures and complex organizations and culturally relevant community health programs
- Cultivate enhanced knowledge about community/citizen engagement, health care planning and implementation of innovation/best or wise practices and quality improvement
- Understand strategic planning and implementation, including introduction to systems thinking perspectives and processes of program and project management
- Explore key areas of health organization or health system management. For example, human resource management, including performance reviews and management, organizational/health system perspectives of professionalism and codes of conduct; and, financial/accounting considerations, program funding and reporting.

Evaluation, Research, and Policy

Course Goals:

To analyze current and past policies and legislation related to Indigenous health and

community administration and to assess and apply research and evaluation to improve health and wellness.

Learning Objectives:

- Compare and contrast types of knowledge
- Create a plan to evaluate a program or service according to Indigenous approaches and ways of knowing
- Critique a research project, in relation to its fit for your community
- Describe the various ways that policy shows up in our lives
- Develop a draft policy for your workplace or Indigenous health setting
- Discuss Canadian public policy and its impact on Indigenous peoples in BC and Canada

Program Schedule

View the current IHALP 2025/26 [program schedule](#).

Program Fees

Application

There is no fee to submit an application. Successful applicants will receive a registration package upon acceptance into the program.

Course Tuition Fees

Tuition totaling \$6,400 is payable in two instalments of \$3,840 and \$2,560. Save \$100 if you apply and, upon acceptance, pay the full fee by the start of the program. Fees may be paid by Visa®, Visa® Debit, Mastercard®, American Express®, cheque, bank draft or wire transfer, and are subject to change.

Course Receipts

An official receipt for income tax purposes is sent in February for courses completed the previous year.

Internet Access

Students must have convenient access to a computer with internet access for the online components of the program.

Assessment Methods

Assessment criteria is developed to support Indigenous learners and reflect their ways of knowing and seeing. Participants are assessed according to clear guidelines to support participants in acquiring the skills and concepts taught in the program.

Assessment is based on classroom attendance and participation, online participation, and grading of assignments, exams, presentations and projects. Instructors and staff guide learning along the way.

Graduation Criteria

To achieve the UBC Certificate in Indigenous Health Administration and Leadership, participants must complete the required courses, attend all of the required on-site residencies and complete the online course activities. Participants must attain a minimum overall average of 60% after completing the five courses.

Instructors

The courses in the program are taught by educators and professionals working in the field who bring their education and work experience into the classroom. Most of the teaching staff are from the Indigenous community.

Workload Expectations

The program's flexible, part-time format allows students to balance the program with work, family and other obligations. To succeed in the program, **students are expected to attend all real-time online or in-person learning sessions**, as well as spend several hours each week throughout the program on readings, assignments and online discussions. It is not recommended to miss more than half a day of each in-person learning session and more than 1-2 live online classes per course. Applicants should note and set aside the required session dates, plus organize their other responsibilities for the coming months so that they have time for their studies during every week. Study in the program is equivalent to approximately five one-semester courses at the University of British Columbia.

Changes to Curriculum

The curriculum is designed to reflect best practices in Indigenous health administration and leadership. In staying up to date, the learning objectives, subject areas, topics, speakers and assignments will change over time to reflect the needs of program participants, new best practices and technologies, and the best use of university resources. The program may also change in duration, number of instructional hours or requirements for completion. As the curriculum changes, the total cost of the program may also change to reflect the actual costs of program delivery.

To receive the UBC Certificate in Indigenous Health Administration and Leadership, participants must complete the required curriculum and the number of instructional hours, including the online real-time or in-person sessions that are compulsory for the program term.

As the certificate program evolves, the following guidelines apply to minor program changes:

- If the required courses change, participants are expected to complete the original courses that were compulsory at the date of their admission to the program.
- Participants who have completed courses that are subsequently removed from the program curriculum will receive credit for those courses.

Program Policies

Limited Enrolment

A limited number of applicants are admitted to the UBC Indigenous Health Administration and Leadership Program. Meeting minimum application requirements does not ensure admittance to the program.

Students progress through the program with the same group of students (a cohort). Students are therefore expected to take all five courses in the program within the duration of the schedule. A re-enrolment fee and increased tuition cost (if applicable) may apply.

Availability of Program

Program availability varies from year to year, depending on demand and availability of resources to offer the program. The program requires minimum enrolment to run and may be cancelled if there is insufficient enrolment.

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)

The certificate is intended to be a professional development program that builds upon the existing knowledge and experience of learners. Because the program is a cohort program based on cooperative learning principles, participants must take all the courses in the program. Any exemption from particular requirements within the courses must be requested in writing with the application form submitted one month before the program or course begins.

Length of Program

Participants must complete all requirements for graduation within the duration of the program. Under exceptional circumstances, a student who withdraws can apply the next year for re-admission.

Accessibility-Related Accommodations

UBC Extended Learning works to create an inclusive learning environment in which each individual student can achieve success. Extended Learning students with disabilities and ongoing medical conditions requiring accommodations can access guidance and support

through the [UBC Centre for Accessibility](#). If you require accommodations to participate in your ExL course, please [contact the Centre](#) before the start of your course to make arrangements for services or support. Before requesting a concession or accommodation, please [register with the Centre](#).

Withdrawal and Cancellation Policy

Learners who withdraw from the program 30 days before the program start date will receive a full refund, less a \$150 cancellation fee. If you withdraw with less than 30 days' notice, you should notify UBC Extended Learning in writing of the reasons for the withdrawal. After this date, tuition fees are non-refundable, except for serious reasons such as bereavement or a documented medical condition (supported by a doctor's letter from a practising medical physician of the British Columbia Medical Association), in which case the refund will be processed on a pro-rated basis for the unfinished portion of the program. The refund will be pro-rated from the time the doctor's letter is received by the administrative staff and the \$150 cancellation fee will apply. A student who withdraws from the program may not register again until being re-admitted to the program.

Academic Integrity

UBC Extended Learning is committed to academic integrity and takes academic misconduct seriously. Penalties for cheating, plagiarizing or other academic misconduct may include dismissal from the program or course with a failing grade and no refund of fees. [Read more UBC's policy](#).

Professional Conduct

UBC Extended Learning fosters positive learning environments that respect the diversity of individuals and apply standards in keeping with appropriate conduct in professional workplaces. Students are expected to adhere to professional standards of behaviour. In particular, the ability to work respectfully in a team environment and with other students, instructors and staff is essential. UBC Extended Learning reserves the right to require a student to withdraw from a program at any time for unsatisfactory professional conduct. In such cases there will be no refund of tuition.

Use of Information Technology

Participants must abide by the [UBC Responsible Use of Information Technology guidelines](#).

Admission Information

The UBC Indigenous Health Administration and Leadership Program welcomes learners from a variety of backgrounds. The admission requirements are fairly broad. Applicants should have the following:

- graduation from grade 12 (or equivalent)
- internet access (including an email address) and the ability to do basic word processing
- experience in an Indigenous health care program or facility or experience working in an Indigenous community
- willingness to contribute to group discussions and projects and encourage other participants in their learning.

Note: At the first session of the program, participants will be shown how to access the online learning management system. Software skills training are not part of this program. Students should be able to do word processing, send email messages, and manage attachments to do the online portions of the course.

UBC Extended Learning requires students have the following technology and expertise in order to keep up with the program and complete projects and assignments from their computer:

- a laptop or desktop with Windows 10 or Mac OSX Sierra 10.12 or higher
- keyboard and mouse
- speakers and a microphone – built-in, USB plug-in, or wireless Bluetooth
- a webcam or HD webcam - built-in, USB plug-in:
- an internet connection – broadband wired or wireless (3G or 4G/LTE)
- familiarity with basic internet applications (email and web browser)

Application Process

Applicants should read and thoroughly understand the Program Handbook before applying to the program.

The UBC Indigenous Health Administration and Leadership Program has a formal application procedure which ensures education quality and student support. The application process also helps to ensure that the needs, intentions and expectations of participants are adequately matched to the program's objectives and capabilities. Admission to the program may be limited by the availability of courses, facilities and instructors.

In addition to completing the [application form](#), applicants should also provide the following to support their application:

- a typewritten letter of intent written solely by the applicant that specifies the applicant's goals, interests and program expectations, as well as details on how the applicant is planning to provide adequate time for study (300-500 words)
- a resumé documenting educational achievements and relevant work or volunteer experience
- the names, phone numbers and email addresses of three references (preferably current or previous employers, volunteer coordinators or teachers).

Evaluation of Applications

When selecting applicants, we consider:

- passion for contributing to Indigenous health and wellness
- the alignment of interests and goals with program approaches and learning objectives
- the suitability of previous education and work experience
- potential to benefit Indigenous communities.

Once applications have been reviewed, applicants will be notified by email regarding acceptance in the program.

Contact Us

For more information about the program or the application process, please contact us:

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Stay Up-to-Date

Would you like to stay informed about new courses, new terms, special offers and events? Just tell us how you would like us to contact you. If you do not check these boxes you will still receive communications relating to the administration of your UBC Extended Learning course or program.

- Yes, I would like to receive this information via **email**.
- Yes, I would like to receive this information via **mail**.

Privacy

We respect your privacy. Your contact information will not be released to others outside UBC.

Personal information provided on the registration form is collected pursuant to section 26 of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act ("FIPPA"), RSBC 1996, c.165, as amended. The information will be used for the purposes of: admission; registration; academic progress; notification of future courses; and operating other UBC-related programs. UBC collects, uses, retains and discloses information in accordance with FIPPA. UBC may share and disclose personal information within the University to carry out its mandate and operations. Information, in aggregate form only, may also be used for research purposes and statistics. Should you have any questions about the collection of information, please contact the Marketing Director, UBC Extended Learning, 410-5950 University Boulevard, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6T 1Z3.