

An Inclusive and Sustainable Recovery for BC's Interior

Submission to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and
Government Services

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Thompson Rivers University campuses are on the unceded lands of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc (Kamloops campus) and the T'exelc (Williams Lake campus) within Secwépemc'ulucw, the traditional territory of the Secwépemc. TRU also serves the peoples of surrounding territories including the St'át'imc, Nlaka'pamux, Tâilhqot'in, Nuxalk, Dakelh, and Syilx.



TRU Facts & Figures

Students
full and part-time:

5,729

On Campus:

13,017

Open Learning:

17,402

International Students
from **112** countries

9

Faculties & Schools

140

Programs on campus

60

Programs online

1,589

FTE Employees

**Fiscal Year 2019/20*

The Challenges

- ***Putting people first*** – the pandemic has disproportionately affected students, women and BIPOC communities.
 - ***Building a strong, sustainable economy*** – jobs remain unfilled in high-demand occupations and sustainable solutions are required for BC's pandemic-affected tourism sector.
 - ***Lasting and meaningful reconciliation*** – confirmation of 215 unmarked graves at the former Kamloops Indian Residential school, within the traditional lands of Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, highlights the need for healing and action.
 - ***Addressing climate change*** – 2021's extreme heat, drought and wildfires calls for recovery and resiliency.
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TRU – Partnering to find solutions

- We look forward to working with government and others in support of a pandemic recovery that is inclusive, one which creates opportunity for all members of our community

Our vision

Community-minded with a global conscience, we boldly redefine the university as a place of belonging — Kw'seltknéws (we are all related and interconnected with nature, each other, and all things) — where all people are empowered to transform themselves, their communities, and the world.



TRU – Putting people first

- University education increases employment opportunities
 - Two years after graduation, unemployment rate for TRU students with a bachelor's degree – 5.4%
 - Vs. young people with high school education, unemployment rate – 20.3%
 - Vs. BC overall unemployment rate – 8.9%

***stats from 2020*

1 out of **9**
every

Jobs in the TRU Region
and

1 out of **150**
every

Jobs in British Columbia
is supported by the activities
of TRU and its students

Our Graduate offerings



Master of Business Administration



Master Degrees in Environmental
Economics and Management



Master of Science in Environmental
Economics and Management



Master of Education



Master of Nursing



Master of Science in Data Science



Master of Science in Environmental Science



Graduate Diploma in Business
Administration



Graduate Certificate in Educational Studies



Graduate Certificate in Online Teaching
and Learning



Equal access, equal opportunity for students

Additional support needed at the graduate program level:

- TRU has increased # of graduate programs to meet student demand, with no corresponding public funding
- All graduate programs at TRU are self-funded with students absorbing the full cost of these programs; this is not the case elsewhere in BC.
- TRU Law – of BC's 3 primary law programs, TRU Law is the only one without targeted provincial funding.

Why graduate studies matter

Students are able to go further in
their learning



They become experts in their field



They provide solutions to
society's challenges



Student research makes a difference



- A Master of Science in Environment Science student is researching ways to suppress the population of invasive smallmouth bass in B.C.'s Cultus Lake.
- A Master of Nursing student is studying ways to improve mental-health services for Indigenous people, and hearing from them firsthand.

A strong, sustainable recovery through research and innovation

Investment in research and innovation will spur economic and social recovery

- Need for consistent and ongoing funding for graduate and undergraduate student research in the Interior, to support Interior communities
 - Separately, TRU looks for support to establish a Tourism Research Centre
 - ✓ *A research centre would collaborate with community, Indigenous and industry partners to achieve multi-faceted solutions to social, economic and environmental issues.*
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TRU – Addressing climate change through Research

We look forward to continued support for research efforts that mitigate and address the impact of climate change:

- Impacts of climate change are the Interior's lived experiences
- TRU is well positioned to increase research in Predictive Services; recent appointment of two new fire science chairs (one funded by the province, and one by the federal government).
- The All My Relations Research Centre is an important contributor, having a mandate to advance Indigenous community wellness with Indigenous researchers working in partnership with Indigenous communities.

TRU – Supporting a strong, sustainable economy

With government support, TRU can increase student access and meet regional needs in high-demand areas:

- Healthcare:
 - ✓ *Bachelor of Nursing (annual intake capped at 80, with an ongoing waitlist)*
 - ✓ *Health Care Assistant (Kamloops and Williams Lake programs)*
 - ✓ *Respiratory Therapy, the only program in BC*
 - ✓ *Master in Nurse Practitioner (pending, un-funded graduate program)*
- Technology:
 - ✓ *Funding required to offer full degrees in Electrical and Computer Engineering (TRU currently offers a Bachelor in Software Engineering)*

Honouring Truth and Reconciliation

- Students entering bachelor's programs at TRU in the next few years will have competence in Indigenous knowledge and ways, upon graduation.
- The Coyote Project – 5-year project to advance indigenization efforts across the entire university.
- Partnership agreement with Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc will increase Indigenous student access and success through additional bursaries / scholarships



CLOSING THOUGHTS

TRU looks forward to being part of the solution toward an innovative, inclusive and sustainable economic recovery for all British Columbians. On behalf of TRU and our Board of Governors, thank you for the opportunity to present.
