



Widening access and participation in Canada

PRESENTATION OF A PRELIMINARY PM

Why Canada?

- ▶ Additional insight can be gained by examining how other nations' governments and HEIs approach WA and WP and what strategies and policies are used
- ▶ Canada – the only western, industrialized country that does not have a coordinated, national department of education
- ▶ Canada – exemplary country with regards to creating PSE opportunities for WA and WP for its ethnic minorities (First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples)
- ▶ Main areas focused on in the PM regarding WA/WP activities
 - ▶ Ethnic Minorities (First Nations, Metis, Inuit)
 - ▶ Sex and Gender
 - ▶ Sexual Orientation
 - ▶ Transgender Identity and Expression
 - ▶ Disability
 - ▶ Age (Mature Students)
 - ▶ First Generation
 - ▶ Religion

Basic Differences: Sweden - Canada

- ▶ Sweden – HEIs have a legal responsibility to provide societal diversity in PSE
- ▶ Canada – HEIs do not have a legal responsibility to provide societal diversity, yet they do have WA and WP initiatives
- ▶ Canada – federal legislation on WA/WP is limited to financial support
- ▶ Canada – federal gov only has jurisdiction over equality and anti-discrimination laws relating to government action or government services
 - ▶ Affirmative Action/Diversity Quotas are legal
- ▶ Canada – Admissions is determined individually by the institution, but procedures differ according to PS level
- ▶ Different types of institutions also have different levels of autonomy
- ▶ The most significant barrier (cost) is less of a barrier for Swedish students.
- ▶ Canadian government sees the expansion of HE participation as not only the responsibility of the government, but also of individuals

Beyond Basic Differences

Sweden – Canada

- ▶ In Canada, WA/WP activities on ethnicity revolve mostly around First Nations, Metis, and Inuit students
- ▶ Strong legislative support for official languages, but not indigenous languages
- ▶ Sexual Assault is a recurring theme in the Canadian context
- ▶ Canadian HEIs have student clubs
- ▶ Inmates in federal corrections facilities are the responsibility of the Canadian government in terms of education

WA/WP activities for First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples

WA/WP activities took the form of:

- ▶ an Indigenous Student Recruitment Officer (*Concordia University*)
- ▶ Aboriginal Health Initiative (*Memorial University of Newfoundland*)
- ▶ Aboriginal Student Services (*Brock University*)
- ▶ Resource Centers
- ▶ Anishinaabe Initiatives Division (*Algoma University*)
- ▶ Anishinaabe Peoples' Council on Board of Governors (*Algoma University*)
- ▶ Aboriginal-Centered Orientation Programs
- ▶ Student Associations/Student Councils
- ▶ Indigenous Academic programs
- ▶ Strategic Plans
- ▶ Indigenous HEIs

WA/WP activities for transgender identity and sexual orientation

No WA activities for transgender identity or sexual orientation

WP activities for transgender identity and sexual orientation are often combined

WP activities include:

- ▶ Equity Services Office (*Carleton University*)
- ▶ Gender and Sexuality Resource Centre
(*Carleton University – Student Association*)
- ▶ Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay, and Transgender Resource Centre
(*Memorial University of Newfoundland – Student Union*)
- ▶ Positive Space Campaign (*Brandon University*)

WA/WP activities for first generation students

WA/WP activities include:

- ▶ First Generation Program
(Brock University)
- ▶ First Generation Student Partners/First Years Connection Program
(Carleton University)
- ▶ First Generation Project
(Algoma University)

Algoma University

First Generation Project (Algoma University)

- ▶ Financial bursaries
- ▶ Peer mentoring program
- ▶ Pet therapy
- ▶ Monthly "help me" sessions
- ▶ Pizza lunches
- ▶ Academic advising
- ▶ Student success workshops
- ▶ Lunch and learn sessions
- ▶ First generation calendar for parents
- ▶ Off campus retreats
- ▶ Dedicated First Generation Coordinator

WA/WP activities for religion or other beliefs

WA in the form of financial bursaries (*Concordia University of Edmonton*)

WP Activities included:

- ▶ Religious Observance Policy (*Capilano University*)
- ▶ Inter-cultural, Inter-religious, and Inter-racial Commission (*Carleton University*)
- ▶ Equity Services Office (*Carleton University*)