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)
- 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)*