



This is the ONLY Ph.D. program in Native Studies in Canada and one of two programs in North America.

Trent is actively seeking individuals, companies or Foundations interested in establishing Scholarships for Ph.D. candidates.

INTRODUCTION

It is generally recognized that First Nation peoples and their communities are confronting a number of significant political, economic, social and cultural issues including:

- Significant disparities in socio-economic conditions and development
- Concerns that Federal policy and legislation has created and is perpetuating dependency on the federal government for support
- Real or perceived inequities in the distribution and sharing in the benefits of lands and resources
- Preservation of cultural heritage and language

At the same time these issues are being confronted, increasing numbers of people world-wide are expressing a desire to learn more about Aboriginal knowledge, traditions, practices and spirituality.

When we look at the multitude of complex and inter-connecting issues involving First Nations Peoples, now more than any time in the past, there is a need for people willing to assume roles of problem-solvers, leaders and teachers in our Aboriginal communities and in our country.

University education, especially graduate study and research in Native Studies has a significant role to play.

TRENT UNIVERSITY & NATIVE STUDIES EDUCATION

Trent University is the first University in Canada to develop and introduce a Native Studies Ph.D. program

- The Trent University Ph.D. program was initiated in 1997 and the first students entered the program in 1999. The first three graduates from the program were conferred their degrees in June 2005.
- Trent University remains the only University in Canada with a Ph.D. program and one of two in North America (the other program is at the University of Arizona).

Trent University is a leader in Native Studies educational programs and research

- The Trent University undergraduate program in Native Studies was established in 1969, and is the oldest in Canada.
- In 1982, Trent University established the Frost Centre for Canadian Studies & Native Studies. The Centre encourages interdisciplinary research in Canadian Studies and Native Studies. In 1984, the Frost Centre became the home for the graduate (M.A) program in Canadian Studies & Native Studies.
- Native Studies is part of the Trent University hallmark inter-disciplinary program approach combining the study of indigenous cultures with a diverse range of other educational programs including Business Administration, Environmental Studies, Anthropology and Canadian Studies.

The Trent University Native Studies Ph.D. program is unique in the world

- Not only is the program inter-disciplinary in nature but it is also based on the integration of Indigenous and Western academic knowledge and methods of learning. A developed network of Aboriginal people, particularly Aboriginal Elders who possess knowledge of the traditional culture, play a central role in the Trent Ph.D. program.
- The program has a mandatory three month Practicum Field Placement where students are required to work full-time or carry out research in a First Nation community or in an Aboriginal organization.
- An innovative feature that is changing the view of learning is the Bimaadiziwin/Atonhetseri:io Option. This course recognizes the unique place of Indigenous knowledge in the Ph.D. program. Students will experience the oral tradition through which Indigenous knowledge is conveyed and Aboriginal pedagogical approaches which include apprenticeship, face-to-face interaction, modeling, and the personal journey. The student has an opportunity to work directly with an Elder or Traditional person in an apprenticeship-type arrangement, focused on particular learning objectives that are negotiated for this opportunity. This option allows the student to deepen her/his knowledge and learning in ways that are beyond the capacity of a structured classroom to provide.

CURRENT SITUATION ASSESSMENT

The Trent Native Studies Ph.D. program has high visibility and activity

- Six new students will be joining the program in September. The six candidates were selected from a total of sixteen qualified applicants. There are now a total of thirty Ph.D. candidates in the program, and the program is at capacity.
- Several other Universities in Canada have expressed interest in recruiting current Ph.D. candidates for open Faculty positions in Political Science, History and Native Studies programs. There is also a strong interest in finding Faculty members of Aboriginal decent.
- The majority of the Ph.D. candidates in the Trent program are from First Nation communities.

Financial Challenges

- It takes at least four years to complete the Trent Ph.D. program. Many of the candidates at Dissertation stage are now in their fifth year. The majority of students don't have income supplements in the form of Scholarships or teaching Assistantships past their third year. These students are taking longer to complete the program because they have taken part-time jobs to have money to live on.
- The Native Studies program does not have the same opportunities available that Science programs utilize, where Professors use Research grants to fund graduate students helping them with their research.
- The Native Studies Ph.D. program is a young program, and there are very few Scholarships established by donations from individuals, companies or foundations at this stage.

OVERVIEW – TRENT UNIVERSITY NATIVE STUDIES PhD PROGRAM

<p>Vision Statement</p>	<p><i>The Native Studies Ph.D. Program at Trent University seeks to ensure that physical, mental, emotional and spiritual dimensions of Aboriginal knowledge, as reflected in traditional and contemporary world views and experience in practice, are articulated, discussed, documented and experienced.</i></p> <p><i>In order to achieve this vision, the Native Studies Ph.D. Program will offer an educational opportunity at an advanced level of study within a respectful environment. Students will be engaged in learning experiences that are centered in Aboriginal cultures in content and process and reflect the interaction between traditional and contemporary Aboriginal knowledge within the academic context. It is an interdisciplinary program developed and sustained in partnership with the Aboriginal community which seeks to advance learning through creative interaction of teaching, research and experience of the highest quality.</i></p>	
<p>Program Objectives</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To advance Native Studies as an interdisciplinary field of study through the recognition of Indigenous knowledge and the creation of knowledge which reflects Aboriginal/Indigenous experience. 2. To make available to students, at an advanced level, education in Native Studies that will enable graduates to employ a range of skills in the context of Aboriginal communities, as well as Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations. 3. To explore research methodologies appropriate to the creation of knowledge reflective of the Aboriginal/Indigenous experience. 4. To prepare students for careers in teaching and research, administration, business and government. 	
<p>Innovative Perspective</p>	<p>The Native Studies PhD program attempts to assume an emic, or insider’s viewpoint, to capture Indigenous Knowledge.</p>	
<p>Program Structure</p>	<p>Basic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses in the first two years • Data Collection & research in 3rd year • Thesis dissertation and defense in the 4th year (*) <p>(*) Research requirements might delay thesis dissertation until the 5th year. Special extensions required for a 6th year.</p>
	<p>Unique Experiential Features</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practicum - aboriginal-community field placement for 3 months • Bimadziwin/Atonhetseri:io experience – an optional experiential program requiring students to participate in a significant Aboriginal cultural experience such as apprenticing with a Native community elder.
<p>Fields of Research</p>	<p>Focus Areas</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Native Studies History and Politics 2. Social and Cultural Contemporary Issues in Native Studies
	<p>Multi-disciplinary Faculty</p>	<p>Native Studies is an interdisciplinary program drawing faculty from a number of diverse fields – history, sociology, anthropology, social work, linguistics, environmental studies, law, education and business administration.</p>