



a place of mind

UBC Vancouver Intercultural Understanding Strategic Plan: The Intercultural Promise

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Prepared for Board of Governors and Student Consultation

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About

The Intercultural Promise, UBC Vancouver's intercultural understanding mid-level strategic plan, provides a conceptual and strategic framework to approaching intercultural issues and opportunities in a way that is more intentional, integrated and supportive—and aims to help make more successful the delivery of student learning, research excellence and community engagement.

This is not a stand-alone document, but exists as an extension of many preceding mid-level strategic plans that have come out of *Place and Promise: The UBC Plan*. Most importantly, this plan takes the position that advancing intercultural understanding ultimately contributes to the wellbeing and success of students, faculty and staff, and to the social or human sustainability of UBC.

This document is a working draft is the sixth substantial revision of *The Intercultural Promise*, and follows a consultation with faculty subject matter experts, the Committee of Deans and the Executive in Vancouver.

Although the commitment to intercultural understanding is University-wide and applies to both the Vancouver and Okanagan campus, this strategic plan comes out of an extensive consultative process that is specific to the Vancouver campus.

The Intercultural Promise begins with the conceptual framework, which articulates the rationale and the need behind this commitment, provides the terms of reference and explains the supporting concepts behind what UBC aims to accomplish, and establishes the guiding values around how. This is followed by the strategic framework, which outlines the six strategic goals of the strategic plan and proposes a staggered approach. Each strategic goal is further explained and accompanied by recently updated actions and recommendations. This section also includes the framework for supporting faculty and for engaging in leadership and staff development, and interfaith initiatives.

The supporting appendices provide further explanation of many of the ideas in this strategic plan, including the framework for “intercultural fluency” and models of how organisations change and institutionalize diversity, equity and intercultural understanding over time.

People who do not know how to recognize,
understand and appreciate cultural difference or how to communicate
across cultural and situational boundaries, are people who are unable to
function effectively in many circumstances, and who do not enable,
and may impede, critical work in our societies.

Promoting Intercultural Understanding (August 2009)

Intercultural understanding is core to UBC.

It is at the heart of what a great public university simply does—Student Learning, Research Excellence and Community Engagement—the three overarching commitments of *Place and Promise, The UBC Plan*.

For a highly diverse campus like UBC Vancouver, intercultural issues can impede learning, undermine the operational and academic excellence of the University, obstruct innovation and potentially constrain the impact of UBC's alumni within communities.

Intercultural understanding, as with equity and diversity, is not an add-on. These are not new things that UBC is imposing. Rather, like the other eight commitments of *Place and Promise, The UBC Plan*, they reflect the means by which UBC delivers its fundamental mission.

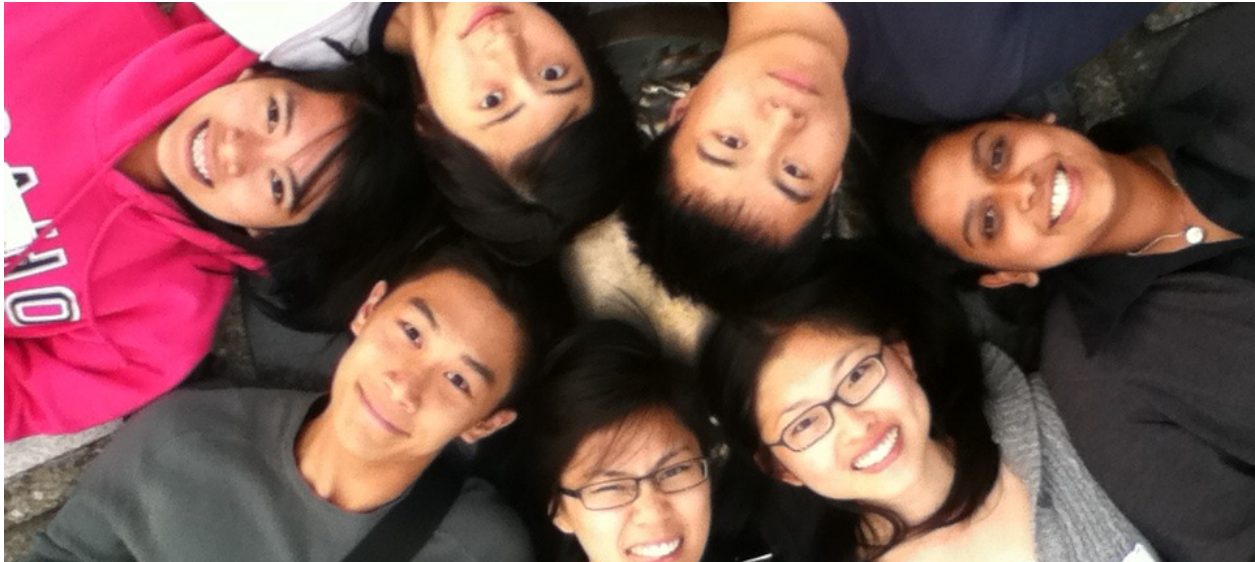
Intercultural understanding, along with equity and diversity, are mechanisms and “ways of being” that help the University produce student learning, research excellence and community engagement more effectively.

Intercultural understanding is also fundamental to the other elements of *Place and Promise, The UBC Plan*. Departments require the appropriate intercultural knowledge and skills—what might be called intercultural fluency—to engage Aboriginal communities. When departments lack the knowledge to approach people respectfully, they will fail at efforts to meaningfully engage Aboriginal communities.

As UBC continues at its pace of internationalization, and as the make-up of students continues to become more diverse, faculty and staff will need an even greater levels of intercultural fluency. Failure to understand how the diversity in the classroom is likely to impact faculty and staff will result in not meeting the University's goals around student learning.

LEVERAGING STUDENT DIVERSITY IN THE CLASSROOM

Small adjustments in approach and curriculum can take the classroom experience to new heights, having a dramatic effect on the intercultural experience for students and overall classroom climate. Through a simple and innovative adjustment to the content in *Approaches to Literature* (ENGL110), a 100-level course that reaches hundreds of undergraduate students, Dr. Chris Lee, Assistant Professor in the English Department, found a way to improve the engagement of Chinese-speaking students. Noticing and concerned about the imbalance of classroom participation, Dr. Lee incorporated short stories by Eileen Chang in translation into the course, hoping to make the course content more relevant and culturally accessible to the growing numbers of Chinese-speaking students. Students able to read the original text easily found them, and unexpectedly came to class challenging the English translation. The adjusted curriculum enabled students, who were struggling with their engagement of the course content, to contribute to the class discussion in ways not previously possible. The flexibility of faculty converted, what is often seen as a barrier, into a more inclusive and richer learning experience for all the students in the class.



Above photo: UBC Peer Programs (2011). The UBC Peer Programs has been active in raising student awareness of intercultural understanding, providing students with training in intercultural communication and creating opportunities to foster relationships across cultural differences.

In short, intercultural understanding is essential to providing an environment for student success at a university as diverse as UBC. It will require the highest levels of intercultural fluency amongst faculty and staff; students, faculty and staff who are equipped and supported to provide this experience; and enriched curriculum that, combined with teaching excellence, make intercultural understanding possible.

Intercultural understanding also affects the University's goals at being a place where people want to work. A lack of respect and intercultural understanding in the workplace can lead to very difficult internal circumstances, and be a barrier to achieving UBC's aspirations as an Outstanding Work Environment. UBC aims to be an inclusive community of scholars, and success at this goal requires intercultural aptitudes and capacity.

Beyond the campus, UBC aspires to provide an experience and environment of learning that equips students with the intercultural skills needed to be more effective leaders, bigger thinkers, exercise more empathy and contribute more in the increasingly complex societies of today and the future.

UBC's graduates, faculty and staff must, therefore, have intercultural understanding—beginning with a depth of understanding in local Aboriginal cultures and issues, as well as self-awareness of one's personal and systemic bias and an openness to difference—to contribute to social cohesion and participate in future solutions.

The opportunity to learn intercultural understanding on our campus, *to the point of fluency*, is UBC's promise. For this reason, this strategic plan is called *The Intercultural Promise*, meant to acknowledge a social obligation to be a place for intellectual diversity—a safe space for uncomfortable, and sometimes unpopular, ideas and conversations to thrive.

For UBC to attain the highest levels of excellence and global leadership, and to deliver on its social contract towards intellectual diversity, UBC must foster the intercultural fluency needed to “recognize, understand and appreciate cultural difference [and] communicate across cultural and situational boundaries.”

Part I: The Conceptual Framework

Index

1.0 A. Identifying the Opportunity and the Need

1.1 Building on the Diversity of the Vancouver Campus

There is something uniquely special about the cultural diversity happening at UBC's Vancouver campus. It is a richness, often difficult to explain, produced by its intercultural assets—the diversity of the students, alumni, faculty and staff, and its geographic location, for example. As a result, UBCV has the unique potential to be a global leader in delivering *more than* a diverse or multicultural learning experience, but to also be a hotbed for developing the awareness, knowledge and skills needed for fostering relationships and dialogue across cultural differences. *The Intercultural Promise*, although responding to some very real intercultural needs and issues, comes out of an opportunity to build on these assets.

1.2 Table 1 - UBC's Intercultural Assets

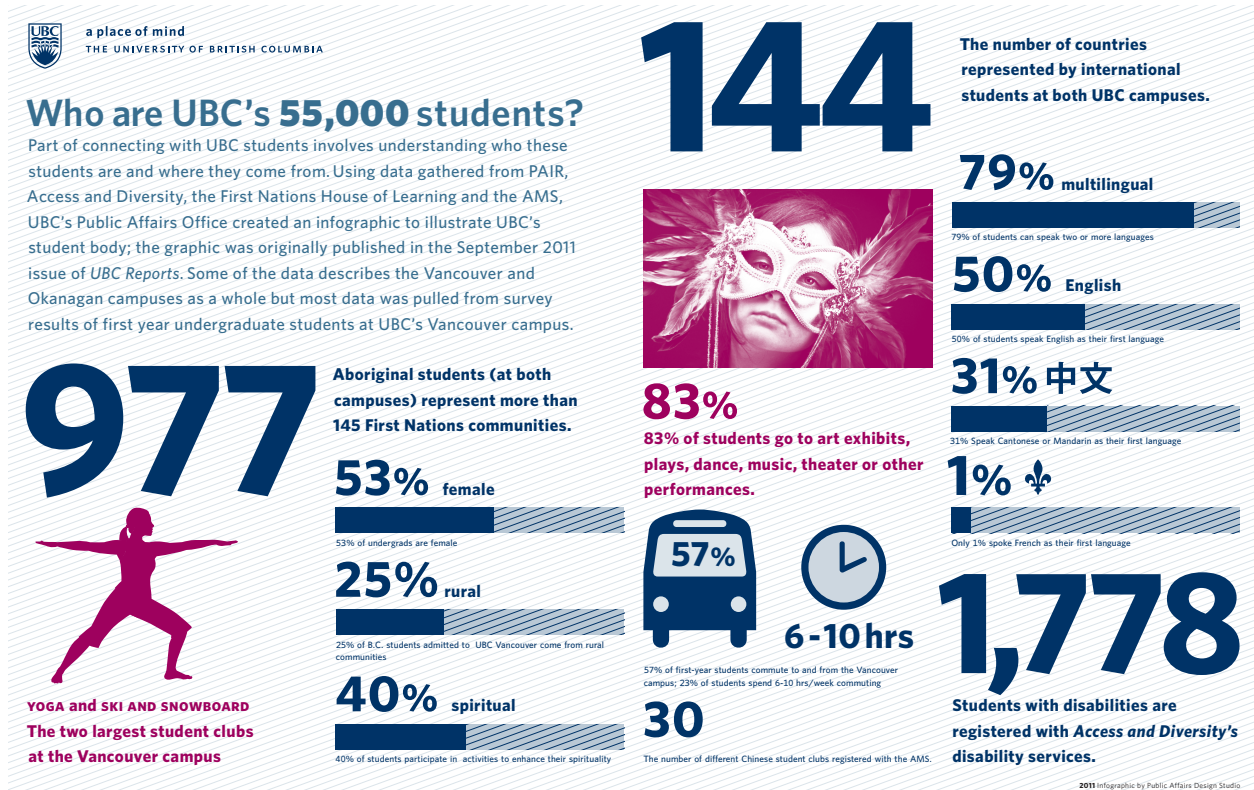
Students and Alumni	Place and People	Expertise and Experience
(1) The rich and complex diversity of its student body and alumni; (2) Student and alumni expectations and readiness for a greater intercultural experience. (3) One of the largest constituents of international students in North America, giving domestic students unprecedented opportunity for cultural knowledge and interpersonal connections.	(4) The UBC Vancouver campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam People, surrounded by culturally diverse communities, and situated on and highly connected to the Pacific Rim; (5) The rich sociocultural diversity of UBCV's immediate and surrounding communities; (6) The rich sociocultural diversity and expertise of UBCV's staff in areas related to intercultural understanding, in both academic areas and student development.	(7) The University's considerable success in recruiting students and faculty from all over the world (including the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal graduate students) ¹ ; (8) UBC's proven leadership in creating intercultural learning experiences in Vancouver and abroad; (9) UBC's many internationally recognized academic and administrative centres with expertise in intercultural understanding and related fields.
Faculty (10) UBCV is home to a highly diverse range of world-leading researchers and experts in areas related to intercultural understanding, world-class researchers with high degrees of intercultural fluency across all disciplines, and scholars who are passionate and experienced in integrating intercultural understanding into learning and research.		

1.3 Being a Diverse Community is Not Enough

Being a highly diverse campus has great value.

A diverse university has the potential for intellectual diversity and enriched learning. According to an analysis of research about the benefit of diversity to campuses conducted by Daryl G. Smith and Natalie B. Schonfeld (2000), "Studies on cognitive development show that critical thinking, problem-solving capacities, and cognitive complexity increase for all students exposed to diversity on the campus and in the classroom."

¹ <http://www.publicaffairs.ubc.ca/2012/05/22/largest-class-of-aboriginal-mds-graduate-from-ubc/>



The assumption has been that contact with various kinds of diversity produces a depth of understanding across cultures. In UBC's experience, however, being a multicultural campus—a campus where different cultures peacefully co-exist (or appear to)—does not necessarily mean students acquire intercultural understanding.

Research reveals that contact or exposure to diversity does not necessarily produce intercultural understanding (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2008). Similarly, as experiences with people different than oneself do not necessarily produce an understanding about difference, that experience on its own does not necessarily lead to learning (Kolb, 1984). As simply stated in *Valuing Difference: A Strategy for Advancing Equity and Diversity at UBC*, despite the potential benefit of diverse universities, "Being a diverse community is not enough."²

Intercultural understanding does happen at UBC Vancouver, but does not occur on its own. It requires clear intent, purposeful self-reflection, a supportive cultural context and the integration of intercultural approaches into the systems of the University.

1.4 Identifying the Intercultural Need

The development of the *Intercultural Promise* involved an extensive research and consultative process. This included a review of research and literature pertaining to intercultural understanding, a peer institution review, and a needs assessment at UBCV.

The needs assessment or "naming the pain" was conducted to ensure the framework around intercultural understanding was not just strategic, but as meaningful as possible to students, alumni, staff and faculty. In being very specific about the barriers to intercultural understanding, there is an opportunity to envision a campus without them, bringing UBC closer to articulating a vision for an intercultural campus. This phase included: over 250 individual staff and faculty interviews; conducting six (continuing) student focus groups; two consultative sessions with Heads and Directors (Heads Up), presentations to various

² *Valuing Difference: A Strategy for Advancing Equity and Diversity at UBC* (2010). p. 2.

units, the Board of Governors, the Alumni Association Board, and various groups of student leaders; and meetings with various student clubs. The needs assessment revealed the following set of faculty challenges and intercultural barriers and anxieties experienced by students.

1.5 Faculty Challenges with Diverse Campus

Faculty observed the following as the of top intercultural challenges as part of working at a highly diverse university (described in further detail in Appendix I, page 31):

- A growing cultural gap between faculty and students on academic expectations;
- The increasing demands of complex intercultural teaching environment;
- Insufficient rewards for excellence in (intercultural) Teaching and Service; and
- The lack of (cross-cultural) connection between students and faculty.

1.6 Classroom Barriers & Intercultural Anxieties

Similarly, students identified the following barriers to intercultural understanding:

- Cultural misunderstanding in the classroom (sometimes developing into conflict);
- Difficulty meeting new people in class;
- Self-segregation in class across ethnicity or race;
- Inability to engage in “high-risk conversations” (about cultural differences); and
- Not knowing how to engage instructors and profoundly different students.

In addition to these barriers, student focus groups identified the most acute intercultural issue amongst undergraduate students to be a growing tension between Canadian-born (or Canadian-raised) students and students that are new to Canada (either as international or new immigrant students), especially of the same ethnic group. A description of this issue and a list of intercultural anxieties observed by students can be found in Appendix I, page 32.

1.7 The Underlying Issues

The needs assessment aimed to identify the root causes of the “intercultural pain” experienced or observed by students, faculty and staff at UBC. It revealed three underlying issues at the heart of the intercultural challenges, barriers and anxieties.

These core issues parallel the following set of campus experiences, found to have a correlation to the development of intercultural understanding on university campuses (Rude, 2012).

- Interracial and/or cross-cultural friendships;
- Frequent discussions with socially and culturally different students, or faculty members with differing worldviews from one’s own; and
- Taking courses (might include training and professional development) where diverse cultures and perspectives are integrated into the course content or pedagogy.

These factors and the establishing of supportive organisational habits have become the focus of the University’s strategic goals around intercultural understanding (page 16).

1.8 B. Supporting Concepts: Identifying “the What”

The development of *The Intercultural Promise* also involved identifying some underlying ideas around intercultural understanding. These points of reference are essential for establishing a common language around *what* the University aims to do, resulting in better coordination between efforts across Faculties and administrative units.

1.9 What does *Intercultural Understanding* actually mean?

There are numerous definitions for intercultural understanding. For the purposes of fostering inclusion, the following definition was chosen:

Intercultural understanding refers to the breadth and depth of understanding across profound cultural difference wherein an individual or a group understands a variety of significant cultural experiences tied to forms of sociocultural difference, such as: (1.) ethnicity, race, religion, age, gender identity and expression, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, socio-economic class, immigration and in many cases academic, employment or professional status; (2.) the cultural histories, creative practices and faith perspectives of various social groups within a society; (3.) the interrelations between dominant and non-dominant cultures; (4.) the dynamics of difference; and (5.) the impact of these factors on power relations.³

Having intercultural understanding implies having the appropriate aptitudes needed to appreciate, and be open and flexible to various forms of social and cultural diversity.

This includes an acute sense of self-awareness, or “the ability to be aware of those values, attitudes, and assumptions”⁴ that inform one’s perspectives and behaviours; some degree of cultural knowledge in a variety of cultural environments; the capacity to communicate across cultural difference; and the ability to cultivate meaningful social relationships across culturally different groups.

As academic cultures remain the most dominant form of culture in a university, interdisciplinarity also requires intercultural understanding across disciplines.

1.10 Foundational Ideas Behind Intercultural Understanding

There are four foundational ideas that help to establish the conceptual framework for intercultural understanding. That intercultural understanding:

- Is *not an end to itself*, but contributing to well-being or social sustainability;
- Is the natural progression of multiculturalism—distinct from and *more than* multiculturalism;
- Involves the development of *intercultural fluency*, the combination of attitudes towards diversity, knowledge about cultures and difference, and interpersonal skills that contribute to one’s capacity for communication and relationship-building across different cultures (described further on page 11 and in Appendix I); and
- Requires a cultural shift through sustained learning and appropriate adjustments to the University’s norms and expectations, policies, protocols and processes (see *Facilitating Organisational Change* in Appendix I, page 33).

³ Adapted from the definition used by Penn State, University Faculty Senate Curriculum Resources, Glossary: http://www.psu.edu/ufs/curriculum_resources/guide/glossary.html (Dec 2011).

⁴ Pope, R. L., Reynolds, A. L., & Mueller, J. A. (2004). *Multicultural competence in student affairs*. (pp. 15). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.



Above photo: CIRS green roof. Photo by Don Erhardt.

1.11 **Not an End in Itself: Contributing to the Wellbeing of Students, Faculty and Staff**

The fostering of intercultural skills and experiences is not an end unto itself, but the key ingredient to UBC's excellence as a global university, and the University's strategic goals in research and teaching.

Advancing intercultural understanding ultimately contributes to the wellbeing of students, faculty and staff, particularly in how they interact and connect as members of one of the most diverse campuses in the world—also described by the UBC Sustainability Initiative as “vibrant human interaction and community cohesion”.

Vibrant human interaction and community cohesion amongst profoundly different people is a major concern of many large cities across Canada and around the world. A recent study conducted by The Vancouver Foundation identified isolation and disconnectedness across ethno-cultural communities as the most pressing issue for the future of the Lower Mainland.⁵ The solutions that emerge at UBC have the potential to benefit the social or human sustainability of cities much larger in scale.

The goals around intercultural understanding might also be framed as contributing to a “net positive” or regenerative campus, in the same way that the Centre for Interactive Research on Sustainability (CIRS) is a net positive building. To be a campus that yields more “social good” in the form of constructive dialogue, intellectual diversity, social inclusion and openness to complexity—as opposed to fostering xenophobia, prejudice, anxiety and isolation—is not unlike the challenges that cities like Vancouver are facing.

⁵ Connections and Engagement. (2012). *A survey of metro Vancouver* [Report]. Vancouver Foundation.

1.12 Emerging and Distinct from Multiculturalism

The Intercultural Promise builds upon the assumption that an intercultural experience and environment is distinct from, but comes out of a multicultural learning or work environment.

The principles of multiculturalism—towards peaceful coexistence and cultural pluralism—are an ideal foundation for intercultural understanding, or dynamic interaction and a shared sense of belonging across cultural groups. On other words, a campus needs to first have diversity before it can foster intercultural understanding. However, as previously stated, a multicultural environment does not necessarily produce intercultural understanding, as exposure and contact with diversity does not guarantee an understanding of that diversity.

The commitment towards intercultural understanding requires that UBC aim to be *more than a multicultural campus*, through more intentional, integrated and supportive efforts towards interconnectedness and exchange across cultures.

1.13 Growing Intercultural Fluency



Intercultural fluency is being introduced to describe what the University aims to develop in students, faculty, staff and alumni. Intercultural fluency as a conceptual framework draws from various related literature and is the derivative of two basic and familiar ideas—academic fluency and “cultural fluency” (Kosuth, 1966; Tatsushi Arai, 2006).

Intercultural fluency comes from a combination of intercultural aptitudes (including, self-awareness and an appreciation of sociocultural diversity), various intercultural and interpersonal skills (such as a capacity for cross-cultural communication and relationship building) and intercultural knowledge (such as a knowledge of diverse cultures and oppressed groups, and their history, traditions, values and customs).



Intercultural Awareness

The key component to intercultural fluency is the development of “intercultural awareness” (Kohls, R.L. and Knight, 1994; Baker, 2011; Baker 2012), which includes the self-awareness or self-knowledge of one’s cultural values and assumptions, the openness to diversity and the acceptance that one’s own approach is not universal. This is sometimes referred to as “multicultural awareness” (Pope, Reynolds, & Mueller, 2004), “intergroup competencies” (Ramsey & Latting, 2005), or “intercultural competency” (Deardorff, 2009) in literature.



Intercultural Communication



Cultural Literacy



Intercultural Capital

Intercultural fluency also requires the development of “interpersonal capacity”, the interpersonal skills that equip one to be more fluent in a variety of cultures. This includes cultural knowledge (or Cultural Literacy), some capacity to communicate across cultures (Intercultural Communication Skills) and growing one’s network of social connections in various communities (Intercultural Capital).

Working definitions of these terms can be found in Appendix II, page 34.

1.14 C. Guiding Values and Approach: Identifying “the How”

A common sense of *how* the University aims to achieve intercultural understanding is as important as consensus on *the what*. Inherent in the development and implementation of *The Intercultural Promise*, is an approach composed of the following guiding values, derived from literature and input from students, staff and faculty on advancing and embedding intercultural understanding into every aspect of UBC:

- **People First**
Advancing diversity, equity, inclusion and intercultural understanding amongst students, alumni, faculty and staff is, first and foremost, about people—their relationships, perceptions and interaction with each other.
- **Build on Our Successes**
Operationally, *The Intercultural Promise* builds on the many examples of excellence at UBC and builds upon the success of previously rolled out strategic plans.
- **Connecting the Dots** (to be at least the sum of our parts)
There is no shortage of expertise, existing activities and ideas at UBC around increasing the intercultural understanding of students, faculty, staff and alumni. One of the biggest challenges is connecting the expertise and more effectively coordinating activities and resources, thereby reducing duplication and bringing about a critical mass on campus.
- **Going Viral**
The approach employed by the University can be characterized as “viral”, designed to facilitate the organic advancement of the idea and ideals of intercultural understanding throughout UBC’s many systems.
- **Emergent Solutions**
The process of developing *The Intercultural Promise* has been one of co-authorship, through extensive and on-going collaboration and input from throughout the University. The end goal of this strategic plan is not to provide the “UBC solution” or vision of what an intercultural campus looks and sounds like, but to establish a common place of understanding from where meaningful and tangible solutions can emerge.

1.15 D. Building on *Place and Promise*

Students and faculty come from across Canada and around the world to be part of UBC’s vision of “an exceptional learning environment that fosters global citizenship, advances a civil and sustainable society, and supports outstanding research”. Intercultural understanding is needed to deliver on this promise.

The University’s commitment to intercultural understanding cannot be met solely through *The Intercultural Promise*, as the aspirations and challenges are complex and multifaceted. Rather, intercultural understanding will be achieved as an extension of the existing mid-level strategic plans, building upon and supplementing present work and activity.

With a range of concurrent mid-level plans at play, it is critical that the goals around intercultural understanding not add to the burden or workload on Faculties, Deans, Department Heads and units already advancing aspects of *Place and Promise*. At this stage of *Place and Promise*, is it imperative that initiatives fulfill as many strategic commitments as possible, spanning across as many mid-level plans as possible. See Appendix III (page 42) for how intercultural understanding advances the other mid-level strategic plans.

We are one humanity and each deeply different.
We may find no better place in which to embrace this paradox than the university. Differences in values, circumstance, and intellectual viewpoint have incited humankind's worst conflicts. Considered with respect, they afford great learning. Wholly embraced, they promise to be our greatest strength.

Place and Promise, The UBC Plan

2.1 A. What Exactly Do You Want Me to Do?

This plan strives to provide a framework for the implementation of intercultural understanding at three levels: support and commitment at *the University level*, practical and concrete application at the *unit level*, and meaningful self-development at the individual or *personal level*. This plan aims to match the desire and personal commitment at the individual level, to activity being done at the unit level, that is also being resourced and supported at the University level *in six key areas*.

Implementation at the **University level** requires a clearly defined commitment to facilitate, encourage and enhance activities already being or might be undertaken by faculty, staff and students across six strategic areas of focus (Fig. 1). The priority at the university level is to empower academic departments and administrative units to contribute to the strategic goals in their own unique way, while also recommending specific actions for those who would prefer the direction.

At the **unit level**, implementation involves a commitment to integrate at least two of the strategic goals as an entry point, the development of an action plan that spans five to seven years, and the sharing of success stories and promising practices. For those needing more concrete direction, the University will provide suggestions, support and resources on an on-going basis, drawing from the promising practices already being used across disciplines. At the **personal level**, the University is inviting faculty, staff, students and alumni to make an individual commitment to the strategic plan and the personal development of intercultural fluency.

This strategic plan asks that individuals consider how one's role or function can further the University's commitment to intercultural understanding, particularly by contributing to greater levels of intercultural or interdisciplinary interaction and a stronger sense of community cohesion. For faculty, implementation might involve embedding intercultural understanding into one's teaching, research and community engagement; for staff, implementation might begin with various activities that raise one's cultural literacy to be more effective with students; and for students, it might encompass initiatives that build a more robust network or foster dialogue across cultural groups.

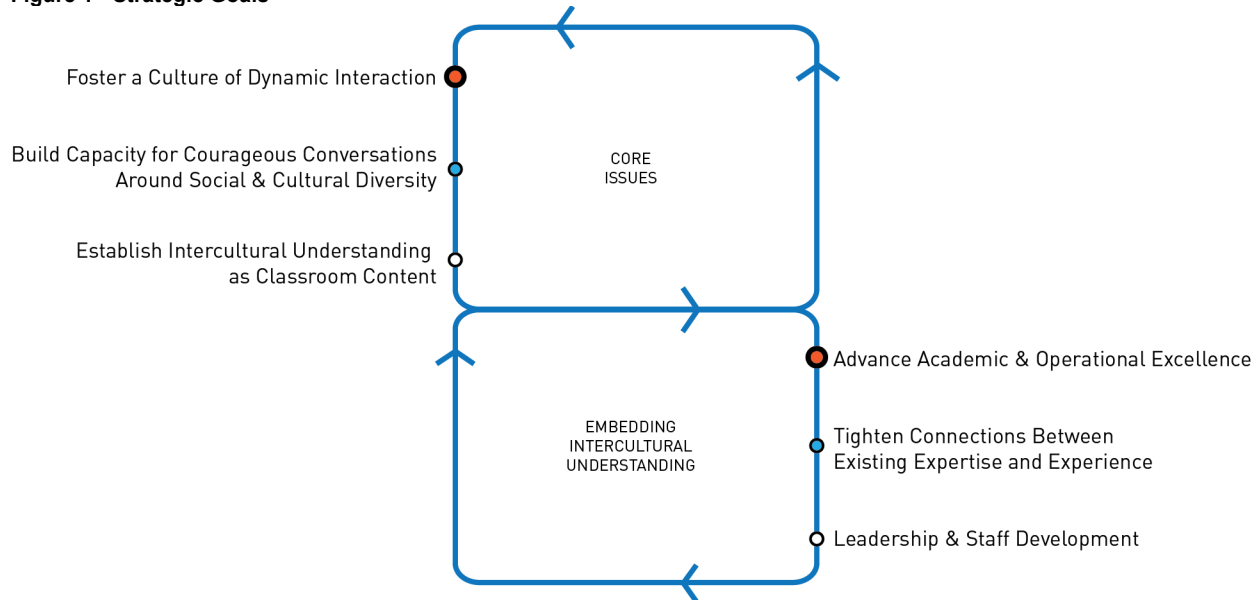
INTERCULTURAL FLUENCY LEADS TO BETTER DECISION-MAKING

Intercultural awareness—a key element of intercultural fluency—is essential for decision-making at all levels; thereby making intercultural fluency a core leadership competency for today's leadership. In 2007, senior management of CBC Sports launched Hockey Night in Canada (HNIC) in Punjabi. In previous years, management presumed the audience of HNIC to reflect the popular perception. Out of curiosity, CBC commissioned a two-year consumer study, which in 2007 revealed that almost all ethnic groups surveyed had a higher propensity to watch HNIC than white audiences. Completely opposite from public belief and stereotypes, the study showed that South Asian and Filipino TV audiences were the most likely to watch HNIC. Shortly after, CBC Sports found Punjabi-speaking sportscasters with a passion and knowledge of hockey, and began broadcasting select hockey games in Punjabi. Within weeks of the broadcasts, CBC received letters from members of the public, saying that when watching hockey in their mother language (or their grandparent's language), they had never felt more Canadian.

2.2 B. Strategic Goals: Aim for Where It Really Counts

The commitment to provide learning and working environments that fosters intercultural understanding in students, faculty, staff and alumni is achieved through six strategic goals. These goals further break down into concrete actions at both the University level and the unit level.

Figure 1 - Strategic Goals



Drawing from this strategic plan's needs assessment, the first three goals target the root causes of UBC's intercultural challenges. In extensive consultation with faculty, staff and students, three core issues surfaced as the root source of UBC's intercultural struggles.

2.2.1 As strategic goals, they are both the foundation *and the measure* of an intercultural campus. They include:

1. To be a campus where students, staff and faculty more easily form meaningful social relationships by **fostering a culture of dynamic interaction** across cultural differences and disciplines;
2. To grow the capacity for students, faculty, staff and alumni to engage in **difficult or courageous conversations** about and across social and cultural differences;
3. To experience intercultural understanding as **classroom content**, through curriculum, pedagogy and/or student intervention.

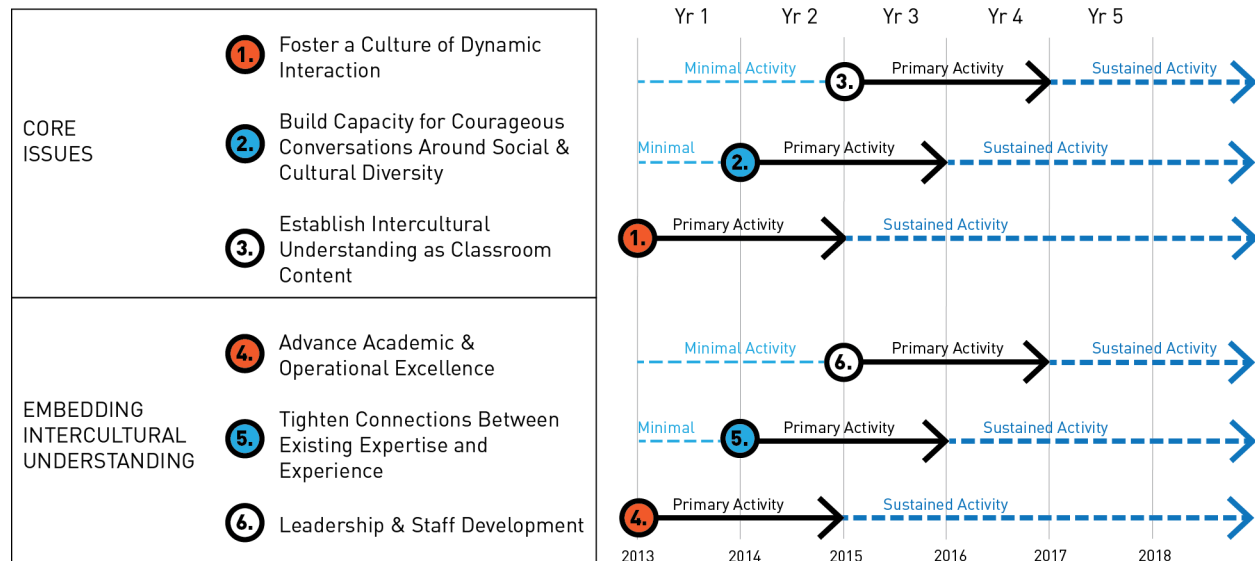
2.2.2 The next three goals target the organisational adjustments or habits needed to effectively and meaningfully embed intercultural understanding into all aspects of the University experience, in a concrete and lasting way.

4. To employ intercultural understanding as a means to **advance academic and operational excellence**;
5. To be at least the sum of our parts by **tightening the connections between existing expertise and experience**; and
6. To enhance our leadership expectations and support of UBC staff through **leadership and staff development**, in ways that are structurally effective and innovative.

2.3 C. Strategic and Staggered Approach

This strategic plan presents a framework for approaching the six strategic goals in a strategic sequence over time. As all six strategic goals or areas of focus are needed to succeed at the commitment to intercultural understanding, they function as focal points for consistent and on-going support from the University.

Figure 2 - Strategic Focus Over Time



- 2.3.1 To be more effective at reaching these strategic goals, and as units are at different levels of readiness and have access to different levels of resources, units are encouraged to choose and concentrate on *one to two goals per set*.

It is recommended that units approach the goals in phases, staggered over a period of five to seven years, in such a way that progressively builds upon the next set of goals, as outlined in the diagram above (Fig. 2).

It is highly recommended that as a minimum, Goals 1 and 4, be integrated into existing initiatives as the “primary activity” for Year 1 and Year 2, followed by “sustained activity” (activities that sustain these goals, as opposed to initiating them). Goals 2 and 5 become the primary activity for Year 2 and Year 3; and likewise, Goals 3 and 6 become the primary activity in Year 3 and Year 4. By Year 5, all strategic goals have been initiated and are in a phase of sustained activity.

This strategic order is recommended as the first pair of goals, “fostering a culture of dynamic interaction” and “advancing operational and academic excellence”, provide a foundation for the next pair of goals, and so on; thereby making the following set of goals easier to achieve.

The opposite can also be true. Providing staff development before a Faculty has articulated how intercultural understanding contributes to academic or operational excellence is certainly doable, but may be short-lived or later experience barriers to accessing resources.

- 2.3.2 This approach allows for units to be focused on at least two goals in each year (one from each set), and depending on a unit’s capacity, gives units the option to reduce any overlap with the other goals, if required.

2.4 Strategic Goal 1: **Foster a Culture of Dynamic Interaction**

UBC aims to support a strong sense of collegiality while maintaining cultural pluralism, where students more easily make friends across cultures, and faculty and staff experience more meaningful social connections across disciplines and areas.

Cultivating meaningful and dynamic social relationships across cultural and disciplinary differences—particularly in the classroom, in research and in the workplace—is at the heart of growing empathy, cultivating innovation and producing academic, research and workplace excellence. It is also an urgent matter. According to recent research, students must catch the window of opportunity to establish relationships across cultures and disciplines in their first year on campus (Rude, 2012). Anecdotally, this progressive isolation affects new staff and faculty.

- 2.4.1 For many students, “dynamic interaction” means being able to make meaningful connections, often friendship, with students of different cultural perspectives—something all students expect from attending an international university. Sometimes referred to as “high-quality peer relations”, this is essential for students’ academic success and mental health, and key to meaningful connection with alumni. This is equally essential for faculty and staff, and can include a range of social connections, across disciplines and administrative units, often described as a strong sense of collegiality.

UBC’s topography, size and disciplinary structure pose some obvious barriers to friend-making and fostering collegial relationships, and are partly to blame for an environment often characterized as “cold” and “impersonal.” Dynamic interaction—from professional collaboration to collegial friendship—across profound social and cultural differences, is the truest measure of intercultural understanding and is foundational to having intercultural experiences in the classroom and courageous conversations about sociocultural diversity.

Actions (What)	Recommendations (How)	Measurement
Increase faculty and staff capacity to foster high-quality peer relationships, across departments and units.	1. Establish structured initiatives that facilitate relationship building across disciplines and areas, with a particular focus on new faculty and staff. This may include: common spaces; repeated opportunities to share, exchange and build relationships over time and across departments; partnering with intercultural organisations (HR, Faculty Relations, Provost, Community Engagement, Deans).	Faculty and staff report having more meaningful and dynamic peer relationships across disciplines and areas.
Support student-generated solutions to fostering high-quality peer relationships in and outside the classroom.	2. In partnership with an undergrad student consultancy group and a graduate student subject matter expert group, support students to develop and lead student-focused solutions. This might include workshops, campaigns, dialogues and social and cultural programming targeted at alleviating students’ intercultural anxieties (page 32) and especially focused on first-year students. (VP Students, Provost, Students)	Students report more diverse circles of friends, and/or increased high-quality peer relationships in the classroom, and across cultures.
Coordinate cultural programming on campus to foster shared intercultural experiences.	3. In partnership with UBC’s Cultural Centres, student groups and community, encouraging students, faculty, staff and alumni to engage in and/or attend key contemporary cross/inter-cultural artistic and creative expression, such as screenings, exhibits and/or theatrical or musical performances, aimed at fostering cultural literacy and developing intercultural awareness. (Cultural Centres, Faculty of Arts, HR, FNHL, C&CP).	Students, faculty, staff and alumni participate in a rich range of cultural offerings that reflect diverse cultural perspectives and foster a heightened level of intercultural awareness.

2.5 Strategic Goal 2:

Build UBC's Capacity for Courageous Conversations

UBC aims to establish university-wide standards, practices and resources for facilitating difficult or courageous conversations, including the growing of individual and departmental capacity for difficult or courageous conversations amongst students, faculty and staff.

Courageous conversations are an essential aspect of the university experience. Understanding the diverse pressures on students—such as conflicting attitudes towards dating or parental pressure to succeed—is part of being an international campus.

- 2.5.1 Universities, by their nature, are supposed to be a safe space for uncomfortable, but informed and respectful conversations, intellectual debate and cross-cultural conflict. As all conflict is “cultural” in some measure, being a safe space for well-managed conflict and the capacity to engage in potentially difficult conversations almost always requires intercultural aptitudes. It also requires an understanding and mitigation of asymmetrical power imbalances and other forms of disparity between groups on campus. The interpersonal skills and grasp of language necessary to engage and participate in uncomfortable, informed and respectful discussions around highly sensitive topics or issues with high potential for conflict—what this strategic plan is calling *high-risk* or *courageous conversations*—is essential to academic and operational excellence at UBCV.
- 2.5.2 UBCV has the potential to build its institutional capacity for courageous conversations by drawing on and connecting the University's many experts and subject-matter expert groups specializing in cross-cultural dialogue, conflict resolution and diversity, equity and intercultural issues. The Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology's (CTLT) “Living Lab” theatre-based workshops that equip participants to talk about difference, racism, prejudice and oppression; the Academic Leadership Development Program's (ADLP) Conflict Resolution training; and the First Nations House of Learning's (FNHL) deliberate dialogue around the historic mistreatment of Aboriginal Peoples through the Indian Residential School System are strong examples. The Cultural Centres of the Vancouver campus (see page 26) also have great potential to use artistic expression as an entry point for addressing complex issues.
- 2.5.3 Actions related to this goal build upon the University's activity around equity and diversity, and the *Respectful Environment Statement*, which provides the fundamental guidelines for all behaviour at UBC. The recommendations aim to harness the demand and wealth of ideas, across all disciplines, for dialogues about sensitive issues related to social and cultural difference. More dialogues are not necessarily a measure of success or intercultural understanding. Rather, increased capacity for courageous conversations requires trained facilitation, guidelines, group preparedness, mentorship, structural supports, shared civic virtues, resilience amongst participants, a building upon “less risky” conversations and a culture of dynamic interaction across culturally different groups (as per Goal 1).

Actions (What)	Recommendations (How)	Measurement
Establish standards and network of supports for high-risk conversation, based on existing best practices and a coordinated calendar of dialogues.	<p>4. Establish guidelines and develop training for facilitating and supporting high-risk conversation, based on UBCV's expertise (Ombuds for Students, Equity Office, VP Students, CS CIC, CTLT, HR).</p> <p>5. Modelled on the existing centres of excellence (FNHL, SJC) and community of practice (VP Students, HR, Faculties), establish spatial and facilitation standards needed for hosting high-risk conversation and designation as safe spaces (Provost).</p>	Establishment of coordinated calendar of dialogues will enable the tracking of sufficiently organized and well-supported high-risk conversations across the University.

<p>Ensure students, faculty and staff are fully aware of these supports, and how to access them.</p>	<p>6. Support the central coordination of related intercultural dialogues and related conversations on (or the intersectionality of) cultural experiences tied to ethnicity, race, religion, gender identity and expression, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, socio-economic class, migration, and in many cases academic, employment or professional status; the cultural histories, creative practices and faith perspectives of various social groups; the interrelations between dominant and non-dominant cultures, and the dynamics of difference, etc.</p>	
<p>Facilitate and support student-driven coordination of courageous conversations, facilitator training and related supports.</p>	<p>7. In partnership with existing student development programs establish a student task force that supports student development of training and student-driven initiatives the provide students with opportunities to participate in and facilitate high-risk conversations that engage some of the most pressing student issues at UBC around diversity (Peer Programs, Student Leadership Conference, Global Lounge, Access & Diversity, Equity Office, Provost).</p> <p>8. Establish an Undergraduate Student Advisory (PPEC) and a Graduate Student Subject Matter Expert Group (G1) who coordinate schedule of related university-wide student dialogues.</p>	<p>Students, faculty, staff and alumni report having more productive and more meaningful high-risk conversations while at UBC.</p>
<p>Support and encourage high-risk conversations within faculties on topics specific to disciplines and Colleges.</p>	<p>9. In partnership with faculties, identify high-risk topics specific to faculties and disciplines, and support the staff and faculty engagement of related issues (Provost, Deans, Heads).</p>	

Related faculty support is described on pages 23-24, and leadership and staff development on page 25.

- 2.5.4 For courageous conversations and dialogues to be truly intercultural, they need to be inclusive of multilingual perspectives. With 79 percent of students at the Vancouver campus speaking two or more languages, there is an opportunity to explore innovative ways of engaging UBC students who are not native-English speakers. Similar to Dr. Lee's use of Chinese text to heighten student engagement (page 6), so must these dialogues seek ways to be linguistically diverse and inclusive.
- 2.5.5 The guidelines and standards must also be appropriately accessible in languages other than English, and recognize that not all cultures train, encourage or expect students or faculty to speak openly about sensitive issues. Moreover, personal experiences, intergenerational legacies and experiences with racism, language barriers and power imbalances also shape an interest in and the classroom or workplace climate for courageous conversations. Disengagement, or the reluctance to participate or to draw attention to oneself may also reflect a history and/or experience of being marginalized, bullied, or intergenerational trauma (Goodman and West-Olatunji, 2010).

Comprehending the range of cultural orientations and factors influencing ones engagement in high-risk conversations is key to UBC's success at intercultural understanding.

2.6 Strategic Goal 3:

Establish Intercultural Understanding as Classroom Content

UBC aims to facilitate the learning of intercultural fluency through curriculum, course content, pedagogy and/or student intervention.

- 2.6.1 Intercultural understanding must be learned, demonstrated and supported in the classroom for it to become part of UBC's core activity as a university. The diversity of students in every classroom presents possibilities of intercultural learning, but can also be a source of intercultural tension, cliquing and miscommunication. Unsupported, a classroom's diversity can heighten the difficulty for faculty to effectively teach across cultures, encourage group interaction and manage the diversity of academic expectations. As a substantial proportion of students commute to UBC, limiting their opportunity for acquiring intercultural fluency through extra-curricular or campus activity, it is critical that intercultural fluency be made a part of classroom learning. This strategic focus aims to provide a variety of tools and supports needed to bring intercultural fluency into a range of classroom experiences.
- 2.6.2 How intercultural understanding is made a part of the learning experience differs across disciplines and departments. For some, a depth of understanding across profound cultural differences is core subject matter and easily visible in the curriculum; for other departments, intercultural fluency is essential to professional practice—an indispensable set of skills and knowledge needed to thrive within diverse teams or serve clients from all over the world. For many areas, it is a combination of these approaches.
- 2.6.3 Making classrooms the primary place for learning intercultural understanding requires distinct Faculty-specific approaches: what might work for the Humanities may not be suitable for the Sciences, for example. Supporting departments in integrating intercultural understanding into the classroom will require creativity, innovation and building upon and sharing of what is already working.

Actions (What)	Recommendations (How)	Measurement
Facilitate the departmental capacity to integrate intercultural understanding into the curriculum through course content and/or pedagogy.	<p>10. Establish a task force of academic Heads for the development of guidelines, recommendations and targets for the integration of intercultural understanding into curriculum (Provost, Deans).</p> <p>11. Establish a living online inventory of how various courses have integrated intercultural understanding into the curriculum, course content and pedagogy (Provost, Deans, Department Heads).</p>	<p>Students report on the integration of intercultural understanding into learning material (course evaluation).</p> <p>Academic leadership report bi-annually on the integration of intercultural understanding into curriculum.</p>
Reduce faculty's intercultural challenges through classroom supports and initiatives.	12. Establish faculty working groups to oversee the piloting and testing of initiatives that develop practical tools that alleviate intercultural difficulties (see page 10) experienced and/or observed by faculty.	Faculty report a noticeable decrease of intercultural challenges or difficulties in their experiences at UBC.
Establish an intercultural understanding course coding system and audit modelled after the University Sustainability Initiative and Aboriginal Studies.	13. Develop a course coding system and conduct course audit, modelled after UBC's Sustainability course requirements (Provost, USI). <i>Not intended to create a mandatory requirement, but to provide information to students on what courses facilitate various kinds of intercultural experiences and learning.</i>	Students report having learned intercultural understanding in the classroom experience, through either content and/or experiential learning.

<p>Support and expand existing academic programs that foster intercultural learning.</p>	<p>14. Encourage the development of robust community service projects, community service learning, community based research, research-based community outreach and related activity as integrated into courses.</p> <p>15. Develop a for-credit Certificate and/or Minor in Intercultural Communications, based on the existing program offered by the Centre for Intercultural Communication at Continuing Studies.</p> <p>16. Expand the on-campus impact of Go Global and community service learning through campus-wide communications campaign focused on sharing the transformational process experienced by students.</p>	<p>A measured increase in the number of courses (and thereby students who have taken courses) with an integrated level of community service learning, intercultural community research, intercultural artistic projects, community based research, community-directed curriculum and/or designed to develop intercultural communication skills or other intercultural aptitudes and skills.</p>
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Related faculty support is described on pages 23-24, and leadership and staff development on page 25.

- 2.6.4 There are numerous departments whose mandate and subject matter advance intercultural understanding for both graduate and undergraduate students, including the Bachelor of Science (Global Resource Systems) Degree Program; Department of Asian Studies; Specialization in International Forestry; Institute of Asian Research; Conflict Resolution, Arts and iNtercultural Experience (CRANE); Cultural Psychology, Language and Literacy Education, Liu Institute of Global Issues; Immigrant Vancouver Ethnographic Field School (IVEFS) and Educational and Counselling Psychology. This plan will build upon these and other existing academic programs and the expertise they present the University (a more complete list can be found on pages 28 - 29).

INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING AS PROFESSIONAL PREPAREDNESS

Kinesiology graduates increasingly work in a variety of health settings with diverse populations, requiring an education that has provided the opportunities to develop the intercultural knowledge and skill needed to work effectively with people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. To address this, the School of the Kinesiology has developed *KIN 465 Interculturalism, Health and Physical Activity*, a course that critically examines debates around multiculturalism, as they relate to the delivery of physical activity for different populations. The course explores how physical activity practices are connected to health in different cultural contexts and the implications this poses for today's kinesiology professional.

Using a combination of community service learning and classroom discussion, this course provides an enriched community-based educational experience that questions what skills and knowledge kinesiology professionals need to work effectively in a variety of intercultural contexts, including local Aboriginal communities; how policy can limit or enhance intercultural understanding through physical activity (and vice versa); how health and physical activity are understood and practised in different cultures; and how processes of migration and discrimination disrupt health and physical activity participation.

Developed by Dr. Wendy Frisby, KIN 465 aims to not only prepare UBC students to find innovative ways to enrich the wellbeing of highly diverse urban populations, but also facilitates self-knowledge of cultural bias, the overall development of intercultural awareness, and a literacy in diversity and equity issues.

2.7 Strategic Goal 4:

Advance Academic & Operational Excellence in Faculties

UBC aims to reinforce and boost operational, research and teaching excellence through intercultural understanding.

- 2.7.1 Intercultural understanding and the development of intercultural fluency contribute towards, and in themselves a form of, academic excellence. In addition to this, fostering intercultural understanding also contributes to the academic and operational excellence of Faculties. When integrated, intercultural understanding becomes a means to achieving a Faculty's priorities and aspirations, especially towards the fulfillment of the commitments of *Place and Promise*.
- 2.7.2 Although the approach to intercultural understanding in the classroom differs across departments, the development of intercultural fluency in operational practices and in how UBC's faculty and staff relate to students and each other, does contribute to the functionality of the department and Faculty.
- 2.7.3 This plan recognizes that departments have unique strengths and needs in this regard, and that some are more able to respond to UBCV's diversity than others. This strategic plan also recognizes that departments are on a continuum, and therefore aims to support the overall success of departments, using intercultural understanding as means to that end.
- 2.7.4 Supporting Faculties' vision for excellence involves:
- Analysis of how "excellence" is culturally defined at UBCV and to what extent units value and accommodate culturally-different perspectives of "excellence" (as it may pertain to teaching, family responsibility and make-up, and physical and mental well-being, for example);
 - Helping UBCV's Faculties clearly identify and articulate how intercultural understanding (or the development of intercultural fluency) in staff, faculty and students advances aspirations towards academic and workplace excellence, or contributes to resolving a faculty's challenges in a meaningful way; and
 - Strong faculty and staff incentives and reward for integrating intercultural fluency into operational, teaching and research excellence, and for contributing to the scholarship around the challenges and solutions of intercultural understanding.

It also involves directly supporting Department Heads by:

- Clearly providing supports and resources, such as best practices and access to expertise across disciplines, taking into consideration existing constraints on Departments (and may include access to supports and resources for multilingual material and research);
- Recognizing and sharing local department-driven solutions to UBC's most critical intercultural challenges amongst faculty, staff and students; and,
- Equipping Teaching Assistants, New Faculty and Sessional Instructors with knowledge and skills needed to deliver intercultural instruction and foster intercultural fluency in the classroom.

Actions (What)	Recommendations (How)	Measurement
Encourage a strong connection between intercultural understanding and faculty goals and objectives.	17. Supporting Deans and Department Heads in articulating the contribution of intercultural understanding towards their faculty goals and objectives, as an integrated component of faculty and/or departmental strategic planning.	External Reviews identify use of intercultural understanding as means towards achievement of faculty and departmental goals.

Actions (What)	Recommendations (How)	Measurement
Establish strong incentives and rewards for operational and research excellence contributing to intercultural understanding.	<p>18. Building upon the Faculty Research Awards & Prizes and the recently launched Equity Research Awards, the creation of a research prize for outstanding research that contributes to intercultural understanding (research in cross-cultural relations, intercultural conflict resolution, workplace diversity, religious pluralism, and aspects of social sustainability, for example).</p> <p>19. Ensuring existing incentives and rewards acknowledge that research excellence with or in community, cultural groups and/or disadvantage groups requires more intercultural skill and time.</p> <p>20. Creation of an Award on Social Sustainability within an existing award for faculty, staff, or student initiatives that demonstrate excellence in contributing to intercultural understanding on campus.</p>	Measured engagement of faculties, staff community of practice and student groups in the articulation of UBC's vision for an intercultural campus experience.

2.7.5 Supports for Leaders: Heads & Directors, and M&P Staff

Make UBC's existing resources, expertise, best practices and department-driven solutions more accessible.	<p>21. Collecting, mapping and effective sharing of existing faculty and staff expertise, promising practices, and working solutions across departments.</p> <p>22. Creation of templates, guidelines and related supports (such as solution-driven examples) for Department Heads wanting to use intercultural understanding towards the achievement of department goals, or resolution of department challenges.</p>	
Design of a strategic communications and outreach program specific to Heads & Directors.	23. On the recommendation of Heads and Directors, develop a user-friendly series that breaks down the intercultural understanding strategic plan into bite-sized pieces, focused on practical tips, taking time constraints into consideration.	

2.7.6 Teaching Assistants, New Faculty and Sessional Instructors

Develop and provide intercultural teaching supports for new faculty, sessional instructors and teaching assistants.	24. Develop a system-wide intercultural training program for all incoming TAs, new faculty and sessional instructors (with an additional specialized training program to support international TAs.), designed to be customized and delivered by faculties with the longer-term goal of establishing the capacity within faculties. Developed in partnership between Faculty of Education, CIC, FOGS, CTLT and HR.	TAs, new faculty and sessional instructors report improved teaching ability. Students report dramatic improvement to classroom climate.
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2.8 Strategic Goal 5: **Leadership and Staff Development**

UBC aims to embed intercultural fluency in UBC's leadership and staff.

- 2.8.1 UBC's academic and administrative leadership require intercultural fluency to be most effective in managing the complexities of an increasingly international student population and diverse workplace.

Similarly, as UBC's staff provide the key operational infrastructure to the University, they experience first-hand the benefit of greater intercultural fluency. It is critical that staff have access to opportunities and resources to support, advise and teach students, and manage all aspects of the University with greater intercultural fluency.

- 2.8.2 The following actions focus on the development of intercultural knowledge and skills needed for UBC's leadership and administrative management, Department Head and Directors, and administrative staff. It also impacts UBC's recruitment and search practices to intentionally seek out diversity in leadership and foster different styles of leadership. This strategic focus aims at integrating intercultural fluency into leadership expectations, as embedded in the existing *Managing at UBC* leadership development program (for more information on *Managing at UBC*, see hr.ubc.ca). Furthermore, this focus supports the creation of unit-level staff development plans, based on department needs and constraints.

2.8.3 **Leadership & Administrative Management**

Actions (What)	Recommendations (How)	Measurement
Establish intercultural knowledge, skills and abilities as core leadership competencies.	25. Incorporate ability to: effectively manage complexly diverse workplace; recognize and recruit for intercultural competencies; foster dynamic social relationships in a highly diverse workplace; and manage high-risk intercultural conversations into job descriptions and performance reviews for new leadership. Includes the intercultural fluency needed to conduct effective posting and hiring processes (Provost, HR).	Development of measurement tool (CIC, PAIR). Intercultural Staff Council (S1) report on leadership performance in intercultural matters.
Establish intercultural fluency as an integrated aspect of leadership development and training.	<p>26. Develop and implement modules in aspects of intercultural fluency and intercultural dialogue facilitation skills for existing leadership development, such as ADLP and <i>Managing at UBC</i> (CTLT, ODL, CS CIC, Provost).</p> <p>27. Build an Intercultural Fluency Stream for experienced managers at UBC through an integration of the Certificate in Intercultural Studies and <i>Managing at UBC</i> programs. Fall 2013 launch (HR, CIC).</p> <p>28. Establish clear protocols around the on-going identification and development of potential administrative leadership who possess intercultural assets.</p>	Faculty and staff report having knowledge and ability to model, manage, and engage in more productive high-risk conversations around intercultural matters, especially between faculty and students.

2.8.4 Staff Development

Identify candidates to serve as intercultural and diversity champions for training and capacity building across campus	29. Strengthen the intercultural fluency of key staff and faculty members across campus through in-depth intercultural training in the UBC Certificate in Intercultural Studies program (CIC). 30. Offer training for intercultural and diversity trainers with ongoing mentoring and development opportunities (CIC).	Staff report having access to meaningful and timely professional development, applicable to the broad range of intercultural needs of UBC faculty and students.
Provide creative development opportunities specific to the needs of administrative and frontline staff.	31. Pilot a range of activities, aimed at growing aspects of intercultural fluency (such as, intercultural awareness, cultural knowledge and intercultural communication skills) of administrative and frontline staff using cultural programming and/or other forms of cultural production (books, films, theatre, etc.).	

2.8.5 Fostering Intercultural Fluency through UBC Cultural Centres

UBC's Cultural Centres and creative departments are an asset to fostering campus experiences that encourage and facilitate the development of intercultural fluency. They are highly respected, world class, and already deliver intercultural programming. Deliberately programming cultural activity, performances, exhibits and screenings on campus that increase the knowledge of different cultural perspectives, in ways that are engaging, foster self-reflection and intercultural understanding, is an effective way to nurture and support the desired cultural shift towards a more inclusive and culturally literate campus environment. Cultural programming can also be an effective means of faculty and staff development, while avoiding "workshop fatigue". UBCV's centres of artistic and cultural production include at least the following:

- The Chan Centre for the Performing Arts
- The Morris and Helen Belkin Gallery
- The Museum of Anthropology at UBC
- UBC School of Music (Ethnomusicology)
- UBC Art History and Visual Art Department
- UBC Department of Theatre and Film

Leverage UBC Cultural Centres in fostering intercultural fluency	32. UBC Cultural Centres participate in the creation of a coordinated action plan around the delivery and outreach of intercultural programming to students, staff, faculty and alumni.	
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GROWING INTERCULTURAL FLUENCY IN STAFF

Seeking an innovative way to raise the Faculty's capacity to support an increasingly diverse population of students, the Faculty of Food and Land Systems piloted a series of discussions that invited academic advisors from various disciplines to attend two films at the Vancouver International Film Festival with a partner or guest, or to watch films on DVD that speak to the cultural backgrounds of their students.

Participants were required to keep a reflection journal and meet to discuss with other staff what they had observed. A schedule of films was developed, ranging in cultural topics, as per the group's self-identified needs. In support of this initiative, an inventory of films available at UBC's various libraries was started. This pilot provided staff the opportunity to take some personal initiative to better understand intercultural perspectives, it facilitated respectful discussion in a non-intimidating manner and offered a vehicle for staff from various areas to meet, build connections and learn about each other's professional work.

2.9 Strategic Goal 6:

Tighten Connections between Existing Expertise and Experience

UBC aims to strengthen or form linkages between areas already fostering an intercultural campus, teaching intercultural understanding and/or facilitating intercultural dialogue.

- 2.9.1 Success at this commitment will require being at least the *sum of our parts* in the area of intercultural understanding. This requires greater recognition of existing expertise and the coordinated support, connection and collaboration between academic and cultural centres, faculty departments and administrative units that are currently producing related programming, research, scholarly work and community engagement that fosters intercultural understanding.

Actions (What)	Recommendations (How)	Measurement
Acknowledge expertise, and share and use research generated at UBC in areas related to diversity, equity and intercultural understanding.	<p>33. Regularly showcase academic and administrative intellectual leadership in the area of diversity, equity and intercultural understanding through a schedule of opportunities for Deans, Heads, Directors, Administrators and Faculty to share research and expertise (might include Heads Up, on-campus speaking engagements, feature articles in university publications, and scheduled commentary).</p> <p>34. (Underway) Create a central academic resource on intercultural understanding in the main library, (in partnership with the Library Diversity Caucus and SLAIS), to support Student Directed Seminars, student and faculty research, and collect UBC research on topics related to intercultural understanding.</p> <p>35. (Underway) Create a central inventory of courses, practical examples, and initiatives that currently appear in teaching and research.</p>	<p>Inventory of new research being produced by academic centres around intercultural understanding and related topics.</p> <p>Reported use of the central academic resources.</p>
Increase the interconnectedness, partnership and exchange across disciplines in fields related to diversity, equity and intercultural understanding.	<p>36. Strengthen the coordination of intercultural understanding initiatives across faculties; facilitating collaboration, joint-funding and more efficient resourcing.</p> <p>37. Creation (underway) of a Faculty Subject Matter Expert Advisory Group (F1); and an Intercultural Staff Council (S1), a staff network representing UBC's community of practice (see page 21).</p> <p>38. In consultation with the Faculty Subject Matter Expert Group (F1), forming a task force for the development of more structured connections and synergy between related departments or units whose focus is diversity, equity and intercultural understanding, and similarly between Academic Centres and Faculty Departments (see page 20) that are already driving the University's intellectual leadership in related areas.</p>	<p>Reported evidence of greater collaboration and partnership between academic centres.</p> <p>Intercultural Staff Council (S1) report improved awareness and connectivity of interdepartmental activity.</p>

To be at least the sum of our parts, as much as possible it is essential to name the parts. The following lists are in alphabetical order and not exhaustive:

2.9.2 Related Centres of Research for Intercultural Understanding (Vancouver Campus)

- The Centre for Culture, Identity and Education (CCIE) | <http://ccie.educ.ubc.ca/>
- The Centre for Interactive Research on Sustainability (CIRS) | <http://cirs.ubc.ca/>
- The Centre for Intercultural Language Studies (CILS) | <http://cils.educ.ubc.ca/>
- The Centre for Human Evolution, Cognition, and Culture (HECC) | <http://www.hecc.ubc.ca/>
- The Centre for Human Settlement | <http://www.chs.ubc.ca/>
- The Centre for Race, Autobiography, Gender and Age (RAGA) | <http://www.raga.ubc.ca/>
- The Centre for Sport and Sustainability (CSS) | <http://css.ubc.ca/>
- Critical Research in Health and Healthcare Inequities (CRiHHI) <http://www.nursing.ubc.ca/CRiHHI/>
- [Conflict Resolution, Arts and Intercultural Experience \(CRANE\)](#)
- The Institute of Asian Research (IAR) | <http://www.iar.ubc.ca/>
- The Liu Institute of Global Issues | <http://www.ligi.ubc.ca/>
- The University Sustainability Initiative (USI) | <http://www.sustain.ubc.ca/>

2.9.3 Related Faculty Areas (Vancouver Campus)

- Critical Studies in Sexuality (CSIS) | <http://csis.arts.ubc.ca/>
- First Nations Studies Program | <http://fnsp.arts.ubc.ca/>
- [Migration and Globalization Studies](#)
- The College of Health Disciplines | <http://www.chd.ubc.ca/>
- [The Continuing Studies Centre for Intercultural Communication \(CS CIC\)](#)
- The Department of Anthropology | <http://www.anth.ubc.ca/>
- The Department of Asian Studies | <http://www.asia.ubc.ca/>
- The Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology | <http://ecps.educ.ubc.ca/>
- The Department of Educational Studies | (<http://edst.educ.ubc.ca/>)
- The Department of Family Practice | <http://www.familymed.ubc.ca/>
- The Department of Geography (Human Geography) | <http://www.geog.ubc.ca/departement/index.html>
- The Department of Medicine <http://www.medicine.ubc.ca/>
- The Department of Mining Engineering <http://www.mining.ubc.ca/>
- The Department of Political Science <http://www.politics.ubc.ca/>
- The Department of Psychology (Cultural Psychology) <http://www.psych.ubc.ca/>
- The Department of Language and Literacy Education <http://lled.educ.ubc.ca/>
- The Department of Sociology <http://www.soci.ubc.ca/>
- The Division of Aboriginal People's Health <http://aboriginalhealth.med.ubc.ca/>
- The Faculty of Graduate Studies <https://www.grad.ubc.ca/>
- The English Language Institute (ELI) <http://www.eli.ubc.ca/>
- The Immigrant Vancouver Ethnographic Field School (IVEFS) <http://ivefs.arts.ubc.ca/>
- The Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice (GRSJ) | <http://www.grsj.arts.ubc.ca/>
- The School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP) <http://www.scarp.ubc.ca/>
- The School of Kinesiology <http://kin.educ.ubc.ca/>
- [The Specialization in International Forestry](#)
- [The UBC School of Complex Governance](#)

2.9.4 Despite courses and research in the area of cultural studies and social sustainability in the above departments and research centres, a noticeable gap exists in not having a formal interdisciplinary program that, similar to the First Nations Studies Program, ties together all the related expertise and work across disciplines. This strategic focus does not aim to resolve this issue, but proposes to bring together the sponsors to a potential emergent solution.

- 2.9.5 Similarly, there is a need for greater structural connection between the following related administrative units and departments, beginning with creating an active interdepartmental staff network aimed at fostering interconnectedness, information sharing and sharing of resources.

UBC is currently considering recommendations on structural changes necessary to strengthen the role and support of equity, diversity and intercultural understanding at the University.

2.9.6 Administrative Units & Departments Focused on Diversity, Equity & Intercultural Understanding

- [Access & Diversity](#) (VP Students)
- [The Centre for Teaching, Learning & Technology](#) (CTLT)
- [The Community Learning Initiative](#) (CLI)
- [The Equity Office](#)
- [Faculty Relations](#) (HR)
- [Go Global Program](#) (VP Students)
- [Green College](#)
- [Human Resources](#)
- [International Student Development](#) (VPS)
- [Korea House](#)
- The Learning Exchange
- [The Office of the Ombudsperson for Students](#)
- [The Office of the Vice President Research & International](#)
- [Organisational Development & Learning](#) (HR)
- [St. John's College](#)
- [UBC-Ritsumeikan House](#)
- [UBC Housing](#) (VP Students)
- [Work-Life and Relocation Services](#) (HR)

- 2.9.7 The overall spirit of partnership and collaboration also extends to the mandates and work of the Iona Pacific Inter-Religious Centre; UBC Multi-Faith Chaplains Association and many other units that might be considered part of the community of practice. Current University initiatives contributing to intercultural understanding also include:

- Coaching@UBC | <http://www.hr.ubc.ca/coaching/>
- [The Dispute Resolution Program \(training for faculty, staff and students\)](#)
- [The "Healthiest Campus" Initiative \(VP Students\)](#)
- The Integrated Conflict Resolution Task Force
- The International Graduate Student Task Force
- The Library Diversity Caucus
- The Managing at UBC | <http://www.hr.ubc.ca/managing-at-ubc/>
- [The Service Excellence Conference](#)
- The UBC Tandem Language Exchange Program | <http://www.tandemubc.ca/>

2.9.8 Fostering an Intercultural Physical Environment

Spaces that display cultural pluralism and the values of inclusion can help to provide an environment that is more conducive to intercultural understanding.

Examples of this include the renaming of the residences, to reflect the cultural heritage of the land. Replicating campus environments designed to encourage cultural inclusion, such as the van der Linden Dining Hall (St. John's College) and the Sty-Wet-Tan Hall (First Nations Longhouse), the University will explore opportunities to inspire and support intercultural understanding through the visible recognition of cultural diversity.

With 79 percent of UBC students able to speak two or more languages, fostering an intercultural campus naturally includes aspiring to be a multilingual campus—including the visible acknowledgement of the Musqueam language of hən̓q̓əmin̓əḥ.

Valuing, and growing the capacity and comfort of faculty, staff and students to speak multiple languages and provide multilingual perspectives is key to fostering an intercultural climate at UBC.

Exhibit a stronger international and intercultural sensibility on campus.	<p>39. Building on existing examples, use of visible markers, signage and the public recognition of key cultural and religious dates to establish a culturally inclusive and international sensibility on campus.</p> <p>This will require the development of guidelines and protocol that can be implemented across campus (underway).</p>	
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3.0 D. Interfaith Plan: Intersection of Strategic Goals

As 40 percent of students report to be actively involved in a faith, UBC's aspirations for community cohesion are tied to how faith groups interact on campus, and the overall campus climate for students, staff, faculty and alumni for whom faith is a major part of their identity.

How safe students, faculty and staff feel about having a faith-identity proportionately affects the capacity for interfaith relationships to occur. The more anxiety students feel about their faith-identity, the less likely interfaith connectivity occurs. Future activity fostering interfaith connections between students, faculty, staff and alumni should be integrated into the preceding four strategic goals. For purposes of clarity, the following action items have been separated out.

Actions (What)	Recommendations (How)	Measurement
Foster a "faith friendly" campus environment.	<p>40. Establish a UBC Interfaith Task Force. In partnership with the Multi-Faith Chaplains Association and the Iona Pacific Inter-religious Centre, develop a framework for a UBC Interfaith Plan (Presidents Office, VP Students).</p> <p>41. Develop an interfaith action plan outlining the fostering of high-quality peer relationships, high-risk conversation and classroom guidelines around the expression and fostering of an interfaith campus culture (Interfaith Task Force, VP Students Office).</p>	<p>Successful adoption of a UBC Interfaith Plan by Spring 2013/2014.</p> <p>Students report UBC experience as being more "faith friendly."</p>

4.0 E. Measuring Progress

At this point, *The Intercultural Promise* does not attempt to articulate a vision for an intercultural campus. Rather, it aspires to put into place the elements needed for a vision of "what an intercultural campus looks and feels like" to emerge. In Year 2 of this plan's implementation (Spring 2014), a campus-wide visioning exercise will be employed to capture an *emergent vision*, as defined by students, staff, faculty and alumni.

Inherent to the plan is the development of new metrics to better measure progress, which in some cases is difficult to quantify. Metrics around students' self-perception of their ability to work with students from other cultures, or faculty members' self-perceived ease of fostering an intercultural environment, for example, are being developed. To help determine milestones and provide on-going feedback and direction, the following advisory groups will be formed:

- A Faculty Subject Matter Expert Advisory Group (F1)
- A Graduate Student Subject Matter Expert Group (G1)
- An Undergraduate Student Consultancy Group
- An Alumni Advisory Group
- An Intercultural Staff Council (S1)
- An External Advisory Group

5.0 **APPENDIX I:** **Supporting Information to Conceptual Framework**

5.1 **A. Faculty Challenges in Detail**

Early consultation with faculty produced the following list of top intercultural difficulties and challenging experiences that faculty have observed as a result of working at a campus with relatively higher degrees of diversity:

- A growing cultural gap between faculty and students on academic expectations;
- The increasing demands of complex intercultural teaching environment;
- Insufficient rewards for excellence in (intercultural) Teaching and Service; and
- The lack of connection between students and faculty.

The following are brief descriptions of each of these challenges.

5.1.2 **Culture gap between faculty and students on academic expectations**

Students and faculty often do not share a common understanding of expectations of each other. This includes domestic and international students whose cultural background may have contributed to a different set of academic expectations and standards, particularly around classroom participation, dialogue with faculty, classroom etiquette, accessing academic supports, and participation and activity outside the classroom.

5.1.3 **Increasing demands of complex intercultural teaching environment**

Faculty expressed a lack of capacity and/or support to meet the growing demands of the increasingly complex teaching environments, which include managing a greater range of students' learning and communications styles.

5.1.4 **Insufficient rewards for excellence in (intercultural) Teaching and Service**

Tied to tenure and promotion, faculty expressed a lack of sufficient incentive, recognition and reward for teaching excellence and service in general, but especially in the pursuit of intercultural content and pedagogy.

5.1.5 **Lack of connection between students and faculty**

Faculty expressed they lacked reciprocal connection with their undergraduate students, perceiving degrees of student disinterest proportionate to the size of the class. This has affected the enjoyment of teaching large classes. There was a general sense that UBC has not done enough to establish basic classroom etiquette and clarity for students in how to maintain meaningful engagement with their teachers.

These "intercultural pains" compound each other and foster misunderstanding and disconnect. Many of these difficulties are both produced by a lack of intercultural understanding and are in themselves the source of intercultural misunderstanding. It is the aim of the strategic plan to either address directly or support the elimination of the above list. **Action 10** (page 21) commits to the creation of a task force that will look at the alleviation of challenges experienced by faculty. **Actions 18 - 20** (page 21) commit to a development of incentives, supports and training for Teaching Assistants, new faculty and sessional instructors so as to address these challenges.

5.2 B. Identifying Cultural Tensions, Anxieties and Intercultural Barriers for Students

The increase of empathy and lessening of anxiety has more impact on reducing racism on campus than information or awareness about racism and prejudice.⁶ With this in mind, students were asked to identify anxieties they may be experiencing related to the diversity of campus. The following list reflects the input from students and is in alphabetic order with exception to the first item, consistently identified as the most acute intercultural issue amongst students.

- Growing gap between second-generation students and students that are new to Canada;
- Discomfort in expressing or acknowledging one's faith identity;
- Cultural exclusion of students with children;
- Culture shock of rural students to UBC;
- Impact of commuter reality on social cohesion on campus;
- Lack of competencies around indigenous identity (in students and faculty);
- Lack of recognition of the experience of being visibly white on campus;
- Noticeable lack of political diversity, leading to anxiety around political expression;
- Parental expectations on students in regards to education and careers;
- Pressures of political correctness;
- Racialization of students (particularly that of white, non-white, Aboriginal and East Asian students);
- An unacknowledged sense of anti-Americanism on campus;
- Unaddressed complexity of Asian Canadian Identity on Campus (as unaddressed in curriculum and campus life).

In partnership with VP Students, PAIR and the Alma Mater Society, the University is endeavouring to validate this list and determine what anxieties are of the highest importance to students.

5.2.1 Growing gap between second-generation students and students that are new to Canada

When asked, international and new-immigrant students predominantly identify second-generation students of the same ethnicity as the most hostile group towards them on campus. Conversely, second-generation students complained of "ethnic cliques" perpetuated by international and new immigrant students as a major issue at UBC. As UBC aims to admit greater numbers of international students, this is likely to grow to be a bigger issue. The anti-newcomer/immigrant sentiment amongst non-white second-generation students is not unique to UBC; however, it is a divisive issue that must be addressed for social sustainability to be achieved on campus. Conversely, ethno-cultural grouping has many benefits for students, in establishing a safe space for minority identities.

It is not the goal of the strategic plan to eliminate the many groups that self-identify through ethnocentric terms, but to encourage students to use these student groups as social incubators. It is the intent of the strategic plan to support activities that encourage the connectivity and partnership between ethnocultural groups, targeting the cultural and relational gap between students born in Canada and those who are new to Canada.

5.2.2 Classroom Climate

In common with both the *Equity and Diversity Strategic Plan* and *Aboriginal Engagement Strategic Plan*, classroom climate is an area of concern. Students have identified the following classroom climate struggles pertaining to intercultural understanding: intercultural misunderstanding in the classroom (sometimes developing into conflict); difficulty meeting new people in class; ethno-racial self-segregation in class; inability to engage in high-risk conversations; and not knowing how to engage instructors and profoundly different students (lacking of student etiquette). Various efforts around student support, orientation, and instructor training will address these issues.

⁶ Bennet, J. *Developing Intercultural Competence for International Education Faculty and Staff*. 2011 Association of International Educators Association Conference, Westin St. Francis Hotel. San Francisco, CA, 2011.

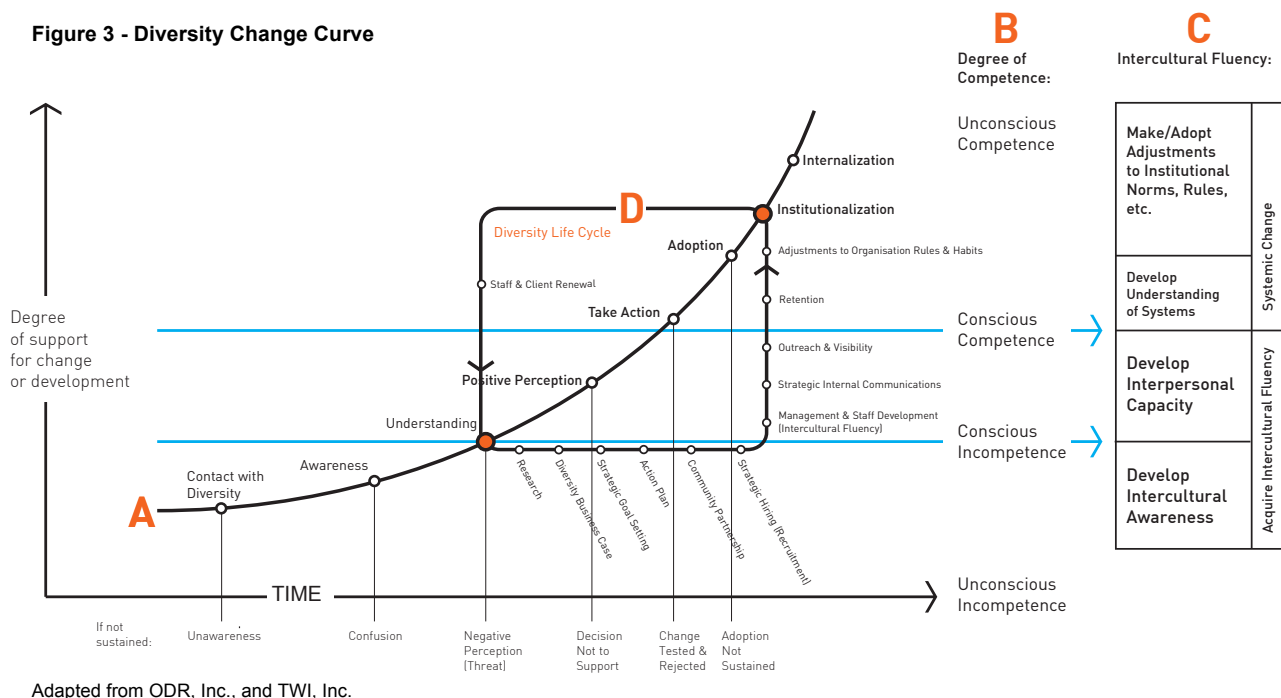
5.3 C. Facilitating Organisational Change

The following diagram combines four synergistic models for the organisational development of diversity, equity and intercultural understanding and the personal development of intercultural fluency, as a means of conceptualizing the organisational change needed to internalize intercultural understanding into UBC's organisational culture. The following explains each of these models and their intersection with each other.

5.3.1 Diversity Change Curve (A)

The change management curve below (Fig. 3) illustrates the gradual impact on an organisation as it is subject to various initiatives related to diversity, equity and intercultural understanding. This change management model (developed by ODR, Inc.) identifies various stages experienced by an organisation, when exposed to sustained pressure, development or change.

Figure 3 - Diversity Change Curve



The stages move from initial contact with diversity, to awareness and eventually to adoption, institutionalization and internalization of norms and institutional rules that reinforce equity, diversity and intercultural understanding. This progression might also be characterized as the normalization of these values and practices. The diagram also identifies the result should the effort (or actions) not be sustained.

5.3.2 Degree of Competency (B)

In later models, a “degree of competency” scale was added (TWI, Inc.) to illustrate the correlation between these various stages of the diversity change curve and the stages of learning, from “unconscious competency” (not knowing one doesn’t know) to “conscious competency” (being aware of one’s competency). Contact with diversity and awareness often leads to “conscious incompetence”, where one is made aware of not having adequate knowledge. If the development is not sustained, this can lead to confusion.

5.3.3 Intercultural Fluency Over Time (C)

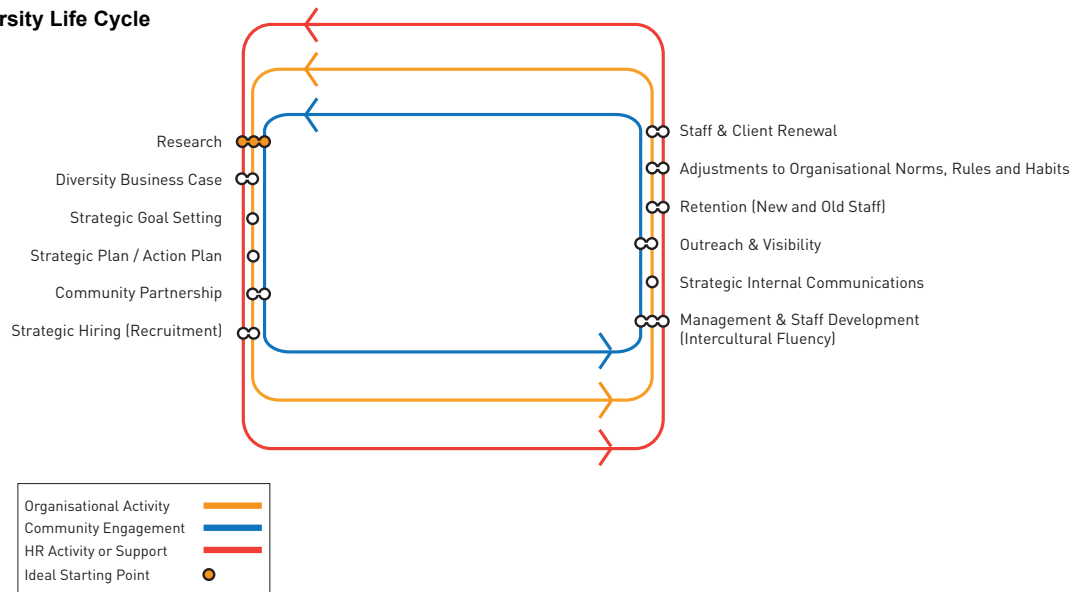
There is a correlation between the personal development of intercultural fluency and the diversity change curve. As an individual is initially exposed to diversity, there exists an opportunity for the development of intercultural awareness. If the personal development (through self-reflection) continues, the acquisition of

interpersonal capacity will follow. At this point, the individual is having intercultural experiences somewhere between “conscious incompetence” and “conscious competence”, being able to identify gaps in cultural knowledge and then filling those gaps. As one develops knowledge of cultural systems, individuals are enabled to make systemic changes through the adoption or adjustment of organisational rules and norms. This level of intercultural fluency (of institutional cultures) correlates with the higher levels of competency (towards “unconscious competence”, or expertise), producing higher levels of organisational support for change (from adoption to internalization).

5.3.4 Diversity Life Cycle (D)

To illustrate the actions required to bring an organisation from “understanding” to “institutionalization” on the Diversity Change Curve, another component has been added called the Diversity Life Cycle (Habacon, 2012). The following diagram (Fig. 4) illustrates twelve areas of activity that organisations commonly engage in to forward diversity and inclusion, in a strategic sequence, from research to the renewal of existing staff and clients (who do not necessarily fit the “diversity criteria”). The personal development of intercultural fluency is integrated into this model as part of “Management and Staff Development.”

Figure 4 - Diversity Life Cycle



Units and departments seeking further direction around how to progress from a stage of understanding towards institutionalization, are encouraged to consider using the components of the diversity life cycle to form an action plan.

- 5.3.5 The Diversity Life Cycle can be broken down into the following parts: (1.) conducting research (such as surveying one’s unit on diversity issues); (2.) development of a diversity business case (or articulation as to the benefits of diversity); (3.) development or integration of diversity into strategic goal setting; (4.) development of an action plan; (5.) community partnership (includes community advisory groups); (6.) strategic hiring; (7.) management and staff development, particularly in increasing aspects of intercultural fluency; (8.) strategic communications throughout the organisation; (9.) outreach to and visibility in communities that reflect a desired diversity; (10.) initiatives that improve the retention of employees that add intercultural fluency to the organisation; (11.) adjustments to organisational rules and habits (such policy, guidelines and organisational value statements); and (12.) the renewal of existing staff and clients.⁷

⁷ Habacon, Alden E., *How To Make Our Organizations More Welcoming & Inclusive*, presented to the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria; October 25, 2012.

5.4 D. Conceptual Framework of Intercultural Fluency



5.4.1 *Intercultural fluency* is the combination of attitudes towards diversity, knowledge about cultures and difference, and interpersonal capacity for communication and relationship building across different cultures. It also includes the following “multicultural skills” (Pope and Reynolds, 1997):

- Ability to identify and openly discuss cultural differences and issues;
- Ability to assess the impact of cultural differences on communication and effectively communicate across those differences;
- Capability to empathize and genuinely connect with individuals who are culturally different from themselves;
- Ability to gain the trust and respect of individuals who are culturally different from themselves
- Capability to accurately assess their own multicultural skills, comfort level, growth, and development;
- Ability to differentiate among individual differences, cultural differences, and universal similarities; and
- Ability to use cultural knowledge and sensitivity to make more culturally sensitive and appropriate interventions.⁸

Drawing from the available literature, there are two areas that can be developed over time that contribute to one’s level of intercultural fluency: “intercultural awareness” and “interpersonal capacity,” the interpersonal skills or assets needed to be more fluent in a variety of cultures.

Within intercultural awareness is the development of self-knowledge, a general knowledge of cultural differences, an openness and appreciation to difference and an acceptance of other worldviews. Interpersonal capacity includes knowledge of cultural nuance and protocol (Cultural Literacy), the skills needed to communicate across cultures (Intercultural Communications Skills), and the establishing of meaningful social connections in various cultures (Intercultural Capital). The following section provides background and working definitions to terms used in the framework around intercultural fluency.

5.4.2 Competing Models

One of the strengths and challenges of the work around intercultural understanding is an extensive body of literature around intercultural and cross-cultural understanding that spans across disciplines and professional fields. The terms “multicultural competency,” “cross-cultural competency,” “intercultural competency” and “cultural intelligence” are used in various (and often competing) literature to describe the attributes needed to understand, communicate and work effectively across and within cultures different from ones own.

⁸ List excerpted from Pope, R. L., Reynolds, A. L., & Mueller, J. A. (2004). *Multicultural competence in student affairs*. (pp. 18-19). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

The following models (and key terms), related to intercultural understanding, were found in the available literature:

- Multicultural Competency (Pope, Reynolds, & Mueller, 2004)
- Cultural Intelligence or CQ (Plum, 2007)
- Intercultural Competency (Deardorff, 2009)
- Intergroup Competencies (Ramsey & Latting, 2005)
- Intercultural Sensitivity Training or the Intercultural Development Inventory (Hammer, Bennett and Wiseman, 2003)
- Cultural Competency (commonly used in Medicine, Healthcare, HR)
- Cultural Safety (commonly used in Nursing, Healthcare)

“Multicultural competency” (Pope, Reynolds, & Mueller, 2004), coming from cultural psychology, has been an aspect of student affairs for decades. Similarly, “Intercultural Competence”, is commonly described as “the ability to think and act in intercultural appropriate ways.”⁹ The framework around intercultural competency is most commonly used in literature around internationalization and training for international student programs. In human resources and healthcare professions these attributes are often described as “cultural competency”, and in nursing called “cultural safety.” Further complicating this area of work, these constructs continue to evolve and are often positioned in competition with each other.

In trying to establish a common framework that could be used across disciplines, this strategic plan does not propose one framework over another, but instead provides a synthesis of the available literature.

5.4.3 Reasons for Choosing “Intercultural Fluency”

“Intercultural fluency” was identified as being most suitable for the diverse needs of students, faculty and staff. “Fluency” implies a greater fluidity and range of knowledge, skills and ability. The idea of “competency”, on the other hand, although useful also implies that one can be incompetent. “Fluency” allows for varying levels of (intercultural) proficiency without the sense of being inept.

Intercultural fluency builds upon the familiar ideas of “academic fluency” and “cultural fluency” to describe what a student, faculty member or staff would require to thrive on a campus as diverse as UBC.

Academic fluency refers to a variety of skills and knowledge related to academic studies. “Cultural fluency is the readiness to anticipate, internalize, express, and help shape the process of meaning-making.”¹⁰ The development of cultural fluency is described by Tatsushi Arai as a parallel to “the way we acquire fluency in a non-native language”, a process wherein “unfamiliar cultural habits of being and doing learned consciously are gradually submerged into our subconscious.” This process of cultural learning (or culture shifting) is often described in change management as the progression through the various levels of competency in the “Conscious Competence Model” (these include unconscious incompetence, conscious incompetence, conscious competence and unconscious competence). It might also be framed as the normalizing of cultural norms.

Like the construct of multicultural competency, “developing cultural fluency [requires] the ongoing cultivation of self-awareness.”¹¹ However, distinct to the notion of cultural fluency is the development of “navigational capacity”, described as “the process of becoming an active participant in forming and transforming the universe of meaning-making process.”¹² This is similar to having reached an advanced

⁹ Hammer, Bennett and Wiseman. *Measuring intercultural sensitivity: The intercultural development inventory*. International Journal of Intercultural Relations 27 (2003), p. 422.

¹⁰ Arai, Tatsushi. *Conflict Across Cultures* (2006), p. 58.

¹¹ *Ibid.* p. 60.

¹² *Ibid.* p. 58.

level of language-acquisition enabling one to write a poem or reflect one's sense of humour. Navigational capacity might extend to include the understanding of and ability to move through the systems one is subject to.

For the purposes of the development and implementation of this strategic plan, the following working definitions of the components of intercultural fluency were developed.

5.4.4 Intercultural Awareness



The working definition of *intercultural awareness*, is based on “the awareness, knowledge, and skills necessary to work effectively and ethically across cultural difference” (Pope and Reynolds, 1997), synonymous to “cultural competence” as used in medicine, health professions and human resources. In addition to this basic definition, intercultural awareness includes a depth of understanding, an appreciation for cultural pluralism, the “ability to appreciate racial and ethnic diversity” and the “ability to appreciate cultural and global diversity”¹³.

It is important to note, however, that the construct of cultural competence can be problematic, in not sufficiently addressing the impact of power relations between dominant and non-dominant groups. A 2007 study of quantitative measures of cultural competence most commonly used in medicine and in the health professions, found that many measurement tools “either assume that both dominant and marginalized groups have the same experiences of multiculturalism.”¹⁴

With this in mind, Pope, Reynolds, & Mueller’s description of “multicultural awareness” (2004) is most useful in defining intercultural awareness. This includes the following factors:

- A belief that differences are valuable and that learning about others who are culturally different is necessary and rewarding;
- A willingness to self-examine and, when necessary, challenge and change their own values, worldview, assumptions, and biases;
- An acceptance of other worldviews and perspectives and a willingness to acknowledge that, as individuals, they do not have all the answers;
- A belief that cultural differences do not have to interfere with effective communication or meaningful relationships;
- Awareness of their own cultural heritage and how it affects their worldview, values, and assumptions;
- Knowledge about how gender, class, race, ethnicity, language, nationality, sexual orientation, age, religion or spirituality, and disability and ability affect individuals and their experiences; and
- Knowledge about within-group differences and understanding of multiple identities.¹⁵

¹³ UBC Community Learning Initiative, Fourth Annual Report to The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation (October 2011), p. 55

¹⁴ Zofia Kumas -Tan, MSc, Brenda Beagan, MA, PhD, Charlotte Loppie, MA, PhD, Anna MacLeod, MA, and Blye Frank, MA, PhD. “Measures of Cultural Competence: Examining Hidden Assumptions”. *Academic Medicine*, Vol. 82, No. 6 / June 2007. p. 548

¹⁵ Excerpted from Pope, R. L., Reynolds, A. L., & Mueller, J. A. (2004). *Multicultural competence in student affairs*. (pp. 18-19). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

5.4.5 Intercultural Communication Skills



Intercultural communication skills, refers to the awareness and skills needed to communicate effectively across profound cultural difference. This strategic plan sites the definition used by the UBC Continuing Studies Centre for Intercultural Communication (CS CIC):

For communication to succeed, words are not enough. Communication requires knowing the cultural rules of what to say, when to say it, and how to deliver the message. Culture can be national, professional, generational, organizational, etc. Therefore, every message is sent and received through numerous filters; our own filters and those of others. Intercultural communication focuses on how to communicate with awareness of these filters.

This includes verbal, linguistic and behaviour skills needed for communication between people from different cultures. In itself, intercultural communication is an academic field of research, and includes the study of how people from different cultures behave, communicate and perceive the world around them; and how cultures are different.

The general concepts and understanding about culture, needed for effective intercultural communication is often referred to as “cultural general”. This might include various cultural orientations, such as a Sense of Power and Responsibility, or Time Management Approaches, as established by Robert Rosinski (2003). This include, “Knowledge about the ways that cultural differences affect verbal and nonverbal communication.”¹⁶

5.4.6 Cultural Literacy



For the purposes of the strategic plan, *cultural literacy* expands on the basic definition of “cultural knowledge”, and comparatively is more focused on “culture specific”, as opposed to “culture general” (found in intercultural awareness and intercultural communication skills). Cultural literacy includes:

- Having the (culture specific) knowledge of history, traditions, values, customs, resources and issues;
- Such as one’s “familiarity with and ability to understand the idioms, allusions, and informal content that create and constitute a dominant culture”¹⁷; and
- The ability to understand and use culturally-specific behaviour or etiquette appropriate for meaningful engagement with culturally different people.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_literacy

The examples of knowing when to bow versus shake a hand (and how hard to shake a hand), or interpret the avoidance of eye contact as a sign of respect, are essential aspects of intercultural fluency. Similarly, most foreign-born students require Canadian cultural literacy, which might include a familiarity with Canadians' preoccupation with ice hockey or the weather.

In an academic setting, cultural literacy might refer to knowing when and how to question a supervisor, or how "things get done" differently from one Faculty or discipline to another. In a work environment, cultural literacy generally includes knowing the acceptable threshold for the expression of emotion in the workplace. These intercultural and interpersonal skills are essential for cultural integration and employment in Canada. Culture shock might be considered the product of not having cultural literacy.

In light of the University's commitment to Aboriginal Engagement and the International Strategic Plan's focus on China and India, the development of cultural literacy in Aboriginal, Chinese and Indian cultures should be considered a priority.

It is important to note that cultural knowledge without intercultural awareness can lead to jumping to conclusions and stereotyping. Despite being very important, especially in situations where trust building is important (such as community engagement), one cannot assume they know exactly what the cultural expectations are. To validate one's cultural knowledge, it is essential that one also have intercultural capital.

5.4.7 Intercultural Capital



This strategic plan introduces the idea of *intercultural capital*, as an extension of social capital across cultural differences, using Pierre Bourdieu's definition of social capital: "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition."¹⁸ In other words, intercultural capital describes the value of having meaningful social relationships across different cultures.

It is unrealistic to aim at acquiring all the intercultural awareness, intercultural communication skills and cultural literacy to give one a sufficient degree of fluency for the complexity and diversity of UBC. It is intercultural capital that makes up for, and gradually eliminates, this deficiency. Friend-making across cultural difference is one of the top reasons students join cultural clubs and also a key element to cross-cultural peacemaking.

The University encourages units and individuals to determine what level of proficiency they possess in any one of these areas, and focusing on those areas that are either of greatest interest and/or most strategic to develop further.

¹⁸ Bourdieu P. 1985. The forms of capital. In Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education, ed. JG Richardson, p. 248. New York: Greenwood

APPENDIX II:

Early Implementation

6.0

A. How this Plan was Developed

The *early implementation*, or short-to-medium-term activity related to the development of the intercultural understanding strategic plan, has been focused on three areas: the development of the strategic plan; corresponding foundational initiatives, including a literature review in partnership with SLAIS¹⁹, an institutional survey (2011)²⁰, and an intercultural understanding audit (2011).²¹ The activities related to the early implementation inform the strategic plan and helped to catalyze a culture shift.

The following process was developed with the support and encouragement of President and Vice-Chancellor Professor Stephen Toope, and the Provost and VP Academic Professor David Farrar, providing guidance on the overall progression and approach, and feedback to numerous drafts.

6.1 Individual Interviews

Over 200 individual people were consulted on the early development of the strategic plan. The list of faculty, staff, administration and students and community experts can be found online at: (link to come).

6.2 Group Consultancy

A number of groups were consulted in the early phases of this plans development, including the Association of Christian Clubs, the Matter Society, Graduate Student Society, Jewish Students Association, the UBC Board of Governors, the Alumni Affairs Board of Directors, the Peer Program Executive, the Library Diversity Caucus, Counselling Services ...

6.3 Student Focus Groups

Six focus groups were conducted and additional focus groups continue to be held. Special consideration was made to ensure a broad of spectrum of students was consulted, producing the list of *Cultural Tensions, Anxieties and Intercultural Barriers for Students* found on page 26. This should not be taken as an exhaustive or completed consultation, but meant only to provide a starting point for on-going consultation, direction, feedback and accountability with students.

6.4 Peer Institution Review

Prior to the development of the strategic plan, a peer institution review was conducted. It included a review of related activity at Columbia University; Harvard University; Leeds Metropolitan University; Oxford Brookes University; University of California, Berkeley; University of Melbourne; University of New South Wales; University of Sydney; University of Washington, Department of Psychology; and the University of Warwick. Consultation with UC Berkeley and UCLA were also conducted in August 2012, in regards to faculty engagement and support.

6.5 Mentor Group

The working draft of the strategic plan was developed with the guidance and direction of a mentor group consisting of Anna Kindler, Brian Sullivan, Darrin Lehman, Janet Teasdale, Linc Kesler and Lisa Castle.

¹⁹ Location online to be provided.

²⁰ Location online to be provided.

²¹ Currently under construction at http://wiki.ubc.ca/Intercultural_Understanding_Inventory_at_UBC_2010-2011

6.6 Individual Contribution

In addition to the Mentor Group, countless faculty and staff contributed to the development of the strategic plan through their ideas, input, feedback and mentorship. In particular the following:

Alan Kingstone	Handel Wright	Mark Vessey	Shafik Dharamsi
Andrew Scales	Henry Yu	Mary Bryson	Sham Pendleton
Anne Gorsuch		Martin Dawes	Sheldon Green
Anne-Marie Long	Indy Batth	Michelle LeBaron	Shirin Eshghi
	John Barker	Mike Bennett	Shirley Nakata
Brian Sullivan	John Robinson	Mike Fryzuk	Sneja Gunew
	Kuan Foo	Moura Quayle	Sunera Thobani
Chris Lee			Susan Grossman
	James Thornton	Neil Guppy	Suzanne Jolly
Dan Hiebert	Janet Mee	Michelle Suderman	
Darran Fernandez	Julia Peak	Patty Hamblar	Terre Satterfield
David Ley	John Meech	Peter Wanyenya	Tom Patch
		Richard Price	Trevor Barnes
Elvin Wyly	Karen Rolston		
	Katherine Beaumont	Robert Daum	Walter Sudmant
Gurdeep Parhar			Wendy Frisby
	Leonora Angeles	Ross King	
	Linda McKnight	Rachel Kuske	
	Lynn Newman		

It is also the product of the input from numerous individual students, including Azim Wazeer, Brett Sinclair, Ekaterina Dovjenko, James Lin, Joy Richu, Mohamed Algarf and especially Mehjabeen Ali.

The conceptual framework for intercultural fluency was co-developed with Karen Rolston, Michelle Suderman and Peter Wanyenya.

7.0 **APPENDIX III:** **Building on Place and Promise**

The Intercultural Promise aims to support and serve the core commitments of UBC, as described in *Place and Promise*, *The UBC Plan: Student Learning, Research Excellence and Community Engagement*.

The following describes how the operationalization of *The Intercultural Promise* advances the preceding eight mid-level strategic plans of *Place and Promise*, in their order of implementation. This section also includes three related strategic plans requiring advances in intercultural understanding as an integral aspect of their success, including: *Valuing Difference: A Strategy for Advancing Equity and Diversity at UBC*; *UBC Vancouver's Graduate Student Strategy and Operational Plan* (2010-2015); and *UBC Library Strategic Directions, Goals and Actions* (2010).

7.1 **Aboriginal Engagement Strategic Plan** | strategicplan.ubc.ca/the-plan/aboriginal-engagement/

As an extension of the Aboriginal Engagement Strategic Plan, *The Intercultural Promise* positions the development of intercultural fluency (cultural literacy, communication skills, social capital) in local Aboriginal communities, cultures and histories as central to intercultural understanding.

The emergent vision for a more intercultural campus must include a substantially greater sense of belonging for Aboriginal students, staff and faculty. This is tied to the original imperative of the Aboriginal Engagement Strategic Plan, addressing the proportionately small numbers of Aboriginal students.

The commitment to intercultural understanding begins with acknowledging that the ideas around multiculturalism are indigenous to the land. Moreover, that local Aboriginal communities possess practices around intercultural exchange and dialogue that are indigenous to B.C. and thousands of years old.

The University's commitment to intercultural understanding also involves actively pushing for greater empathy and awareness of local Aboriginal issues and history amongst UBC's diverse student population. The establishing of intercultural understanding at UBC requires this knowledge be understood as fundamental to the UBC experience.

The FNHL has established guidelines for sustaining a safe place for high-risk conversation that will be used as a model and standard across campus. Moreover, the development and implementation of initiatives aimed at improving classroom climate will provide a template for similar activity around intercultural understanding, equity and diversity.

7.2 **Sustainability** | strategicplan.ubc.ca/the-plan/sustainability/

The strategic plan on intercultural understanding is the direct extension of the University's aspirations around social sustainability.

Since UBC's Sustainability Strategy, *Inspirations and Aspirations* (2007), the University has defined "a truly livable campus environment" as one that is "vibrant, culturally rich, healthy, equitable, and diverse", all part of being a "Model Sustainable Community."²²

The intersectionality between biodiversity and sociocultural diversity has carried through to the current goal for the University towards social sustainability:

"Foster social sustainability through teaching, research, and community engagement that promote vibrant human interaction and community cohesion."

Similarly, the "net positive" philosophy of the Centre for Interactive Research on Sustainability (CIRS) helps to set the emergent vision for intercultural understanding and social sustainability at UBC: to foster a

²² *Inspirations and Aspirations*. UBC (2007), p. 19.

social environment and institutional practices that produce a “net positive” in social terms; thereby producing a university that can take historic inequity, conflict and intercultural tension and convert them into “dynamic human interaction and social cohesion.”

There are also many aspects of this strategic plan that are modelled after the implementation of the *Inspirations and Aspirations*. This includes: a focus on “emergent vision and solutions” wherein students, faculty, staff, alumni and external community will determine the vision of a more intercultural UBC Vancouver campus; establishing an inventory and coding of courses wherein intercultural understanding is taught in curriculum or experiential learning; and the formation of an external advisory group.

7.3 **Focus on People** | focusonpeople.ubc.ca/

Becoming an interculturally fluent campus is, first and foremost, about people—their relationships, perceptions and interaction. In aiming to be workplace of “vibrant human interaction and community cohesion” taking into account profound cultural differences, the commitment to intercultural understanding advances all five of the strategic goals found in *Focus on People*, beginning with:

“A healthy workplace builds capacity within the organisation for social and financial sustainability, and cultivates resiliency within each member of that community.”²³

This involves ensuring employees and managers have the necessary skills, competencies, cultural fluency and supports to thrive in a complexly diverse workplace. Tied to this is effectively recruiting and retaining talent who possess these prerequisites. It requires that employees and management have advanced levels of intercultural fluency, and that intercultural competencies be established as a basic requirement for management.

Fostering the sense of being listened to, respected and valued, requires leadership and management practices (and possibly standards) appropriate to UBC’s diversity. Likewise, the advancement of intercultural understanding at UBC, that does not also improve the recruitment and retention of employees of under-represented groups, particularly in management and senior management, would be considered a failure. With that in mind, the most interculturally sophisticated talent will demand an environment conducive for diversity of thought.

Most importantly, advancing intercultural understanding will involve modifying many of UBC’s path-dependent systems—making adjustments to the institutional rules that affect what people do everyday. This might include updates to job descriptions and capacity building around managing employee conflict. It may also include integration into performance management and employee branding. This work and expertise resides in Human Resources, and subsequently, no department of UBC can implement institutional change more effectively and more meaningfully as HR.

7.4 **International Strategic Plan** (March 2011) | strategicplan.ubc.ca/the-plan/international-engagement/

Intercultural understanding is often synonymous with internationalization and international partnerships. In this way, this strategic plan is a very natural reinforcement and extension to the *UBC International Strategic Plan*:

There is a strong international presence at UBC: there are students from more than 140 countries pursuing degrees on the UBC Vancouver campus, and students from 65 countries pursuing degrees on the UBC Okanagan campus. This multicultural student population reflects UBC’s diverse local community; British Columbia is home to significant populations with roots elsewhere in the world. For more than twenty years, UBC has been building strong academic ties with universities around the world, beginning with our first formal partnership with Shanghai Jiao Tong

²³ *Focus on People*, p. 9.

University. Since then, we have broadened our global reach, building on a foundation of strong research collaboration, active student mobility and internationally relevant student learning.²⁴

This context sets the stage for intercultural understanding at UBC. UBC's diverse student population and connection to the Asia Pacific region is one of UBC's strengths. It is the fostering of interconnectedness between this diversity that is also the University's challenge.

Advancing intercultural understanding ultimately benefits internationalization at UBC, in both the student experience and research excellence. As the *UBC International Strategic Plan* focuses priority on China and India, particularly to "Raise UBC's profile in India so that we become known as a destination of choice for study, research and international partnership."²⁵

Internationalization also includes stronger recruitment and strengthening alumni ties:

Recruitment of undergraduate and graduate students from India is an important element in our strategy for engagement; we aim to more than double the number of Indian students at UBC. Not only do Indian students represent a huge pool of talent, we need to build links through establishing an alumni base in India. There are about 200,000 Indian students going abroad to study in university.²⁶

The University aims "to maintain our recruitment strengths" in China, and make stronger the connection with alumni in Hong Kong and mainland China.

Although our alumni links in Hong Kong are strong, more could be done to increase and strengthen alumni links by building a more systematic engagement of alumni in mainland China. Alumni should include those who have been visiting scholars and faculty as well as students. UBC's Asia Pacific Regional Office in Hong Kong could play a leading role in this.²⁷

In light of this, the strategic plan on intercultural understanding will concurrently focus on advancing students' cultural competency and cultural fluency in regards to China and India (aka. China Competencies and India Competencies), taking advantage of expertise found in the Institute of Asian Research and Asian Studies, and drawing from the experience of UBC's alumni throughout Asia and India. A more intercultural campus, that is better equipped to support international students from China and India ultimately improves the student experience, retention, word-of-mouth reputation and reduces the cost of recruitment.

7.5 **Research Excellence** (April 2011) | research.ubc.ca/vpri/ubc-research-strategy

Research excellence and intercultural understanding are self-perpetuating as explicit in the *UBC Research Strategy*:

UBC's commitment to intercultural understanding in *Place and Promise* also has implications for a research strategy in that developing a better understanding is the goal of some of the research effort at UBC, and sharing that understanding through public debate and dialogue is an important means for our research to have impact on the broader society. Because of UBC's emphasis on Asia, we have a particular obligation to increase intercultural understanding between Asian and North American cultures.²⁸

²⁴ *UBC International Strategic Plan*, p. 4.

²⁵ *UBC International Strategic Plan*, p. 20.

²⁶ *Ibid.* p. 22.

²⁷ *Ibid.* p. 18.

²⁸ *UBC Research Strategy*, p. 10.

Both community engagement and intercultural understanding are critical to making UBC's research activity relevant, meaningful and impactful. As previously mentioned, the prioritizing of Asia in both the International and Research Strategic Plans requires fluency in Asian cultures and society.

7.6 **Student Learning** | strategicplan.ubc.ca/the-plan/student-learning/

Student Learning, Research Excellence and Community Engagement are in fact the goal of intercultural understanding within in an academic institution.

In the context of UBC's multicultural student population, the University's commitment to providing a "transformative student learning through outstanding teaching and research, enriched educational experiences, and rewarding campus life" implies an advanced intercultural and international experience inside and outside of the classroom, throughout a student's career. Moreover, the greatest hands-on experience, training support and intercultural expertise reside in units who service and support the complexly diverse population of students. This especially includes at least the following units whose work in supporting students already actively advance the University's objectives towards, diversity, equity, accessibility, social justice and social sustainability:

- Access and Diversity
- The Community Service Initiative (aka. Community Service Learning)
- Counselling Services
- The Global Lounge
- Jumpstart (International and Domestic Student Orientation)
- The Peer Programs in general; and specifically Equity Ambassadors and Wellness Peers
- Student Leadership Conference

These are well-supported units and initiatives with substantial infrastructure and are in themselves a significant asset to all aspects of *Place and Promise*. With this in mind, the operationalization of the intercultural understanding strategy must be done in partnership with, and many cases through, the existing community of practice and student-focused programs, generally supported through Student Development and Services (SD&S), the Office of the Ombudsperson to Students and the Equity Office. Not only do their activity already advance intercultural understanding, but in many instances are seen as the world leader in fostering the intercultural experiences of students.

This also includes establishing partnership and alignment with student-run organisations, such as the Alma Mater Society (especially in coordination with the AMS Equity Commissioner), the Graduate Student Society (GSS) and various clubs on campus committed to intercultural understanding and student constituency groups, whose activity addresses issues of social cohesion at UBC.

7.7 **Alumni Engagement Strategic Plan (2006; 2009)** | [View PDF](#)

UBC's 250,000 alumni are diverse, with young alumni as diverse as the current student population with extremely loyal and active alumni all over the world. As the *Alumni Affairs Strategic Plan* aims to "double active alumni engagement over the next seven years"²⁹, the multicultural diversity of UBC's alumni presents an unprecedented opportunity towards "building UBC's presence in key communities" all over the world.

Similarly, a "positive alumni and student feeling", resulting in lifelong relationships with the University, requires the intercultural understanding to meaningfully connect with UBC's diverse alumni. Likewise, UBC's alumni in China and India are an invaluable asset for both young alumni and the University in providing the social capital and cultural fluency to be competitive in these markets, and effectively recruit and build partnerships, respectively.

²⁹ *Alumni Affairs Strategic Plan*, p. 2.

UBC's social contribution to fostering inclusive and just societies is ultimately achieved through the active role and engagement of UBC's alumni within their communities, and with UBC's young and future alumni.

7.8 **Community Engagement (2012)** | communityengagement.ubc.ca/

The University's aspirations to raise the overall standards of excellence in community engagement within the diversity of the communities that surround UBC Vancouver necessitate high levels of intercultural understanding. This includes the interconnectedness with the ethno-culturally diverse communities where many of UBC's commuter students and alumni live, the community organisations that service these communities and the communities closest in proximity to the University, such as Acadia, University Neighbourhood Association, etc. In this way, advances in intercultural understanding help to facilitate deeper and more meaningful community engagement for students, alumni, staff and faculty.

In the same way that intercultural understanding and research excellence are reciprocal, such is the same with community engagement, as will be evident in the concurrent *Community Engagement Strategic Plan*. The learning, research and service-driven partnership of students, alumni, staff and faculty with communities in the Lower Mainland also facilitate the development of intercultural fluency.

There are numerous examples of community engagement at UBC that are also examples of excellence at intercultural understanding. This includes: UBC's Community Service Initiative (CSI), the Immigrant Vancouver Ethnographic Field School (IVEFS), Continuing Studies, the Chan Centre, the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre (IKBLC) and the Museum of Anthropology (MOA). This also includes community service learning in curriculum, as seen in HKIN 489D, *Interculturalism, Health and Physical Activity*, for example.

7.9 **Valuing Difference: A Strategy for Advancing Equity and Diversity at UBC** diversity.ubc.ca/valuing-difference/

At the heart of UBC's commitment to Intercultural Understanding is the further commitment towards respect and equity, as central values to *Place and Promise: The UBC Plan*. For this reason, the work and mandates of Access and Diversity, the Equity Office, the Office of the Ombudsperson for Students and Senior Advisor to the Provost on Women are interconnected. All of these areas share the common mandate of making the University a fairer, more equitable and accessible place to learn, teach and work.

This interconnection lives in many places, including the University's strategic plan on accessibility, diversity and equity, *Valuing Difference: A Strategy for Advancing Equity and Diversity at UBC*.

Valuing Differences is essential to realizing the University's commitment to building intercultural aptitudes and inclusion amongst students, alumni, faculty, staff and community. It also articulates the ethical imperatives for advancing intercultural understanding as contributing to concurrent goals around equity:

That some disadvantaged groups remain underrepresented in some sectors and at some levels of the University community; that some students, staff and faculty continue to feel excluded or marginalized; and that action is required to address these concerns.³⁰

Advancing intercultural understanding therefore inherently addresses the related issue of exclusion, by aiming to foster an inclusive and empathetic environment, encouraging and supporting the actions required to eliminate exclusion, and fostering interconnectedness across cultural difference. More specifically, advancing intercultural understanding involves pushing forward the actions items of *Valuing Difference* around Curriculum and Scholarship³¹ and Classroom Climate.³²

The intercultural understanding strategic plan aims to further strengthen the coordination and synergy between the activities of the community of practice, and in doing so, aims to foster greater clarity for students, faculty and staff. Each of these units has an educational and campus culture role and contribute

³⁰ *Valuing Difference: A Strategy for Advancing Equity and Diversity at UBC* (2010), p. 2.

³¹ *Ibid.* p. 13.

³² *Ibid.* p. 16.

to the operationalization of the *UBC Statement on Respectful Environment for Students, Faculty and Staff*³³, therefore, there does exist some overlap. The core functions of each of these departments is however distinct. For more information on how Access and Diversity, the Equity Office, the Office of the Ombudsperson for Students and Senior Advisor to the Provost on Women are interconnected, please see Appendix 4.0.

7.10 ***UBCV's Graduate Student Strategy and Operational Plan*** (July 2010) | [View PDF](#)

The strategic plan on intercultural understanding will look to support graduate students in a targeted way, so as to take advantage of the unique opportunity they present the University. In being a point of intersection and interconnectedness between undergraduate students (often as Teaching Assistants) and faculty, higher levels of intercultural fluency in UBC's graduate students directly benefits undergraduate students, their peers, and their supervising faculty. In this way, graduate students, have great potential to drive a culture shift at UBC towards becoming a culture of intercultural understanding.

Advancing intercultural understanding is an embedded aspect of *UBCV's Graduate Student Strategy and Operational Plan*, especially as the extension of the general objective around recruiting, retaining and engaging a "diverse graduate student community of the highest caliber that welcomes and supports Aboriginal and international students"³⁴; in providing "an intellectual and social environment based on quality, equity and mutual respect;" and in "enabling students to become outstanding global citizens who contribute to a civil and sustainable society." Fostering intercultural understanding in graduate students is essential for their future success and is therefore an inherent aspect of the *Graduate Pathways to Success (GPS) Program*.

Moreover, intercultural understanding is essential in addressing the difference in cultural expectations between graduate students and supervisors, as explicit in the existing workshops aimed at improving cross-cultural supervision. The ability for graduate students to make sense of and find a place in UBC's complex diversity requires advancing intercultural understanding. Similarly, advancing the intercultural aptitudes of supervising faculty directly improves the graduate student experience.

7.11 ***UBC Library Strategic Directions, Goals and Actions*** (February 2010) | about.library.ubc.ca/strategic-plan/

It is imperative that UBC's libraries be seen as centres of excellence around intercultural understanding. On a practical level, the staff and faculty of UBC's libraries interface with UBC's diverse students and faculty, and are often a point of interdisciplinary contact, requiring the highest levels of intercultural aptitude. More importantly, the library is the symbolic heart of UBC's campus culture: the values modelled at the library affect and influence all students and faculty. With this in mind, it is strategically important that UBC's libraries exude an intercultural sensibility.

This is accomplished, firstly, in the materials and resources that support the advancement of intercultural understanding made available in the library; and secondly, through the strategic directions around community engagement:

Through local, national and international collaboration we exchange perspectives, expertise, and resources with diverse communities. Our community engagement encourages effective use of resources and contributes to the economic, cultural and social well being of the people of B.C. and beyond.³⁵

Subsequently, in partnership with the Library Diversity Caucus and the School of Library, Archive and Information Services (SLAIS) a central repository of scholarly resources supporting student and faculty pursuits in intercultural understanding are being developed.

³³ See: <http://www.hr.ubc.ca/respectful-environment/>

³⁴ *UBCV's Graduate Student Strategy and Operational Plan* (2010). p. 1

³⁵ *UBC Library Strategic Directions, Goals and Actions* (2010). p. 5.

8.0 **APPENDIX IV:** **Key Related Administrative Units and Departments**

The work and mandates of Access and Diversity, the Equity Office, the Office of the Ombudsperson for Students and the Senior Advisor to the Provost on Women Faculty, are deeply interconnected and often easily confused. The following section provides a comparative description of the respective roles.

- 8.1 **Access and Diversity** is mandated to provide academic support, primarily servicing (but not exclusively) students with a variety of needs that affect their academic performance and quality of campus experience. Its core function is to “create an inclusive living and learning environment in which all students can thrive.” Access and Diversity’s unique strength is in ensuring students with disability are provided the necessary academic supports and accommodations. They can provide advice and referrals to students with suspected disabilities (including learning disabilities) and they work very closely with Counselling and Student Health Services. They can also work directly with faculty to facilitate the provision of academic accommodations. Because of this department’s expertise, it is also asked to provide supports to faculty and staff. The Equity Ambassadors, a student volunteer group is also staffed out of Access and Diversity. Access and Diversity is lead by Janet Mee and is an integrated part of *Making a Difference*, the Office of the VP Students Strategic Plan.
- 8.2 Following a recent review of the equity and diversity structures at UBC, the Equity and Inclusion Office is currently being revisioned. Formerly known as the **Equity Office**, it oversees the University’s compliance to and management of UBC’s equity policy and manages the University’s legal obligations to Canada’s equity law as it pertains to the equity-seeking groups (which includes women, visible minority groups, Aboriginal Peoples, people with disability and sexual orientation). Its core function is to “prevent discrimination and harassment on campus, to provide procedures for handling complaints and to coordinate UBC’s employment and educational equity program.” The Equity and Inclusion Office also manages the University’s official statements on diversity and equity (see: <http://diversity.ubc.ca/>). Its strategic plan *Valuing Difference: A Strategy for Advancing Equity and Diversity at UBC*, was adopted in February 2009.
- 8.3 The **Office of the Ombudsperson for Students** “works with UBC community members to ensure students are treated fairly and can learn, work and live in a fair, equitable and respectful environment. Reporting directly to the President, the office is an independent, impartial and confidential resource for students at UBC Vancouver, jointly funded by the AMS, GSS and UBC” (see <http://ombudsoffice.ubc.ca/>) The Office of the Ombudsperson for Students plays a major role in supporting students who are experiencing challenges navigating UBC’s systems, particularly when conflict between students and the University arise, such as academic appeals.
- 8.4 By contrast, the **Senior Advisor to the Provost on Women Faculty** is an integrated member of the Office of the Provost and VP Academic, mandated to lead the institutional transformation towards an enhanced environment for women faculty at UBC. Working in collaboration with departments, Faculties, institutes and centres across UBC as well as peer institutions internationally, this position moves forward the initiatives outlined for the position—policy development, promoting advancement and leadership, ongoing research and assessment, and transformation of the environment. Rebuilding practices and structures for review, rewards, recognition, advancement, and involvement will be a major contribution to UBC’s visibility and recruitment objectives, establishing UBC as a leader in these initiatives.
- 8.5 The **Director of Intercultural Understanding Strategy Development** is also integrated into the Office of the Provost and VP Academic, providing leadership, coordination, consultation and overseeing the most basic shared initiatives around intercultural understanding. This position is mandated to foster interconnectedness between all related units and advisory groups with a focus on fostering social sustainability on campus.

9.0 Acronyms and Abbreviations

A&D	Access and Diversity
ADLP	Academic Leadership Development Program
AMS	Alma Mater Society of UBC
C&CP	Campus and Community Planning
CIRS	Centre for Interactive Research on Sustainability
CRANE	Conflict Resolution, Arts and iNtercultural Experience
CS CIC	Continuing Studies Centre for Intercultural Communication
CTLT	Centre for Teaching and Learning Technology
ELI	English Language Institute
FNHL	First Nations House of Learning
HR	Human Resources
I-House	International House
IVEFS	Immigrant Vancouver Ethnographic Field School
PAIR	Office of Planning And Institutional Research
PPEC	Peer Program Executive Committee
SD&S	Student Development and Services
SJC	St. John's College
SLAIS	School for Library, Archival and Information Services
VP Students (VPS)	Vice-President Students

Advisory Groups

F1	Faculty Subject Matter Expert Advisory Group
G1	Graduate student subject matter expert working and advisory group
S1	Intercultural Staff Council

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- Photo on page 7 (VP Students).
- Adaptation to illustration on page 33 (ODR, Inc.)