

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE NORTH ISLAND COLLEGE EDUCATION COUNCIL
HELD ON TEAMS ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2025**

DRAFT

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- PRESENT:** Aisling Brady, Faculty, Comox Valley, *Chair*
Alex Blair, Faculty, Comox Valley
Cheryl O’Connell, Administration
David Johns, Faculty, Campbell River
Gurjeet Singh, Student, Comox Valley
Jennifer Fallis Starhunter, Faculty, Campbell River, *Chair, Curriculum & Fast Track*
Judith Marriott, Faculty, Comox Valley, *Chair, Planning & Standards*
Kelly Goudreau, Faculty, Comox Valley
Kelly Shopland, Administration
Margaret Hearnden, Faculty, Comox Valley
Michelle Badger, Administration
Paris Gaudet, Support Staff, Comox Valley/Campbell River
Tony Bellavia, Administration, Comox Valley
Lisa Domae, President (Ex-Officio)
Kara Foreman, Recording Secretary (RS)
- REGRETS:** Georgette Whitehead, Faculty, Comox Valley
Ibrahim Abdullah, Faculty, Campbell River
Katrina Corporal, Student, Comox Valley
Manpreet Kaur, Support Staff, Comox Valley
Precious Mvumira, Student, Campbell River
Takia Islam, Student, Campbell River
- GUESTS:** Donna Merry
Kathleen Haggith
Neil Cruickshank

1. Indigenous Acknowledgment

Declaration of Quorum: A. Brady declared quorum at 10:31 am.

2. Adoption of Agenda

Moved by J. Marriott / Seconded by A. Blair **TO ADOPT THE AGENDA FOR SEPTEMBER 12, 2025.**

Noted: items were not taken in the order on the meeting agenda.

MOTION CARRIED.

3. Business Arising

The Chair noted that this special meeting was called because items on the agenda needed to be reviewed by Council with recommendations going to the Board of Governors’ (BOG) meeting on October 2, 2025. Per the BC College & Institute Act and Policy 3.20, the BOG must seek advice from Council regarding the cancellation of programs although the final decision to cancel programs is up to the BOG. In this case, motions are framed that Ed Council recommends the BOG cancel the program(s) following any discussion (and further recommendations) at the table.

VP Academic / Education Team: Program Cancellations (Tony Bellavia)

Context for Cancellations

Per the steps outlined in the Procedures in Policy 3-20, these program cancellations were brought to the Education Team for consultation, then to the Leadership Team, and then to EdCo for their advice, and finally the President, VP Academic and the EdCo Chair to will present their recommendations to the BOG. With regard to the provincial mandate, the directive is clear. NIC must review all programs initiatives towards that provincial mandate. The VP acknowledged that these cancellations will have impacts that result in a reduced workload for some faculty members, but that this is no reflection on the quality of instruction. A multitude of factors went into these decisions. Some are due to external forces, some due to technological changes, and most importantly, some are due to changes in student demand. He thanked Council for the opportunity to discuss these cancellations.

3.1 Program Cancellations

Noted: T. Bellavia abstained from voting on all motions.

3.1.7 Metal Jewelry Design Certificate

Moved by A. Blair / Seconded by P. Gaudet TO RECOMMEND THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS APPROVE THE CANCELLATION OF THIS PROGRAM.

Background:

D. Merry, Manager of Continuing Education, stated that this Certificate has been available for the last 12 years. While it's a popular program, it is expensive to deliver and it's been challenging filling the seats as a Certificate program. It is a cost recovery program, however, increased cost of materials make it unsustainable with the 2% tuition increase limit. CET is suggesting a cancellation for Fall 2026. Instructors are CET faculty, not NICFA, and they have proposed and are implementing a more sustainable option by creating 3 stackable micro credentials of 154 hours each, with streamlined content. Their first cohort started last week with sufficient numbers to be cost recovered, and already have adequate enrollment for the 2nd cohort

Discussion:

- It was noted that the attached paperwork lists this as a program suspension and should be corrected before presentation to the BOG.
- It was also noted that the course titles should be listed and not just the course codes in order to provide adequate information for the BOG's decision.
- Clarification was made that a program can be cancelled without all of its courses being cancelled as some courses are used in multiple programs.
- Concern was expressed about the potential of credit-based programs that go through the rigorous curriculum review process then being moved to Continuing Education, or into micro credentials that do not have the same review process. This shouldn't become standard practice going forward.

The VP stated that NIC is committed to following the collective agreement in regards to program development and the association of courses with the Faculty Association.

MOTION CARRIED.

3.1.1 Tourism and Hospitality Management Certificate

Moved by A. Blair / Seconded by K. Goudreau TO RECOMMEND THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS APPROVE THE CANCELLATION OF THIS PROGRAM.

Background:

Some of the rationale for this cancellation will also apply to other Tourism programs on this agenda. Tourism & Hospitality Management is currently under suspension although the Adventure Guiding Certificate is still active.

With changes to the IRCC, and with tourism and hospitality management no longer qualifying for the post-graduation work permit, we're seeing a large drop in interest among international students which consists of approximately 80% of enrollments. Some of the courses in this program will remain active within the Adventure Guiding Certificate.

Discussion:

Q: Given that government policies change, why is this program being cancelled instead of being suspended?

A: It's partly about quality assurance. This program hasn't gone through a formal review process for some time and it's difficult when there are multiple iterations of the same program concurrently. A student begins a program under a certain calendar and remains there until completion or if they switch programs. If we put a hard stop to the program, it allows us to look at reconceptualizing a new program from a foundational level. If a program is suspended the calendar description remains active for that program with no students. Cancelling it removes the program and courses from the calendar.

Q: We've been bouncing around ideas of how to either use or deactivate Tourism courses. It looks like the programs are already out of the calendar so it doesn't seem to require cancellation to remove them. Also given the focus on labour market demand, and the fact

that we live in an area with a large market for tourism, why aren't we just suspending the program and working on getting more domestic students enrolled? What is the urgency in cancelling the program and deactivating the courses?

A: The BC Labour Market Outlook 2024 edition indicates that the majority of tourism jobs are in TEERs that don't require formal education. At the moment our programs aren't attracting students. Most jobs are in TEER 5 which require no formal education, or TEER 4 which requires only secondary school education. Suspension would only delay cancellation for a year so cancellation seems the best recourse for programs that have come to the end of their applicability to the labour market if our focus is on being responsive.

Q: It looks like these courses have already been removed from the calendar without cancelling them, so is cancelling them necessary?

A: They are still in the calendar with a suspension notice. The calendar indicates a post secondary's inventory and you get lots of questions if you have too many things in suspension. (e.g. when are you offering it, why aren't you offering it) It's a reflection on the institution and this needs to be considered when making these decisions.

Q: What about students currently enrolled in the program?

A: For currently enrolled students, the Registrar's office has put together individual teaching out plans to ensure they have the courses needed for completion.

Noted:

- The paperwork still says suspension and none of the consultations have been checked off.
- Course deactivations are not part of the cancellation process. They still have to go through EdCo for approval. Course deactivations listed in the program cancellation are there for informational purposes only.
- Program cancellation and new program development has a much extended timeline for making that program active than reactivating something already on the books. If the government back tracks, it could take a year to have a viable program ready for enrollment.

Q: There's been mention of focusing on targeted skills instead of a broader credential but a certificate is already our smallest credential. Currently we don't have anything that requires the creation of micro credentials to be presented as information at EdCo. Could we have a commitment to look at adding that to policy so that we're not worried about smaller targeted micro credentials replacing the credentialed offerings that we currently have in tourism and hospitality?

A: K. Haggith is currently reviewing the credential policy through the SEM umbrella and looking at adding a smaller credentialed credential called an Associate Certificate. These would go through Curriculum and EdCo and through the academic governance process.

Q: With Metal Jewelry there is a new plan in place so cancellation makes sense. Why the need for cancellation if there isn't a new plan in place. Why not just suspend the program for 2 years and make a new plan?

A: Part of this is in regard to our commitment to the provincial mandate to review efficiency in our operations. The request to cancel this program is because it is no longer a focus of this institution. The dean's mandate is to produce high labour market priorities moving forward for the next 3 to 5 years. Based on student demand we do not see tourism in that lens. Student demand was driven by international enrollments and their ability to get post grad work permits. That opportunity is gone. We don't have a domestic market for this program. The dean needs to focus his attention elsewhere. Program cancellation clearly articulates that change in direction.

Q: I can't find this program on the website so isn't the lack of student demand a self-fulfilling prophecy? And the process to have students able to complete their credential is causing lots of problems. Why not postpone cancelling it until the students are done?

A: Current students will be supported regardless of the direction we take.

Q: Does part of supporting students include referring or transferring them to other institutions?

A: There are a total of 20 students in this program and each student's situation is being audited and the courses they need to complete are being provided.

Q: Will the college put in a process to ensure that programs that are being canceled but could be revamped will be?

And what facility does the college have in place to push back on the government's mandate (as evidenced by the inclusion of ECCE after it was identified as missing) as each province and territory has different requirements?

A: In regards to a commitment to review, it would be under consideration in regards to the development of the new strategic plan that's unfolding in the fall and priorities that are emerging. Based on the review of labour market priorities and the mandate that outlines movement to high paying jobs, the college will not invest time and energy into tourism. However, there have been discussions on potential opportunities to work with Indigenous nations if they request tourism related programming.

Regarding push back on the mandate, the President's office and other offices have done a significant amount of advocacy work on the federal changes, however, we don't anticipate changes on the tourism front for the next several years.

Q: Has there been any discussion about keeping just the Tourism & Hospitality Management Certificate and cancelling all the others?

A: The only certificate that remains active is the Adventure Guiding Certificate because it has the most interest from students and enrollments are sufficient to run it.

Q: Tourism & Hospitality has not gone through a rigorous program review so doesn't have a Program Advisory Committee but has there been any consultation with industry and its need for these students?

A: Anecdotal but not official communication.

Q: Program completion allows students 3 years. Will all students complete their program before the anticipated program cancellation date?

A: Post secondary institutions are allowed to provide a specialized teach out plan as long as it's reasonable and gives reasonable notice. We have not received any expressed concerns from students about the teach out plans presented.

Q: What were the last enrollment numbers for domestic students in the Tourism programs?

A: There were no enrollments this year as the program was suspended. Previously there were 2 or 3 students in each of the certificates who are now completing the courses needed to meet the completion requirements.

MOTION CARRIED. 2 OPPOSED.

Items 3.2.1 – 3.1.5 were taken together

3.1.2 Tourism and Hospitality Management Diploma - Hospitality Management Option

3.1.3 Tourism and Hospitality Management Diploma – Tourism Management Option

3.1.4 Tourism and Hospitality Management – Post Graduate Certificate

3.1.5 Tourism and Hospitality Management – Post Graduate Diploma

Moved by P. Gaudet / Seconded by D. Johns TO RECOMMEND THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS APPROVE THE CANCELLATION OF THESE PROGRAMS.

No Discussion.

MOTION CARRIED. 2 OPPOSED.

3.1.6 Tourism and Hospitality Management Diploma – Adventure Guiding Option

Moved by M. Badger / Seconded by D. Johns TO RECOMMEND THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS APPROVE THE CANCELLATION OF THIS PROGRAM.

Background:

There is a significant attrition rate between the Certificate and the Diploma. The Certificate has a more applied and experiential focus, where the Diploma is more theoretical and aligned with management philosophies. Very few students gravitate to the Diploma.

Discussion:

Q: Is there any value in holding off on cancellation of the Diploma in case demand increases in the next few years?

A: While the certificate is still the more popular, the enrollment numbers are still only 16-20 students in the Certificate so the demand is still low. This is a cost recovery program and only some of the THM and elective courses are base funded.

Q: To clarify, it's not that students are choosing the certificate over a two year diploma, it's that they're not converting their certificate and continuing into the diploma?

A: Yes. In some cases students are actually choosing to migrate from the two year to the one year.

MOTION CARRIED. 1 OPPOSED.

3.1.8 Computer Information Systems Certificate (CIS)

Moved by D. Johns / Seconded by P. Gaudet TO RECOMMEND THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS APPROVE THE CANCELLATION OF THIS PROGRAM.

Background:

This program was developed prior to Covid and when launched it didn't attract many students. The sector changed rapidly and students were less interested in information technology and were instead gravitating toward digital design development. This is the 2nd year of suspension of this program and there are no students enrolled. Noted that only those courses that are not part of other programs will be removed from the calendar.

Discussion:

Noted the paperwork still says suspension not cancellations and the consultations have not been checked. Also a typo was noted.

MOTION CARRIED.

Items 3.1.9 – 3.1.0 were taken together

3.1.9 Computing Accounting Certificate

3.1.0 Administrative Assistant Certificate

Moved by M. Badger / Seconded by A. Blair TO RECOMMEND THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS APPROVE THE CANCELLATION OF THESE PROGRAMS.

Background:

Office Assistant Certificate 1 (OAC 1) which is still active attracts the vast majority of students. There has been a sharp decline in graduations and enrollments for these two certificates. OAC 1 is the foundational program and students are choosing not to proceed further. This lack of student demand is likely a reflection of changing technology, including artificial intelligence.

Discussion:

Noted: same issues with the paperwork. Also a recommendation for clarity; do not mix percentages with numbers. Use one or the other, or include both.

MOTION CARRIED. 1 OPPOSED.

3.1.11 Aircraft Structures Technician Certificate

Moved by D. Johns / Seconded by M. Badger TO RECOMMEND THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS APPROVE THE CANCELLATION OF THIS PROGRAM.

Background:

Due to the perpetuating issues with curriculum requirements, capital constraints and overall enrollments, we had to suspend the program in 2020, 2021 and again in 2023. In 2022, the program went through a comprehensive review, and based on that review, it was determined that the program should be cancelled. The key factor determining the viability of the program was student enrollment, with persistent low enrollments over 2 decades. Skilled Trades BC has made it clear that their priority investment is in Red Seal programs and this is not a Red Seal program.

Discussion:

None.

MOTION CARRIED.

Final Comments:

The VP Academic requested a follow up conversation with the EdCo chair, the Registrar, Chair of Curriculum Committee and the AVP College Experience to clarify processes with regard to deactivating courses. His office will setup this meeting.

8. Meeting Evaluation – Roundtable Discussion

Everyone agreed it was a good meeting.

9. Next Meeting – October 17, 2025

10. ADJOURNED AT 12:14pm