

**A RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN BRITISH  
COLUMBIA CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM**

by

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## Abstract

This project focused on fostering resilience amongst co-operative higher education students as a necessary skill for success in academia, the workforce, and in life. There are five chapters in this project. Chapter 1 outlines the significance, background, and purpose of the project, as well as my personal location as a researcher. Chapter 2 presents a thematic and study-by-study literature review that explores co-operative education and its models as well as ramifications of student resilience in higher education. The literature review identified major themes of academic, career, stress/emotional, and communication/social resilience common to co-operative higher education students. Chapter 3 discusses the research methods, which were based on an educational qualitative orientation and content and documentary research designs. The process identified major themes of co-operative education program activities and subthemes of pre-employment training, the placement process, student interaction, evaluation, and policies and procedures; and types of resilience including subthemes of academic, career, communication/social, and stress/emotional. Chapter 4 presents a developed UNBC resilience framework that aligns co-operative education program activities with resilience themes, building strategies, and university agencies, and identifies outputs/competencies related to the impact of resilience on co-operative education students' academic and workforce success. Chapter 5 offers the project's summary, conclusion, and recommendations such as using individualized resilience coaching for student success, and further research on the impact of resilience on co-operative education student relations with employers and the impact of a resilience framework on co-operative education student alumni.

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This project is dedicated to postsecondary co-op students who welcome the challenge of building their skills as professionals while trying to balance success in academia, life, and the workforce. Coordinating many aspects of one's life is never easy, and this project is dedicated to ensuring that student development is top of mind to increase the supports necessary for student success.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

Co-operative education (co-op) programs have been a part of postsecondary institutions around the world since 1903 (Canadian Association for Co-operative Education (CAFCE), 2005). Currently, co-op programs fall under the umbrella of work-integrated learning and broader umbrella of experiential learning (Accountability Council for Co-operative Education and Work Integrated Learning – BC, 2017). The University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) is one of many institutions in Canada that values experiential learning and has elements of work-integrated learning such as internships, practicums, and co-operative education in its academic programs (University of Northern British Columbia, n.d.a). However, current organizational restructuring at UNBC has initiated a revitalization of the UNBC co-op program to bring the value of a co-op program back to students, employers, and the university as a postsecondary institution.

Claudia Sperling, former president of the Association for Co-operative Education BC/Yukon, argues that co-op programs provide “invaluable experiences that help students develop the critical knowledge and skill sets” needed for future career success (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2017, para. 4). Recent literature has identified resilience as one of the required transferable skills that students, including co-op students, must acquire for a successful life and career (Patry & Ford, 2016). If UNBC is to live up to its vision and mission statements to transform lives and “prepare leaders for tomorrow” (UNBC, n.d.a, para. 4-5), it is essential that the UNBC co-op program delivers invaluable experiences that assist students in developing the knowledge and skills, such as resilience, that will equip them for current and future success. This chapter presents the significance, background, personal location, and purpose of the project, and concludes with an overview of the chapter.

## **Significance of the Project**

This project culminates in a resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program. A resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program is significant because it will positively impact the planning, implementation, and management of the program by the co-op office (CAFCE, 2005) and benefit stakeholders of the program, including co-op students, employers, and the institution. Additionally, this project is of great significance as it addresses the gap in literature and adds to professional practice (Creswell, 2015) in co-operative education at postsecondary education institutions.

A resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program is significant as it will have a noteworthy impact on students in the program. Resilience has been identified as a key factor that individuals must have to be successful in life and work (Holdsworth, Turner, & Scott-Young, 2017; Patry & Ford, 2016). Additionally, building meaningful resilience must be done over time and through practice (Ackerman, 2018). As such, a resilience framework will assist UNBC co-op students by consistently encouraging them to build and harness resilience as a transferable skill to use throughout the rest of their time in academia, the workforce, and life. The framework will encourage the building of resilience in co-op students through guiding how the UNBC co-op program structures and delivers its activities, particularly the ones that are central to developing UNBC co-op students for the workforce.

Additionally, a resilience framework will benefit employers who are looking to hire UNBC co-op students. Employers who are keen to succeed in today's economy can benefit from hiring especially resilient co-op students to assist with their organizational needs and plans for the future (King, Newman, & Luthans, 2016). Therefore, a resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program is significant in that it will ensure employers are interested in hiring UNBC co-op

students. Ensuring employers want to hire UNBC co-op students for their resilience and other skillsets will ultimately assist with the sustainability of the program.

A resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program will also support UNBC in its responsibility to its co-op students, as postsecondary institutions are now viewed as responsible for fostering resilience in students (Holdsworth et al., 2017). Furthermore, UNBC's vision and mission statements position it as a leading Canadian postsecondary institution that transforms lives and communities, preparing leaders for tomorrow (UNBC, n.d.a). Helping bolster resilient individuals amongst UNBC co-op students, who are already participating in pre-employment training and embarking on work terms in surrounding communities before they graduate, speaks to UNBC's mission and vision of leadership that impacts individual lives and communities.

The outcome of this project is of great significance as it will inform further research on resilience in co-op students, as well as areas of academic resiliency (Academic Resilience, n.d.; Boingboing, 2017; Holdsworth et al., 2017) in academic disciplines across the university. As such, this project will add to the resources available for experiential learning (e.g., co-op programs) and academic programs to further develop students and provide an opportunity for future research into the benefits of resilient students in academia and the workforce and the implications this may have on stakeholders such as employers, partners, and institutions.

Finally, a resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program will contribute to professional practice within other Canadian postsecondary co-op programs. UNBC is in a prime position to add to the professional practice in co-operative education, as exemplified by the president of the university's statement that "we are really well known here in the north but now, we need to think globally and we have been. We are no longer the best kept secret and we are making a broader impact" (Weeks as cited by Geernaert, 2017). Co-op programs are responsible

for creating and updating pre-employment training and practices to help ensure co-op students develop and refine their employability skills and gain a comprehensive understanding of the workforce (CAFCE, 2005). Employability skills, as identified by the Conference Board of Canada (n.d.), refer to transferable soft skills (JVS Toronto, 2012) such as resilience. By creating a resilience framework that exists beneath the structure of the UNBC co-op program, other co-op programs will be able to see how an important employability skill, such as resilience, can be encouraged and nurtured throughout a student's experience with a co-op program in a variety of ways. This framework could also be adapted for use by other student services at postsecondary institutions that are also concerned with student development.

In sum, with this projects' resilience framework focus, all stakeholders of the UNBC co-op program will benefit and the framework will serve as a creative and innovative co-op program model that is sustainable for the future. A resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program may also create a foundation for future research into resilience as a transferable skill in academic and experiential learning programs.

## **Background of the Project**

For years, sustainability has been central to questions surrounding the UNBC co-op program. The UNBC co-op program has had a tumultuous history since its inception in the 1996/97 academic year (see Appendix A). Between 2007-2008, three separate motions regarding the co-op program's existence were put forward to UNBC's Senate, including motions to abolish the program (UNBC, 2007a), keep the program (UNBC, 2007b), and house the program under a newly created Career Development Centre staffed by two individuals to oversee all career and co-op related student services (UNBC, 2008). Since the inception of the Career Development Centre, now the Student Career Centre, and the decision to keep the UNBC co-op program, the

program has been administered on a case-by-case basis to meet individual student needs.

However, over the last few years only one to two students partook in co-op work term placements each year (BC HEADset, n.d.). This is a severe decline in placements considering students partook in 184 co-op work term placements during the program's peak in 2000/01 and just 13 placements in 2010, a few years after the decision was made to significantly decrease the number of staff allocated to the UNBC co-op program (see Appendix A, BC HEADset, n.d.).

In 2017, a report was mentioned in UNBC's Senate that suggested the return of revitalized and sustainable UNBC co-op program (UNBC, 2017b). As a result, a two-year Co-operative Education Lead position was created in February 2018 to revitalize the program (UNBC, 2017a). This position created an opportune time to evaluate a new direction for the UNBC co-op program, one that ensured the program's sustainability through benefits for its stakeholders.

As co-op programs formally integrate students' academic studies with work experiences and attempt to prepare students for successful futures, they are particularly concerned with developing students for the workforce (CAFCE, 2005). In addition, Patry and Ford (2016) stated that resilience is integral and a part of "becoming well-prepared for a successful and productive life and participating fully in today's knowledge economy" (p. 3). As such, a resilience framework is an ideal way to help ensure UNBC co-op students are equipped for success, while benefitting employers and the institution simultaneously and supporting one of the purposes of any co-op program, which is to prepare students for the workforce (CAFCE, 2005). However, the background for creating a resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program also incorporates my personal location as a researcher.

**Personal Location**

I grew up in the Greater Toronto Area, in a city more than double the size of Prince George, British Columbia, where I now live and work. I attended a medium sized, research-intensive university with a long and rich history for my undergraduate arts degree, and then a college for a graduate certificate in public relations. I also worked in the Greater Toronto Area, Toronto, and Kingston, Ontario for several years in various industries before moving to Prince George.

Shortly after moving to Prince George I was hired as a Student Recruitment Officer, recruiting undergraduate students from around the world to UNBC. I spent most of my time talking to prospective students, trying to understand what their educational goals were and how UNBC could or could not help them achieve those goals. I was often asked whether a specific program (e.g., business), or UNBC in general, had a co-op program. During this time, I began a graduate degree in education at UNBC. In February 2018, I left the Student Recruitment team and took on a newly created position, Co-operative Education Lead.

Having worked in the UNBC co-op program for the past year, I have interacted with students in the program during one-on-one meetings regarding students' job applications, concerns about the job search, opinions on the workforce and their place in it, and short- and long-term goals. I have also interacted with students during pre-employment workshops on job searching, resumes, cover letters, and interview preparation. During these interactions I have noticed co-op students' feelings of apprehension and inadequacy surrounding juggling school and work, the application process, and preparedness for the workforce.

Additionally, due to my role in the UNBC co-op program being focused on revitalizing the program, I have researched co-op program best practices by consulting national co-op

manuals (CAFCE, 2005), talking to program coordinators at other Canadian postsecondary institutions, meeting with UNBC staff and faculty to understand their perceptions and the resources available to the program, and meeting with UNBC students to understand their needs. Being the only individual at UNBC solely dedicated to revitalizing the UNBC co-op program, my time spent in the world of co-operative education, though it may be short, has been intensive. As such, I have gained an understanding of what the UNBC co-op program can be and what it needs to be to better serve its students, employers, and the institution. Overall, my educational and professional journeys, and immersion in the world of co-operative education, has led me to the purpose of this project.

### **Purpose of the Project**

Considering the history of UNBC's co-op program, the program's revitalization and sustainability are dependent on the program benefitting its students, employers, and institution. As such, the primary purpose of this project is to create a resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program that will create an environment that fosters resilience in UNBC co-op students, assisting them in building their individual resilience. Broadly speaking, resilience been identified as critical student's employability (Patry & Ford, 2016) and as such, the purpose of this project also goes beyond UNBC and speaks to the employability of Canadian postsecondary students. Consequently, assisting UNBC co-op students in becoming resilient individuals will help them academically, socially, and professionally, and allow them to contribute to employers who are dealing with a dynamic and demanding economy, while bolstering UNBC as an institution that truly creates leaders while transforming lives and communities. As such, creating a resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program supports student development, which speaks to the goal of ensuring the program benefits its stakeholders and therefore contributes to its sustainability.

A secondary purpose of the project is to ensure that academic programs and student services across UNBC are familiar with the concept, benefits, and applicability of a resilience framework that can contribute to students' learning experiences, development, and success. UNBC is dedicated to preparing leaders for tomorrow (UNBC, n.d.a) and consequently, the UNBC co-op program, along with academic programs and other student services, are responsible for upholding that mission. A resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program provides the UNBC community with a viable mechanism for alignment with UNBC's mission and vision, which both speak to the development of students.

### **Overview of the Chapter**

This chapter presented the significance, background, personal location, and purpose of this project. The significance of the project is that a resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program benefits students, employers, and the institution, and addresses a gap in literature while adding to professional practice within co-operative education. The background of the project reiterated the tumultuous history of the UNBC co-op program and a current revitalization process that should benefit all stakeholders, with a goal of sustainability. The chapter also presented my personal location as a young working professional leading the co-op program at UNBC. My work duties and responsibilities, which enabled me to delve into the world of co-operative education, was highlighted and presented as a guiding force for this project. Chapter 2 of this project explores a literature review of various publications related to the concepts and models of co-operative education programs, as well as the concept of resilience, types of resilience, and the impact of student resilience on co-op students in postsecondary education.



## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

The role of a literature review is very important in research projects as it provides context related to the study and descriptive context that supports the research methods (Creswell, 2015). This project adopts a thematic educational qualitative research literature review approach (Creswell, 2015). The chapter's literature review explores major themes in experiential learning and work-integrated learning, Canadian co-op programs' purposes and activities including pre-employment training, the placement process, student interaction, evaluation, and policies and procedures, and two models of co-operative education. This literature review also uses a study-by-study literature approach (Creswell, 2015) to explore major themes in the conceptual definition of resilience including discipline specific definitions and types of co-op student resilience including academic, career, communication/social, and stress/emotional. In addition, the importance of resilience for co-op students and the role of universities in nurturing resilience in co-op students is also discussed in the chapter.

### **Experiential Learning and Work-Integrated Learning**

There is various educational literature on experiential learning and work-integrated learning. Experiential learning was first introduced by early and contemporary educational philosophers Johanne Pestalozzi, John Dewey, and Paolo Freire amongst others (Association for Experiential Education, 2002; Dewey, 1938; Itin, 1999; Neil, 2005). Dewey believed "there is an intimate and necessary relation between the process or actual experience and education" and that "people learned from experience and doing" (1938, as cited in Cooperative Education and Internship Association, n.d., para. 5). It was not until the 1970s that experiential education emerged as a recognized field in education and in 1977 the Association for Experiential Education was established (Hammerman, Hammerman, & Hammerman, 2001). Furthermore,

Ambrose and Poklop (2015) described experiential learning as “learning by doing” and a learning method which “integrates theory and practice to promote deep and flexible learning” (p. 55). The definitions of experiential learning aptly highlight the relationship between learning and the hands-on application of doing; however, the definitions simply state how learning occurs in experiential learning and do not explain the process involved. Additionally, despite the connection between learning and doing being realised in the late 1930s, experiential learning not becoming a recognized educational field until the 1970s naturally provokes questions surrounding its fit in traditional academia and benefits to learning.

Ambrose and Poklop (2015) conducted a phenomenological study in 2013 on co-operative education learning from students’ perspectives. They interviewed 104 seniors from six American university colleges, who had participated in at least one co-op work term, using a standardized, semi-structured interview protocol. Ambrose and Poklop found that experiential learning is “much more powerful and robust because it provides students with opportunities to apply their knowledge and practice their skills in authentic, real-world situations, with all the contextual idiosyncrasies and unpredictability that entails” (2015, p. 55). This explanation of experiential learning’s importance highlights specific contexts in which learning may occur, which allows for experiential learning to occupy a space in academia and instructors’ understanding of how to engage with experiential learning in a practical way.

Coker, Heiser, Taylor, and Book (2017) conducted a 5-year case study at a mid-sized private university in North Carolina on the impact of experiential learning depth and breadth on student outcomes. They paired data from graduating seniors’ transcripts (including co-curricular records) and responses from the National Survey of Student Engagement. Coker et al. also reported the dividend of experiential learning as valuable as it leads to “additional learning gains

in a range of areas” such as “acquiring a broad general education, writing clearly and effectively, contributing to the welfare of the community, relationships with faculty and administration, and desire to attend the same institution” (2017, pp. 18-19). As demonstrated, the benefits of experiential learning are that it can enrich the settings in which learning occurs by bringing learning outside of the classroom, while also positively impacting other areas of student learning and development. These explanations of the importance of experiential learning signify it as a place for transformative learning and student development, alongside traditional academic programming, to occur.

Work-integrated learning (WIL) is a subset of experiential education and learning (Accountability Council for Co-operative Education and Work Integrated Learning – BC, 2017). Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning (CEWIL) Canada (n.d.a), formerly known as the Canadian Association for Co-operative Education (CAFCE), defined WIL as:

A model and process of experiential education, which formally and intentionally integrates a student’s academic studies with learning in a workplace or practice setting... WIL occurs at the course or program level and includes the development of learning outcomes related to employability, personal agency and life-long learning. (para. 2)

The WIL model provides additional context for the relationship between learning and doing by bringing work experiences into academia. The WIL model also identifies the areas in which experiential learning can increase student development by highlighting the fact that when WIL occurs, either at the course or program level, it touches on the development of employability, agency, and continuous learning. The definitions and benefits of experiential education and learning and modern-day WIL demonstrate the need to complement traditional academic

programming with the concept of doing, to help develop students for a world outside of the classroom. Co-operative education falls into the WIL model (Accountability Council for Co-operative Education and Work Integrated Learning – BC, 2017) and has been identified as one of the earliest forms of experiential learning (Donovan, Portar, & Stellar, 2010).

### **Co-operative Education (Co-op) Programs**

Co-operative education is a structured method of combining classroom-based education with practical work experience. A co-operative education experience, commonly known as a “co-op,” provides academic credit for structured job experience (Cooperative Education and Internship Association, n.d.). CEWIL Canada (n.d.c) defined a co-op program as one “which alternates periods of academic study with periods of work experience in appropriate fields of business, industry, government, social services and the professions” (para. 1). Similarly, Canadian-Universities.net (2016) defined co-operative education as a “a structured method of combining classroom-based education with practical work experience” (para. 1). In addition, CAFCE (2005) defined co-operative education as “a program that formally integrates a student's academic studies with work experience with participating employers” (p. 1). Furthermore, the University of Waterloo (n.d.) defined co-operative education as combining “academic studies with work experience” (para. 5). As demonstrated, all definitions of co-operative education or co-op programs highlight the addition of work experience to academic studies at postsecondary institutions. These definitions also suggest that co-op programs are formally structured educational programs, which may lead to them being prescriptive. A structured and potentially prescriptive co-op program may prove challenging to change once implemented due to university governance processes and bodies such as senates (Berkowitz, 2010), which may hinder program’s abilities to interact effectively with the workforce. As such, to ensure co-op programs

are meeting the needs of the workforce (CAFCE, 2005) they may need to get creative in the way they deliver their programming and activities.

However, Zegwaard and Coll (2011) published a paper that explored the state of literature and research in co-operative education, the ideas behind its acceptance in higher education, and identified integration as an area that still required attention for successful co-operative education programs to exist. They suggested that postsecondary institutions should be concerned with “the unsupported notion that having a mere add-on work-experience program, tacked to the side of a degree or other program somehow constitutes co-op or WIL” (2011, p. 12). Zegwaard and Coll also argued that despite institutions often employing add-on work experience programs based on the assumption that “learning will automatically occur (therefore assumed to be adding value to student learning experience),” this assumed value is “unfounded and not supported by the literature” (2011, p. 13). While the addition of work experience to academia is an example of how programs can employ the premise behind experiential education and learning, and subsequently the WIL model and co-op programs, Zegwaard and Coll (2011) make a valid point in questioning exactly how the learning is happening in these programs, if it is not merely happening during the concept of doing. If programs are simply facilitating the integration of work experience into academia to develop students and enrich their experiences with formal education, the idea of learning development needs to be further unpacked to understand the process behind it. As such, it is unsurprising that co-op programs include work experiences and additional activities, such as pre-employment training, ongoing student interaction, and evaluation (CAFCE, 2005) to ensure that value is truly being added to the student learning experience and student development. These types of activities speak to Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning cycle, which suggested that effective experiential learning is not just

an individual having a concrete experience (e.g., a work placement or term), but also observing and reflecting on that experience, abstracting concepts and uses, and then using this knowledge in the future.

### **The Purpose of Co-op Programs**

CEWIL Canada (n.d.c) explained that a co-op program allows students to alternate academic and work experience terms in their discipline. The purpose of the program is for students to gain an enhanced and practical understanding of their academics, while developing and refining employability skills and gaining a comprehensive understanding of the workforce and their role in it (CAFCE, 2005). Furthermore, Usher (2012) supported the need for work-integrated learning programs due to their important role in developing “career ready students with identifiable graduate capabilities” (p. 5) which will enable students to succeed in future workforces. However, the definition of a career ready student will change based on the economic condition graduates are facing, as different economic conditions will require different skillsets (The Brookfield Institute for Innovation + Entrepreneurship, 2019). As such, while the purpose of a co-op program is to develop career ready students, how a co-op program goes about doing this is integral to whether they are adequately preparing students for the workforce. Co-op activities should be grounded in principles that are constantly shifting to support student learning, and consequently, student development for a life after academia. Patry and Ford (2016) have identified resilience as one of those skills that individuals must have to achieve success after postsecondary education. As such, a facet of development preparation that co-op programs should consider is co-op students balancing academia and the workplace (CEWIL Canada, n.d.c) and navigating transitions using resilience skills such as self-organization, effective communication, and effective time management.

## **Activities Impacting Student Development in Co-op Programs**

CAFCE (2005) stated that co-op programs are responsible for administering activities such as student recruitment, student admission, pre-employment training, learning objectives, the placement process, student interaction, employer interaction, evaluation, and policies and procedures. The co-op office and its staff are responsible for implementing these activities and while some activities occur annually or biannually (e.g., student admission), co-op offices are usually dealing with three different student populations (recently admitted students, work term students, and academic term students), employers, and their institution staff and faculties at any given time (CAFCE, 2005). Seeing as co-op programs are dealing with various groups of students while administering a wide range of activities, co-op offices must be cautious in ensuring all student groups are being properly developed. Furthermore, while co-op activities exist to support a co-op program's purpose of developing students and helping them understand the workforce (CAFCE, 2005), the program's purpose of developing students for the workforce, seems to be one of the only elements binding these activities together to create a cohesive program. However, CAFCE (2005) also hopes that Canadian co-op programs adopt best practices that fit their institutional cultures. As such, other elements may be used to support a co-op program's purpose as that which links a co-op program's activities to each other. These additional elements to help create a cohesive co-op program for an institution may be concepts such as an institution's mission or vision, or a skill such as resilience, that would assist in creating career ready graduates (Patry & Ford, 2016).

**Pre-employment training.** CAFCE (2005) stated that co-op offices are responsible for providing students with pre-employment training on a variety of topics including learning objectives, the job search, labour market dynamics, resumes and cover letters, interview

techniques, and communication, conflict management, personal management, and teamwork skills. The co-op office should also regularly update pre-employment training based on feedback from employers to ensure the program is adequately preparing students for the realities of the workforce (CAFCE, 2005). Leaving the creation and updating of pre-employment training to individual co-op programs indicates that programs have the ability and flexibility to craft and implement training curriculum as they see fit. However, it also assumes that individual co-op programs will take this responsibility seriously and put the resources necessary into the development of pre-employment training that will truly assist students with their development and equip them for the workforce. While the flexibility that co-op programs have to develop their pre-employment training may put additional strain on smaller programs, it allows for programs to consider what their students need, what the workforce is demanding, and ensure training connects the two concepts. Pre-employment training is an ideal vehicle for ensuring graduates are ready for the workforce, and have essential skills such as resilience, that will prepare them for success (Patry & Ford, 2016). For instance, resilience can be discussed in relevant courses such as organizational behaviour (Mate & Ryan, 2015) or highlighted as a learning objective that co-op students can work towards improving. Additionally, the pre-employment training topics mentioned above share a commonality in that they have the innate ability to incite stressful situations. As resilience has been shown to help individuals cope with stressful situations (Shellman & Hill, 2017; Smith, Tooley, Kay, & Kay, 2010), these pre-employment topics become an optimal space for discussing and building resilience skills such as academic resilience and effective communication, to assist co-op students in becoming champions of these important training topics, while building their skillset for the workforce.



**The placement process.** CAFCE (2005) explained that co-op offices are encouraged to adopt a matrix or continuous co-op work term placement process. After certain hiring processes have been completed, both systems require co-op offices to rank students for placement with participating employers (CAFCE, 2005). In both placement processes, co-op offices are involved in the placement of students in co-op work terms and activities within this process including determining the interview period, enabling employers to participate, receiving and posting job descriptions, creating an application process, sending applications to employers for review, producing an interview schedule, ranking and matching students with employers, and confirming placements (CAFCE, 2005). As demonstrated, placement processes facilitated by co-op programs do not allow students and employers to engage in hiring processes that students would encounter after academia, which may stunt student development in an area where strategies could be employed to aid in the development of resilience skills such as effective communication.

Furthermore, Delany et al. (2015) argued that experiential learning programs, such as clinical placements, are critical to student development and yet “can also be a time when students feel most stressed” (p. 1320). Consequently, the placement process and placements themselves, can be a time of stress for students as they are dealing with some aspects of hiring processes, the idea of being ranked against fellow classmates, and anxieties related to their upcoming work placement. Stress self-management (SSM) by co-op students in higher education is a key resilience skill requiring attention by all stakeholders managing the program (Shellman & Hill, 2017, Smith et al., 2010).

**Student interaction.** This is a major activity focus in the administration of co-op programs in higher education. CAFCE (2005) outlined the various ways co-op offices interact

with students including admitting students to the program, providing co-op students with an orientation to the program and pre-employment training, conducting site visits during co-op work terms, and debriefing after work terms. Additionally, a sample job description for a co-op coordinator outlines additional responsibilities such as providing guidance on workplace skills and advice on seeking full-time employment and academics (CAFCE, 2005). Consequently, co-op offices can directly and indirectly impact student development due to constant interaction with co-op students throughout the program's various touch points. This impact can then affect a co-op program's other stakeholders, as students are a significant conduit to the program's employers and institution through participating in co-op work terms (CAFCE, 2005). However, the ability co-op offices have to impact student development through interaction, gives them a unique opportunity to foster resilience, a necessary skill (Patry & Ford, 2016), in their students. Ackerman (2018) stated that "to truly build meaningful resilience, it must be a practice rather than a crash course" (para. 99) and since interaction with co-op students takes place over time and through a variety of instances, as stated above, building truly meaningful resilience in co-op students is possible.

Even though the onus of student interaction lies more with co-op office personnel, co-op students are also responsible for developing effective student-to-student interactions and communications in the workplace and on campus as part of their learning (Johnson, 2008). The challenges of facilitating effective co-op student-to-student interactions exists mostly within university agencies such as student union centers, academic learning centers, and sports centers where students interact with each other to build communication skills and find support from each other (Johnson, 2008). These spaces can become valuable resources to co-op programs looking to build communication/social resilience skills in co-op students.

**Evaluation.** Co-op offices are responsible for evaluating program components such as student performance, employer suitability, and program activities (CAFCE, 2005). A co-op student's performance is evaluated through employer evaluations and work term reports encompassing the student's learning objectives and experiences in the workplace (CAFCE, 2005). Employer evaluations of students should assess elements such as the acceptance of criticisms and suggestions, personal care, communication skills, judgement, and relations with others (CAFCE, 2005). Work term report guidelines should also assess communication skills; however, they can also be largely reflective (CAFCE, 2005). Employers and co-op offices should use these evaluations and reports, as well as other instances, to provide students with feedback on their performance (CAFCE, 2005). Evaluations and feedback are yet another touch point that co-op offices have with students. Evaluation "is the process of judging or putting a value on a procedure, the degree to which knowledge has been gained, or a skill" and feedback "is a method of providing information about a student's learning or skill acquisition in order to plan future learning goals and to ameliorate behaviour and skills" (Preceptor Education in the Faculty of Health at Dalhousie University, n.d., para. 2-3). As such, evaluations and feedback can significantly impact student development and learning. Furthermore, employer evaluations of student performances are used in assessing the success of a student's co-op work term, which is then reflected on academic transcripts (CAFCE, 2005). Resilience has been linked to increased performance at work (Magnano, Craparo, & Paolillo, 2016; Robertson, 2017) and is an area in which co-op students should be evaluated on and provided feedback for to facilitate future growth and development.

**Policies and procedures.** These are considered as guiding the effective organizational management of people and resources. CAFCE (2005) stated that co-op offices are also

responsible for developing and instituting policies and procedures to ensure standards and stakeholder needs are met. Policies relate to topics such as work terms, fees, withdrawal from a work term, academic coursework, pre-employment training, admission, placement processes, conduct expectations, and appeals (CAFCE, 2005). While policies are in place to safeguard co-op programs and stakeholders such as its students, policies and procedures “can have a significant impact on student mental wellbeing [as] they reinforce certain values and behaviours which in turn affect student experience” (University of British Columbia Student Development and Services, 2013, p. 8). As such, co-op programs must be cognizant of the potentially negative effects their policies and procedures can have on student mental wellbeing and the student experience. A student’s lack of understanding co-op education policies could have a negative effect on them and cause them to experience negativity in the form of stress, emotional breakdowns, and low self-esteem (Robbins, Kaye, & Catling, 2018). Postsecondary agencies such as co-op offices and student union offices in charge of student orientation, amongst others, are responsible for writing and interpreting policies and procedures for co-op students to ensure clarity and understanding. Seeing as resilience protects individuals’ psychological wellbeing (Robertson, 2017), policies and procedures must also be viewed as an area where resilience can play an important role in developing student abilities and providing students with a space to flourish.

### **Canadian Models of Co-operative Education**

There are many models of co-operative education globally. However, the Canadian model was created to address the specific learning and work or employer needs of students across Canada (CAFCE, 2005). Canadian models of co-operative education (co-op) programs include two approved co-op program structures or models that are recognized nationally:

- co-op programs with more than one work experience integrated into the overall program providing students with the opportunity for career exploration, development and exposure to more than a single type of work environment in their discipline; and
- co-op internship programs with one work experience period where students receive an in depth exposure (normally) to one employer organization, which provides the student the opportunity for development commensurate with the length of the overall program.

(CAFCE, 2005, p. 6)

Both models align with the central premise of a WIL program, in that they incorporate work experience into academia (CEWIL Canada, n.d.a). However, the models differ in length of exposure to the workforce which, as suggested by the definitions, speaks to the level of development students will receive throughout the co-op program, inherently connecting work experiences with development. The issue yet again is the premise that WIL programs simply incorporating work experiences into academia (CEWIL Canada, n.d.a) perpetuates the notion that “learning will automatically occur (therefore assumed to be adding value to student learning experience)” (Zegwaard & Coll, 2011, p. 13). To remedy the preconceived notion of work experiences as learning opportunities which innately lead to development, CAFCE (2005) outlined co-op program activities that create additional spaces to add value to the student learning experience, such as pre-employment training, the placement process, student interaction, evaluation, and policies and procedures.

However, CAFCE’s (2005) two co-op models differing in length and exposure to the workforce also suggests that these models simply create different experiences for students. As such, student learning outcomes must be determined from the outset to understand which co-op model would be best suited for a program. Additional factors to consider when determining an

appropriate co-op model may also be the nature of the discipline or industry and the program length and structure. Consequently, CAFCE's (2005) co-op models and suggested program activities provide options for Canadian postsecondary institutions to ensure students are being adequately prepared for the workforce.

The UNBC co-op program follows the CAFCE (2005) multiple work term model specified in the co-op manual. UNBC's adoption of the CAFCE (2005) model was necessary and morally warranted based on the fact that a past UNBC co-op education representative, Dexter MacRae, was part of the pioneering Canadian team that created the Canadian co-op manual. As such, the UNBC co-op program was created in alignment with CAFCE (2005) and hosts a multiple work experience co-op program model (UNBC, n.d.b). Through this model, UNBC co-op students "gain quality work experience in a variety of fields with multiple employers" (UNBC, n.d.b, para. 6), which allows them to gain the career exploration and exposure to diverse environments identified as possible with a multiple work experience co-op model (CAFCE, 2005). The UNBC co-op program addresses the development aspect of the multiple work experience co-op model by supplementing work experiences with co-op activities outlined by CAFCE (2005) such as pre-employment training and workshops (see Appendix B), student interaction (UNBC, n.d.b), evaluation (see Appendix C), and policies and procedures (see Appendix D; UNBC, 2018). However, the UNBC co-op program does not have a placement process, as suggested by CAFCE (2005). Instead, the UNBC co-op program simply facilitates students embarking on job searches and employer directed hiring processes on their own with guidance from the co-op office (UNBC, n.d.b). CAFCE (2005) encourages institutions to ensure their co-op programs fit institutional contexts and the UNBC co-op program uses that encouragement to implement altered activities, such as those relating to the placement process

and an increased focus on student interaction (UNBC, 2017a), to ensure fit with UNBC's institutional context.

### **Conceptual Definition of Resilience**

The word resilience was first used in 1674 (Merriam-Webster Online, n.d.). Smith et al. (2010) defined resilience as “the ability to bounce back from stress” (p. 174); however, this definition is narrow as it limits the focus on stress, which by implication goes beyond that. The American Psychological Association (APA) (2014) defined resilience as “the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or even significant sources of stress” (para. 4). This definition also includes the idea of ‘coming back’ from stress; yet, is more substantial in suggesting that resilience is complex and includes a process of bouncing back, while also providing context to factors that could cause stress. Walker, Gleaves, and Grey (2006) defined resilience in higher education as “the ability to recover rapidly from difficult situations as well as being the capacity to endure ongoing hardship in every conceivable way” (p. 251). This definition of resilience is broad and does not necessarily locate resilience within higher education. However, this could allude to the idea that resilience impacts higher education students in a variety of ways and that the impact resilience can have on them while pursuing higher education can also be translated into other areas of their lives, such as the workforce. The various definitions of resilience have similarities such as dealing with difficulty, individual capacity, and a likelihood of success; however, the number of different definitions allude to the concept's dynamic nature (Benard, 2004; Holdsworth et al., 2017; Masten, 2014; Patry & Ford, 2016). Explorations of resilience have created many diverse definitions and led to distinct types of resilience. Consequently, there is no consensus regarding a single, widely-used definition of resilience (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013; Patry & Ford, 2016).

**Types of resilience.** Major research reports in disciplines such as psychology, medicine, counselling, and education, amongst others, have reported various types of resilience which include academic resilience (Holdsworth et al., 2017), career resilience (Bimrose, Brown, Barnes, & Hughes, 2011), and stress/emotional resilience (Mazzer & Rickwood, 2015; Robbins et al., 2018). These concepts are complemented by communication/social resilience that specifically affects student interaction, self-organization, and the evaluation of co-op students in higher education (Benard, 2004; Longaretti, 2011; Ungar, 2005).

*Academic resilience.* Holdsworth et al. (2017) defined academic resilience as:

The capacity of a learner to adapt and develop in response to adverse situations throughout the course of their university experience, within the loci of learning or the university environment which enables the learner to return to a balanced life condition with additional capability allowing them to move forward with a greater level of human capital. (p. 1851)

This definition of resilience connects resilience in university to increased stability and capacity in general, which speaks to the importance resilience could have in impacting other areas of a student's life. The impact of resilience on other areas of life relates to postsecondary institutions becoming increasingly interested in student wellbeing in addition to success in academics and career readiness (Rogers & Lucas, 2016).

Academic resilience amongst co-op students in higher education is related to co-op activities such as pre-employment training, evaluation, and policies and procedures (CAFCE, 2005; Robbins et al., 2018). This resilience theme has administrative implications for co-op offices in higher education in terms of ensuring a balance between learning motivation and



academic success by working with co-op students' agencies, such as faculties, as reported in studies by Cahill, Beadle, Farrelly, Forster, and Smith (2014) and Marthers (2017).

***Career resilience.*** This is defined as “the capacity of an individual to respond to both positive and negative events and to move forward. It is about being able to tolerate uncertainty and ambiguity, whilst at the same time being flexible and autonomous” (Bimrose et al., 2011, p. 17). This definition alludes to the concept of receiving feedback in the workforce, which employers see as a critical ability (Ortiz as cited by McCarthy, 2017; Robertson, 2017). It also comments on ambiguity and the need to be flexible, which employers have also identified as essential given today's economy (Robertson, 2017). Consequently, this definition does well in connecting resilience to specific instances of the workforce that are important for individuals to consider while attempting success.

Career resilience is impacted by generational traits that include work behavior and attitude towards the workforce. Generation Y individuals born between 1972-1992 and Generation Z individuals born between 1993-present (Statistics Canada, 2018) have made a significant impact on the workforce due to the mass retirement of “Baby Boomers” (Odo, 2018). Generation Y and Z differ from previous generations as demonstrated in their work place behavior (Odo, 2018) and the types of stressors they face. Walker et al. (2006) suggested that when students think about their entrance to the workforce, they experience:

Increasing sociocultural pressures... to focus their energies on achieving a largely unattainable ideal of success, defined by the highest possible class of degree, the greatest number of skills obtained, the acquisition of state-of-the-art digital literacies and the most comprehensive portfolio giving evidence of ability to respond to every possible vicissitude. (p. 255)

The experiences and thoughts of students entering the workforce is concerning considering in 2015/16 the average age of students enrolled in programs such as bachelor's level programs with co-operative education components was 24 (Statistics Canada, 2017). As such, it is Generation Y and Z who are experiencing unrealistic pressures to succeed and currently account for the majority of those enrolled in Canadian co-op programs. This reality suggests that co-op programs, whose purpose is to develop students for the workforce (CAFCE, 2005), should be looking to build resilience in their students. Additionally, Kim and Lee (2018) asserted that "individuals face unexpected adversities in life related to family, relationships, career, and other factors" (p. 195), which continues to broaden the stressors co-op students may face and places an even greater focus on the impact resilience can have on co-op students.

Career resilience is significant in higher education co-op activities as it relates to pre-employment training, the placement process, student interaction, and evaluation (CAFCE, 2005). Engaging in co-op programs requires students multi-task as they must handle challenges between their workplace and academic demands, a notion which was supported in studies by Robbins et al. (2018) and Sagor (1996). The need to build more career resilience in co-op students was reiterated by Marthers (2017) as he explained that a lack of focus in this area in higher education may likely increase other resiliency challenges such as stress and allied emotional challenges for co-op students, thereby limiting the opportunities to support a holistic workplace experience.

***Stress/emotional resilience.*** This resilience theme is the most common description of the concept of resilience, as earlier stated. The disciplines of psychology and educational counselling are more involved in the concept of stress resilience, as Robbins et al. (2018) identified psychological measures of resilience as demonstrated through stressful events and levels of self-esteem. Holdsworth et al. (2017) added that if students can perceive a stressful situation and

coping mechanism in a positive way, resilience can also serve as an opportunity for growth and advancement. The idea that resilience assists individuals in dealing with stress and may positively impact students' growth, bodes well for co-op programs with their focus on student development (CAFCE, 2005) and the reality that co-op students will experience stress (Delany, Miller, El-Ansary, Remedios, Hosseini, & McLeod, 2015; Denovan & Macaskill, 2017; Holdsworth et al., 2017; Kim & Lee, 2018; Shellman & Hill, 2017; Walker et al., 2006).

In addition, Denovan and Macaskill (2017) argued that “some degree of stress is inevitable amongst undergraduates” (p. 862). Walker et al. (2006) also claimed that “for very many students within higher education, their period of study is not free from difficulty, rather it is characterized by instability” (p. 261). Furthermore, Holdsworth et al. (2017) contextualized the same notion in their argument that “managing low levels of stress is something that university students face throughout their degree, in addition to sporadic periods of intense stress” (p. 1843). Additionally, approximately 25 percent of Canadian postsecondary students have reported a mental health disorder such as anxiety, depression, or a stress disorder (The Research Universities' Council of British Columbia, 2017). As demonstrated, stress is inevitable for student populations, such as co-op students. These arguments and statistics facilitate the need for postsecondary institutions and programs to help students develop stress/emotional resilience skills to enhance their overall well-being and prepare them against stressful work environments they will one day encounter (Kinman & Grant, 2010).

Shellman and Hill (2017) stated that the time students spend in academia can be stressful as they attempt to “integrate and balance academic demands and new peer-relationships with the life they have always known” (p. 60). Participating in experiential learning through work placements during a student's time in academia has also been viewed as a source of stress

(Delany et al., 2015). Understanding academics, peer relationships, and experiential learning programs (which encompass co-op programs) as sources of stress for students is critical in relation to dealing with co-op student populations as these students attempt to balance academia, life, and work throughout their co-op programs (CEWIL Canada, n.d.c). Unfortunately, current co-op students are facing these stressors in addition to new challenges that accompany a dynamic and uncertain workforce (King et al., 2016; Robertson & Cooper, 2013). Skills related to communication/social resilience demonstrated through techniques such as leisure coping (Denovan & Macaskill, 2017) can assist with students building the social competencies necessary to adjust to relationships in academia, the workforce, and in life.

In conclusion, the studies of Denovan and Macaskill (2017), Holdsworth et al. (2017), Kim and Lee (2018), Shellman and Hill (2017), and Walker et al. (2006) addressed the stressors postsecondary students, such as co-op students, will face throughout their time in academia, the workforce, and life. Thus, the relationship between resilience and stress plays an important role in guiding co-op students through all aspects of life.

In relation to the co-op activities for students in higher education, stress resiliency is connected to pre-employment, the placement process, student interaction, evaluation, and to some extent, policies and procedures (CAFCE, 2005). The ability of students to demonstrate stress resilience varies among individual co-op students and to some degree is affected by gender, as reported in studies within higher education by Masten (2009) and Robbins et al. (2018). Even though this project is not concerned with gendered areas of resiliency, but rather identifying strategies in higher education co-op programs that can help students manage and improve stress resiliency, gender could be considered moving forward.

## **Importance of Resilience for Co-op Students**

Resilience can positively impact students, specifically co-op students, in a variety of ways such as assisting them in managing their mental health, reinforcing motivation to learning success, acquiring work internship skills, as well as inculcating positive attitude and behaviors as students during internship (Kinman & Grant, 2010). Given that co-op students will encounter stress (Delany et al., 2015; Denovan & Macaskill, 2017; Holdsworth et. al, 2017; Kim & Lee, 2018; Shellman & Hill, 2017, Walker et al., 2006) and spend approximately 70% of their time in academia on campus engaging in academic pursuits and 30% of their time in the workforce (CEWIL Canada, n.d.c), it is important to understand the impact of resilience on stress and well-being, academia, and the workforce.

**The impact of resilience on stress and well-being.** The APA (2014) defined resilience as “the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or even significant sources of stress” (para. 4). As such, it is unsurprising that literature on resilience focuses on how well resilient individuals handle stress, especially based on gender differences as noted in the study by Robbins et al. (2018).

Chung, Turnbull, and Chur-Hansen (2017) conducted a case study at a publicly funded Australian university in 2013 to compare the levels of resilience between ‘traditional’ and ‘non-traditional’ first year students. They collected data from a sample of 442 first year psychology students using an online mental health survey that adopted the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale. Chung et al. found that “highly resilient individuals are those who have demonstrated a good track record in overcoming stressful conditions” (2017, p. 78). While this claim identifies the relationship between resilience and stress, it does not reflect on how this relationship benefits individuals.

Denovan and Macaskill (2017) used the broaden-and-build theory as a framework to conduct a case study investigating if resilience levels predicted students' use of leisure coping and positive affect and the subsequent effects on levels of well-being. They integrated several scales and measures into a questionnaire that was completed by 202 social science university students in the United Kingdom. Consequently, Denovan and Macaskill were able to further contextualize the impact of resilience on postsecondary students as they found that resilient individuals are "more likely to use constructive means of coping (such as leisure coping) to proactively cultivate positive emotion which counteracts the experience of stress and promotes well-being" (2017, p. 861). Shellman and Hill (2017) studied whether participation in a 13-day college outdoor education program at a mid-sized college in Central New York could impact students' perceived levels of resilience and mental health. They collected data from 132 participants between 2011-2013 using surveys that adopted Wagnild and Young's Resilience Scale. Shellman and Hill also found that "resilient individuals are better able to persevere and cope in times of trouble, thus programs that foster the development of resilience may in turn enhance an individual's overall well-being" (2017, p. 62). These arguments that resilience can counteract stress and promote overall well-being is an important step in realizing the benefits of resilience. Additionally, Shellman and Hill's (2017) mention of programs that foster resilience development is important to note as postsecondary programs that focus on student development, such as co-op programs, could use resilience as a way to bolster development and leisure coping as a resilience building strategy (Denovan and Macaskill, 2017).

Smith et al. (2010) conducted a case study to examine resilience and its relationship with various health-related measures. They collected data from two large undergraduate samples from a university in New Mexico in 2007 and 2008 using various resilience and health-related scales

and measurements. Smith et al. argued that the influence of resilience on an individual's health suggests that resilience "may play an important role in physical" and overall health "by reducing the amount of time and/or the extent to which the organism is under stress" (2010, p. 173). The idea of resilience reducing the amount of time an individual feels stressed is echoed in Walker et al. (2006)'s definition of resilience in higher education which suggests that resilient students recover quickly from challenging situations. These related ideas are particularly important for co-op students who are balancing school and academia (CEWIL Canada, n.d.c) and are thus facing stressors related to both areas simultaneously.

Smith et al. also suggested that an individual's perceived resilience "may increase the likelihood of engaging in adaptive, approach coping strategies rather than maladaptive, avoidant coping strategies when faced with stressful situations" (2010, p. 174). Furthermore, individuals' perceived resilience "may improve health by making it more likely that a person will accept challenges that may eventually promote a more happy and fulfilling life" (Smith et al., 2010, p. 173-174). The idea that resilience can impact physical health, encourage adaptive coping strategies, and motivate an individual to take on challenges is especially encouraging given the stressful transitions adolescents, such as co-op students, will face (Organisation for Economic Co-operative and Development, 1998, as cited in Kim & Lee, 2018; Ryan & Deci, 2001). Additionally, even just the perception of resilience encouraging individuals to take on challenges is significant in relation to co-op programs as students in these programs are being encouraged to attempt success in the workforce before they have even graduated (CAFCE, 2005). Furthermore, Ramos-Díaz, Rodríguez-Fernández, Axpe, and Ferrara (2018) studied the role of resilience in the relationship between perceived emotional intelligence (PEI) and life satisfaction. They surveyed 945 secondary school students from five institutions in Spain using a survey based on a

resilience, PEI, and life satisfaction scale. Ramos-Díaz et al. also found that resilience may assist with “improving the likelihood of increasing adolescent well-being” (2018, p. 13). As such, the link between resilience and adolescent well-being should serve as a platform for further empirical studies in postsecondary student resilience.

**The impact of resilience in academia.** Student resilience is an area attracting research in educational institutions in Canada and globally. Sagone and De Caroli (2014) conducted a case study on the relationship between resilience, well-being, and coping strategies. They surveyed 183 university students from three degree areas at an Italian university using a survey based on resilience, well-being, and coping scales. Sagone and De Caroli argued that resilient individuals experience “conditions of psychological well-being in academic setting(s)” (2014, pp. 468-469). This statement locates the benefits of resilience within academia; however, it does not explain the significance of resilience within academia.

Walker et al. (2006) published a paper that critically analyzed resilience within higher education students, examined factors that impact students’ learning, and presented ideas regarding how teaching and assessment may be used to promote resilience. Walker et al. elaborated on the previous argument by claiming that success and achievement in academia are “generally predicated upon escalating cognitive complexity, grappling with uncomfortable and alien ideas, questioning of accepted attitudes, beliefs and behaviours, all carried out over a very long period of time” and thus “resilience is clearly a very important concept” (2006, p. 252). Holdsworth et al. (2017) conducted a case study on postsecondary students’ understanding and perceptions of resilience; the impact resilience would have on learning, university experiences, and professional practice; and the role of universities in fostering resilience. They interviewed 38 undergraduates and postgraduates at a large, urban Australian University, using a semi-structured



interview protocol. Holdsworth et al. also proposed that “a student’s response to the challenges, stressors, and risk factors presented over the course of their university degree will determine the value and success of his/her experience and future learning experiences” (2017, p. 1837). Given the importance of a student’s response to stress, “resilience at university is central to a successful participatory learning experience, and therefore, to the collective human and social capital of an individual” (Holdsworth et al., 2017, p. 1837). These arguments, which suggest that resilience is critical to success in academia due to increased psychological well-being over a substantial amount of time, is especially important in relation to students, especially co-op students, given that most co-op programs extend a student’s time in academia by approximately a year (Canadian-Universities.net, 2016).

Walker et al. (2006) also asserted that western society believes resilience to be impactful for the “development of our identity, at home, in work and in our longer-term educational development” (p. 254) and thus nurturing resilient students is important as “many learners’ state of ‘becoming’ will help them to develop visions of themselves that are strong enough to sustain them throughout all their lives” (p. 262). Furthermore, Holdsworth et al. (2017) found that students themselves recognized that resilience is essential to success in their academic pursuits “as well as other spheres of their lives,” such as the workplace (p. 1842). The idea of resilience providing students with a sustainable foundation for success in many areas of their lives is significance in to today’s economy and the challenges it presents individuals (Robertson & Cooper, 2013), such as co-op students, who are entering it while still in academia (CEWIL Canada, n.d.c). Additionally, students’ impressions of resilience are further supported by the idea that resilience can also assist with the stress of the school-to-work transition (Kim & Lee, 2018). Given that co-op students are constantly in the midst of school-to-work transitions (CEWIL

Canada, n.d.c), it is imperative that resilience be further examined within the context of the workforce.

**The impact of resilience in the workforce.** As a result of co-op students' participation in the workplace, it is important to understand the impact resilience can have on co-op students as employees. Robertson (2017) published a paper that explored the importance of resilience for health, work, and the ability to perform under pressure. He argued that resilience is critical for success in today's workforce as it protects individuals' psychological wellbeing. Robertson went on to assert that "people with higher levels of psychological wellbeing behave differently, for example responding better to unfavourable feedback and showing greater flexibility and originality," behaviours that are positively correlated with "productivity and performance at work" (2017, p. 48). Magnano et al. (2016) conducted a study on the relationship between resilience and emotional intelligence on achievement motivation in the workplace. They surveyed 488 Italian professionals, between the ages of 18 and 55, using various scales and measures relating to resilience, emotional intelligence, and achievement motivation. Magnano et al. found that "employees who are more resilient and able to manage their emotions may be more motivated toward achievement and success and may show better performance and satisfaction" (2016, p. 16). Magnano et al. also determined that resilience and its ability to help individuals "accurately perceive, access and regulate emotions... can assist individuals in dealing with a stressful work environment, and to make adjustments to achieve organizational goals" (2016, p. 15). The idea that resilient individuals can better manage their emotions and respond well to unfavourable feedback is critical for co-op students participating in co-op work terms as employers expect all employees to be able to manage setbacks in a healthy way and use feedback so they can see the circumstance as an opportunity for growth (Ortiz as cited by McCarthy,

2017). Additionally, resilience increasing individuals' productivity and performance levels at work is important given employer evaluations of co-op students impacting their academic transcripts (CAFCE, 2005). However, it is also important to consider the realities of today's workforce to fully realize the importance of resilience for individuals, such as co-op students, who are relatively new to the workforce.

King et al. (2016) published a paper that summarized research on workplace resilience as an area for future theory building and empirical research, arguing that "resilience, has emerged as a key, strategically important organizational behaviour for success, growth, and even survival" for employees and employers in the "turbulent nature of the environment facing today's organizations" (p. 782). Patry and Ford (2016) published a technical report that included a literature review on resilience and an analytical section focused on the applicability of popular resilience measures for Canadian postsecondary students using existing longitudinal data. Patry and Ford also noted the importance of resilience in preparing students for success in societies and economies that "continue to evolve rapidly" (2016, p. 41). This suggested workforce turbulence can be mitigated by the idea that resilience has been shown to assist individuals in maintaining effectiveness at work, despite changing conditions (Connor & Davidson, 2013, as cited in Ramos-Díaz et al., 2018). As such, the relationship between resilience and dynamic environments is important in relation to co-op students in their perpetual a state of transition from academia to the workforce (CEWIL Canada, 2018) and during the larger transition from student to professional (Kim & Lee, 2018). Additionally, this relationship prompts the need for further empirical studies into co-op student resilience and its impact on transitions from academia to the workforce.

Patry and Ford (2016) also suggested that transferable skills, such as resilience, are integral in “becoming well-prepared for a successful and productive life and participating fully in today’s knowledge economy” (p. 3). However, Patry and Ford also bring in the role of universities and colleges in asserting that society expects students to acquire transferable skills “as part of their postsecondary training” (2016, p. 3). This idea that postsecondary institutions are expected develop students’ transferable skills to ensure their employability, gives credence to experiential learning programs, such as co-op programs, which are dedicated to developing career ready graduates (CAFCE, 2005).

In sum, the studies of Kinman and Grant (2010), Chung et al. (2017), Denovan and Macaskill (2017), Shellman and Hill (2017), Smith et al. (2010), Ramos-Díaz et al. (2018), Sagone and De Caroli (2014), Walker et al. (2006), Holdsworth et al. (2017), Robertson (2017), Magnano et al. (2016), King et al. (2016), and Patry and Ford (2016) addressed the positive impacts resilience has on postsecondary students, specifically co-op students, as it relates to their well-being, time in academia, and in the workforce. Thus, the benefits of resilience provide a strong argument behind the role universities must play in nurturing resilience in co-op students.

### **The Role of Universities in Nurturing Resilience in Co-op Students**

There has been increased emphasis on individual well-being across sectors (Rogers & Lucas, 2016). Shellman and Hill (2017) argued that institutions of higher education are among “a growing number of industries and organization... developing initiatives that focus on and prioritize well-being” (p. 60). Ramos-Díaz et al. (2018) also claimed that “nowadays schools are seen as institutions where their role extends beyond academic competence to further fostering students’ psychological and social adjustment” (p. 11). These arguments highlight the addition of student wellbeing to the agenda of postsecondary institutions; however, they do not shed light

on what student wellbeing looks like, why it is important, or how to build and protect it. Rogers and Lucas (2016) provided this argument with more context in stating that:

At the institutional level, we are increasingly seeing universities around the world take on the challenge of moving beyond only measuring outcomes related to academic and career success and expanding the scope of their responsibility to include students' well-being and their capacity to build lives of vitality, resilience, purpose, and engagement. (para. 6)

This argument expands the idea of postsecondary institutions' interest in fostering student wellbeing by alluding to specific instances that can protect student wellbeing. However, it fails to identify student wellbeing as necessary for academic success (Holdsworth et al., 2017; Sagone & De Caroli, 2014; Walker et al., 2006) and career success (Magnano et al., 2016; Patry & Ford, 2016; Robertson, 2017). Without this link, postsecondary institutions may be unable to put adequate resources behind supporting student wellbeing, despite it being recognized by society as important for postsecondary institutions to address (Ramos-Díaz et al., 2018; Rogers & Lucas, 2016).

The Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario also recognized the importance of broader learning outcomes for Ontario postsecondary institutions, including resilience as a transferable skill to be measured as a learning outcome (Patry & Ford, 2016). The authors stated that "students are expected to acquire these skills as part of their postsecondary training" (Patry & Ford, 2016, p. 2) and "as society and the economy continue[s] to evolve rapidly in Ontario and worldwide, there is a need to redefine the learning outcomes of postsecondary education in order to better prepare students to succeed in work and life" (p. 41). These statements identify the relationship between postsecondary institutions and preparing students, so they achieve broader learning outcomes, while identifying the need for doing so as well. The indication of the need for

developing skills, such as resilience, can assist postsecondary institutions in securing resources needed to do so. Additionally, Patry and Ford's (2016) indication of resilience as important for success in work and life helps provide postsecondary institutions with a space for this development to happen, such as in co-op programs that are designed to help prepare students work for the workforce and lifelong learning (CAFCE, 2005).

Finally, Holdsworth et al. (2017) took the relationship between universities and resilience one step further in stating that because universities are responsible for “develop[ing] the skills and capabilities of individuals,” they are in a key position to “address the development of resilience” (p. 1837). Holdsworth et al.'s (2017) argument completes the idea of postsecondary institutions fostering resilience in students by adding to previous notions that postsecondary institutions are wise to foster resilience and wellbeing in students due to societal views (Ramos-Díaz et al., 2018, Shellman & Hill, 2017) and resilience benefitting students in academia, life, and the workforce (Patry & Ford, 2017; Rogers & Lucas, 2016). The addition of the concept of responsibility solidifies postsecondary institutions and programs, such as co-op programs, ability to foster resilience in students as a necessary skill. However, it is unclear how co-op programs, which are dedicated to student development and preparation for the workforce (CEWIL Canada, 2005), should undertake the commitment to foster resilience in students.

## **Overview of the Chapter**

This chapter explored literature on experiential learning and work-integrated learning, co-operative education programs, the purpose of a co-op program, co-op activities impacting student development, and two Canadian models of co-operative education. The chapter also discussed the conceptual definition of resilience including various types of resilience, the importance of

resilience for co-op students, amongst others, and the role of universities in nurturing resilience in co-op students.

The literature on experiential learning and co-op programs revealed that the intent of these areas is to add to student development by enhancing students' opportunities to deepen their learning and add to their employability and graduate readiness. Co-op program activities were determined to be practical ways in which programs could interact with students and shape their development. However, the skills that students need to develop for success will change over time, and as such, the exact student development pieces to be produced by co-op programs seemed to be left largely up to individual co-op programs to determine and implement. This may result in co-op programs being unable to properly develop students due to a lack of resources or passionate staff and faculty.

The literature on resilience suggested that resilience is an individual's ability to persevere and potentially thrive in the face of adversity. Resilience was found to be of key importance to co-op students based on the stressors they will face in academia, the workforce, and life and the fact that resilience can assist co-op students in facing these stressors, ultimately, helping them develop a skillset necessary for success. Due to the positive impact resilience can have on all students, universities have been charged with fostering resilience in students if they are truly equipping students with a skillset that will enable them to succeed and become contributing members of society. Strategies universities can use to foster resilience in their students has been researched (and will be discussed in Chapter 4), however, there is no literature on how a co-op program is supposed to encourage resilience in co-op students. This is especially problematic given a co-op program's purpose is to develop career ready students.

The findings from this literature review reveal an opportunity to embed resilience building strategies in a co-op program to ensure student development in this critical area. Even though co-op programs are prescriptive, they allow for flexibility and trust that institutions will uphold the integrity of their respective co-op programs. As such, given the findings from the literature review section on resilience, it appears that a resilience framework may be an ideal way for the UNBC co-op program to truly benefit its students and other stakeholders. This literature review serves as an example of how the review of a program model and research in a field, can lead to program development and betterment, ensuring that student development is always at the forefront. Chapter 3 of this project explores the research methodology behind creating a resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program.



### **Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

This project adopts a qualitative educational research orientation. Mayan (2016) claimed that researchers opt for a qualitative research orientation when they want to understand the meaning people assign to human experiences and underlying phenomena. The desire to understand the “why” and the interpretive nature of qualitative research is why I chose to employ a qualitative educational orientation for my project. Qualitative research designs of content and documentary analysis are explored from various studies to generate major themes (Creswell, 2015) related to co-op student resilience in postsecondary education.

#### **Qualitative Content Analysis**

This project used qualitative content analysis to identify major themes within co-operative educational activities and create a resilience framework. In recent years, content analysis as a research design has found its place in educational research, especially with regards to qualitative orientations (Creswell, 2015). Mayan (2016) stated that qualitative content analysis is used to understand the complex interaction of a concept’s “actions, aims, emotions, and perceptions” (p. 53). Similarly, Berg and Lune (2012) claimed that qualitative content analysis is a thoughtful and meticulous examination of literature that identifies “patterns, themes, biases, and meanings” (p. 349). Hsieh and Shannon (2005) explored qualitative content analysis in a precise manner, identifying various types of content analysis including summative content analysis, which aims to understand the usage of a concept.

This project also used elements of qualitative content analysis to explore resilience and the various impacts it can have on postsecondary education students, particularly co-op students. Understanding the actions, aims, and meanings of resilience, as taken from its definition, types, impacts, and building strategies (which will be explored in Chapter 4), were integral to

understanding how resilience can be used to benefit students and subsequently, the other stakeholders, of the UNBC co-op program. Additionally, one of the major advantages of using qualitative content analysis is that content analysis is flexible, allowing for the researcher to make inferences from multiple sources that can be applied to the study itself (Rose, Spinks, & Canhoto, 2015). As such, qualitative content analysis was an appropriate choice to support the creation of a resilience framework through an analysis of co-op programs and resilience literature.

### **Documentary Analysis**

The project explored textual and visual data related to co-op programs and co-op student resilience. The textual data was sourced and selected from public and private documents. Bowen (2009) described document(ary) analysis as “a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents—both printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) material” (p. 27) and went on, “analytic procedure [of documentary analysis] entails finding, selecting, appraising (making sense of), and synthesizing data contained in documents” (p. 28). The rationale of using qualitative documentary analysis is that qualitative researchers are able and expected to draw upon multiple sources of evidence, seeking convergence and corroboration to support content analysis (Bowen, 2009; Scott, 2006). Furthermore, Mayan (2016) asserted that documents are helpful in determining concepts such as “value, interest, attitudes, and trends” (p. 82).

For this project, I explored public documents (Scott, 2006) such as archives, forms, institutional records, manuals, and reports on co-op programs and the importance of resilience and private documents such as books, and journal and magazine articles related to the benefits and importance of resilience and resilience building strategies. These documents were selected to

provide a targeted background of value and trends for creating a resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program. From the content and documentary analysis process, major themes of academic (Holdsworth et al., 2017), career (Bimrose et al., 2011), and stress/emotional (Mazzer & Rickwood, 2015), supported by communication/social resilience (Denovan & Macaskill, 2017; Johnson, 2008) were identified from resilience literature in Chapter 2. In addition, major thematic co-op activities of pre-employment training, the placement process, student interaction, evaluation, and policies and procedures (CAFCE, 2005) were identified from co-op literature in Chapter 2. These resilience and co-op themes were strategically aligned with resilience building strategies, university agency inputs, and competency outputs in a resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program in Chapter 4.

### **Overview of the Chapter**

This chapter presented the research methodology, namely the qualitative research designs of content and documentary analysis. The qualitative research designs' advantages of enabling access to multiple data sources justified the data collection for the project. From the documentary and content analysis related to co-op programs and resilience, themes such as academic, career, stress/emotional, and communication/social resilience were placed alongside co-op activities for the resilience framework in Chapter 4 of this project.

## **Chapter 4: Resilience Framework for the UNBC Co-op Program**

This chapter presents my developed resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program. The framework is based on identified academic, career, communication/social, stress/emotional resilience themes from Chapters 2 and 3 of the project. The resilience themes are explored alongside co-op activities of pre-employment training, the placement process, student interaction, evaluation, and policies and procedures, also from Chapters 2 and 3 of the project. The resilience building strategies used alongside the co-op activities and resilience themes are building a supportive-learner focused environment; developing core self, self-management, and coping skills; facilitating growth and; and encouraging positive relationships. Resilience building strategies were sourced from empirical studies on resilience in higher education students and adults. Finally, related competency outputs were identified through analyzing strategies, co-op activities, and themes, in relation to resilience literature from Chapter 2.

The following sections will discuss creating a framework; resilience frameworks; and the resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program's intended use, resilience themes and building strategies, input of university agencies in developing student resilience, and competency outputs and effects. A visual presentation of the conceptual framework will be presented in the form of a table (see Table 1). The chapter concludes with an overview.

### **Creating a Framework**

This project encompasses elements of empirical and non-empirical qualitative research, which is common when a project or article attempts to create a new conceptual model or framework (Cropanzano, 2009). As for the empirical element, creating a new conceptual model or framework requires the researcher to “discuss relevant empirical findings” before proposing the model or framework (Cropanzano, 2009, p. 1305). To adequately discuss empirical findings,

I employed the ideas behind content analysis to provide a background for creating the resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program.

As for the non-empirical element, the framework attempts to present current trends and findings in resilience building themes, strategies, and co-op activities, combining the topics to realise the benefits resilience could bring to co-op students and subsequently, other stakeholders. As such, it also aligned well with a non-empirical research approach as it essentially brought together “different ideas from different research activities to produce a more comprehensive understanding of a situation” (Remenyi & Money, 2006, p. 33). While this non-empirical research approach is seen mostly in business and management studies (Cropanzano, 2009; Remenyi & Money, 2006), I believe it fits an educational context as I have conducted a program analysis of a co-operative education program, with the intent of creating a framework for the UNBC co-op program that benefits its stakeholders through helping them develop a necessary transferable skill.

In addition, underlying the creation of a resilience framework is my desire as an instructional leader to provide UNBC co-op students with an environment that supports their development. This desire has been identified as a belief statement that all instructional leaders in education should align themselves with (British Columbia Principals’ and Vice-Principals’ Association Standards Committee, 2016). As such, the project’s intent lies squarely in education; however, the research method itself may be more aligned with business and management studies. The marrying of business and education solidifies my choice to use a largely non-empirical research method (supported by the empirical qualitative research design of content analysis) to create a resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program.

## **Resilience Frameworks**

Resilience frameworks are designed to visually demonstrate “a selection of evidence based ideas or remedies” in headings or compartments “to help us think strategically and practically about doing things resiliently” (Boingboing, 2013, para. 2). This project explored resilience building ideas or remedies of learner environments, developing skillsets, facilitating growth, and relationships, presented in evidence based resilience frameworks by the Mayo Clinic (2018), Noble & McGrath (2015), The Open University Scotland (2017), Smith, Epstein, Ortiz, Christopher, and Tooley (2013), the World Health Organisation (2003, as cited in Cahill et al., 2014), and Zeisman-Pereyo (n.d.).

As demonstrated above, there are many types of resilience frameworks within educational settings. For the purpose of this project, I am adopting several elements of the adult resilience framework by Hart, Blincow, and Cameron (2012, as cited in Boingboing, n.d.) as this framework is grounded in work-related needs and the experiences of individuals recovering from challenges. Furthermore, many postsecondary co-op students in Canada are adults (Statistics Canada, 2017), which also justifies the use of the aforementioned framework. The figure below illustrates the adult resilience framework.

Resilience Framework (Adults) – Copyright Hart, Blincow & Cameron (adapted from original) <a href="http://www.boingboing.org.uk">www.boingboing.org.uk</a>					
	BASICS	BELONGING	LEARNING	COPING	CORE SELF
SPECIFIC APPROACHES	Good enough housing	Find somewhere to belong	Make work & learning as successful as possible	Understanding boundaries and keeping within them	Instil a sense of hope
	Enough money to live	Help understand place in the world, & that others may face similar situations		Being brave	
			Tap into good influences (eg peer support)	Engage mentors	Identifying & solving problems (reduce self blame and guilt)
	Being safe	Keep relationships going (eg educator /support partners/carers/family)	Map out career or life plan		Putting on rose-tinted glasses (reframing/reappraising)
	Access & transport	The more healthy relationships the better		Fostering their interests	
		Take what you can from relationships where there is some hope	Help self-organisation	Calming down & self-soothing (support reflection, not feeling overwhelmed by illness)	Help the person take responsibility for her/himself (self-advocacy)
	Healthy diet	Get together people the person can count on		Remember tomorrow is another day	
	Exercise and fresh air	Responsibilities & obligations	Highlight achievements		Lean on others when necessary
		Focus on good times and places		Develop life skills	
	Enough sleep	Make sense of where the person has come from	There are tried and tested treatments for specific problems, use them		
	Leisure & work occupations	Predict a good experience of someone or something new			
		Make friends and mix			
	NOBLE TRUTHS				
ACCEPTING		CONSERVING		ENLISTING	
Interpersonal skills, empathy		Interpersonal skills, trust		Self (eg not passive), family, friends, mental health professionals, GP	
			COMMITMENT		
			Ongoing support issues		

*Figure 1.* Resilience Framework (Adults) in which specific approaches to building resilience in adults are outlined and categorized into compartments relating to resilience. Copyright 2012 by Hart, Blincow, & Cameron (cited by Boingboing, n.d.).

Additionally, Allegretti (2017) uses Smith et al.'s (2013) existing resilience framework "to shape a common understanding and direction for student support" (p. 22) for the development of a strategic resilience framework for a university college in Ontario. Allegretti's (2017) use of an existing framework guided my practice of exploring several frameworks, choosing to focus on Hart, Blincow, and Cameron's (2012) resilience framework for adults, and using existing empirical studies on resilience building in students to create this project's framework.

I also used CAFCE's (2005) co-op manual as a guiding document to populate the framework. Co-op activities listed in the framework come from the co-op manual and exist within a multiple work experience co-op program model (CAFCE, 2005). The UNBC co-op program uses this co-op program model and activities with slight alterations to the placement process (UNBC, n.d.b) and student interaction (UNBC, 2017a). Slight alterations are encouraged by CAFCE (2005) to ensure co-op programs fit institutional contexts. I was also guided by Allegretti's (2017) mention of leveraging existing expertise on campus to help build and implement a strategic resiliency framework, created for a small university college in Ontario, when creating the university agency inputs to the development of student resilience section.

### **Intended Use of a Resilience Framework for the UNBC Co-op program**

A resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program is intended to help ensure the UNBC co-op program becomes an environment that encourages students to obtain basic resilience skills and competencies to use towards learning and future success. The developed framework in this chapter presents co-op program activities that can impact or influence student development and strategically identifies appropriate resilience building strategies that can be employed to help achieve the intended use of the framework.

### **Resilience Themes and Building Strategies**

The identified resilience themes for the purpose of this project's framework are academic, career, communication/social, and stress/emotional (see Chapters 2 and 3). The resilience building strategies include, but are not limited to, building a supportive learner-focused environment; developing core self, self-management, and coping skills; facilitating growth and learning; and encouraging positive relationships.



### **Build a supportive, learner-focused environment.**

Effective resilience building in students requires postsecondary institutions to employ campus-wide strategies. These strategies can focus on broad spaces such as campus and classroom environments while involving staff, faculty, and the community at large.

*Campus and classroom environments.* Firstly, to truly implement a successful resilience framework, it is necessary to communicate the framework using common language to all stakeholders (Allegretti, 2017). A UNBC agency that can assist with communication is a marketing communications office (e.g., Office of Communications) and this strategy affects the overarching program activities by helping build communication/social resilience skills. An additional strategy is to create a process for staff and faculty that enable policies and procedures to be assessed for implications on mental health (Canadian Association of College & University Student Services (CACUSS) & Canadian Mental Health Association, 2013). UNBC agencies that can assist with policies are departments focused on policy (e.g., Records Management), faculties (e.g., Department of Psychology and School of Education), and counselling services (e.g., Wellness Centre). This strategy affects overarching co-op activities, especially policies and procedures, by helping build stress/emotional resilience skills.

With regards to the campus, it should be a supportive (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto, & Toronto Public Health, 2014), considerate, learner-centered environment (Zeisman-Pereyo, n.d.). This environment should also provide students with welcoming and safe physical spaces to socialize and connect (Boingboing, 2017b, CACUSS & Canadian Mental Health Association, 2013). Such physical and safe student spaces for UNBC co-op students could include recreational facilities (e.g., Charles Jago Northern Sports Center (NSC)), student union offices (e.g., Northern

Undergraduate Student Society (NUGSS)), cafeterias, common spaces (e.g., Canfor Winter Garden, Teaching and Learning Building atrium), academic success and learning centers (e.g., Academic Success Centre (ASC)), learning resource centers (e.g., Academic Resource Centre), libraries (e.g., Geoffrey R. Weller Library), safe spaces (e.g., First Nations Centre (FNC), Interfaith Chaplaincy, Northern Pride Centre, and Northern Women's Centre), and classrooms (e.g., Canfor lecture theatre), amongst others. These spaces can foster communication/social and stress/emotional resilience skills amongst co-op students and impact overarching activities and student interaction.

Finally, the classroom should also be a positive learning environment (Noble & McGrath, 2015). This positive learning environment should be inclusive and 'student friendly' so as to foster holistic education that embeds emotional literacy and social competencies (Zeisman-Pereyo, n.d.), resilience, and personal achievement (Noble & McGrath, 2015) in learning. Specifically, resilience themes can be discussed in relevant UNBC courses such as organizational behaviour, business communications (UNBC, 2018), and referenced in reflection-based exercises for students (Mate & Ryan, 2015). Institutions can also offer specific "courses and workshops on relationship building and emotional management" (CACUSS & Canadian Mental Health Association, 2013, p.18). These classroom-based practices will facilitate academic, career, communication/social, and stress/emotional resilience skills through co-op activities such as pre-employment training. UNBC agencies that will be central to implementing these strategies will be student academic advising (e.g., Academic Advising), academic success and learning centers (e.g., ASC), learning resource centers (e.g., ARC), career and co-operative education centers (e.g., Student Career Centre and Co-operative Education (Co-op) Office),

counselling services (e.g., Wellness Centre), and faculties (e.g., Department of Psychology, School of Business, School of Education), amongst others.

***Staff and faculty leadership.*** Staff and those in leadership roles in postsecondary institutions have a vital role to play in resilience building as they are often the ones interacting with students and guiding practice. These individuals, in addition to students, must work together to create a healthy and positive environment for all (CAMH, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto, & Toronto Public Health, 2014).

To help create a healthy and positive environment, postsecondary institutions can ensure that appropriate staff and faculty receive adequate training in resilience building (Allegretti, 2017; Boingboing, 2017b; Cahill et al., 2014; McCarthy, 2017). Strategies to assist in training include encouraging staff and faculty to give rapid feedback, transparent problem-solving and thinking during interactions with students, oral reasoning in the classroom (Walker et al., 2006), and ensuring staff and faculty are knowledgeable regarding mental health supports and can provide available resources to students (CACUSS & Canadian Mental Health Association, 2013). Staff must also treat each other, as well as students, respectfully and considerately, to model positive behaviour for students (Boingboing, 2017b; CAMH, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto, & Toronto Public Health, 2014). Modelling positive behavior for co-op students will enable them to potentially exhibit these attributes during work placements for successful evaluation of their performance by employers (CAFCE, 2005). UNBC agencies that can assist with the strategies listed above for staff and faculty leadership could be counselling centers (e.g., Wellness Centre), teaching and learning centers (e.g., Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology (CTLT)), and faculties (e.g., Department of Psychology, School of Education). These staff and faculty leadership practices and engagement with co-op students will

facilitate academic, career, and communication/social resilience skills through overarching co-op activities including pre-employment training, the placement process, student interaction, evaluation, and policies and procedures.

***Campus community and resources.*** The campus community and existing resources can be an effective way to ensure resilience building is happening in various interactions with students. Strategies to build a campus community that encourages resilience in students include postsecondary staff emphasizing and encouraging students to access a wide range of student supports (Allegretti, 2017; Dickinson & Dickinson, 2015; McCarthy, 2017) and ensuring that students can identify at least one positive support, such as campus counsellors (Giamos, Lee, Suleiman, Stuart, & Chen, 2017) whom they can turn to (Boingboing, 2017b). Various literature has identified counselling as an important service required by co-op students in higher education, as they are challenged by workplace and academic campus demands that often cause stress (Marthers, 2017; Robbins et al., 2018). UNBC agencies involved with counselling and support include counselling services (e.g., Wellness Centre) and to a lesser degree, career and co-operative education offices (e.g., Student Career Centre and Co-op Office), student academic advising (e.g., Academic Advising), academic success and learning centers (e.g., ASC), learning resource centers (e.g., ARC), and safe spaces (e.g., FNC, Interfaith Chaplaincy, Northern Pride Centre, Northern Women's Centre). UNBC agencies that could assist with fostering a sense of belonging include recreational facilities (e.g., NSC), student life and leadership offices (e.g., Student Life), and student union offices (e.g., NUGSS). Engagements should help foster a sense of belonging for co-op students (Boingboing, 2017a; Cahill et al., 2014; Sagor, 1996) as they provide supportive social communities (Zeisman-Pereyo, n.d.) and encourage mentorship in the community (CACUSS & Canadian Mental Health Association, 2013; Harrington, 2013). The

aforementioned counselling resources and spaces on campus for fostering belonging will assist building stress/emotional resilience skills amongst co-op students, impacting co-op activities such as pre-employment training, student interaction, and evaluation.

**Develop core self, self-management, and coping skills.**

Once resilience building strategies are in place throughout the campus and classroom, it is imperative to begin building individual student resilience. Strategies to build student resilience can involve postsecondary staff encouraging development of their core self, self-management, and coping skills.

***Core self.*** Firstly, students should be encouraged to understand their strengths and expand upon them (Noble & McGrath, 2015). Strategies to help students expand upon their strengths include giving them opportunities to practice their skills (Dickinson & Dickinson, 2015; Longaretti, 2011; Marthers, 2017; McCarthy, 2017; Noble & McGrath, 2015; Sagor, 1996), encouraging them to remain hopeful (Mayo Clinic, 2017), and encouraging them to look for opportunities to discover new skills (APA, 2014), especially when it comes to problem-solving skills (Boingboing, 2017b). An additional strategy is to reframe the concept of perfectionism by focusing on the positive attributes of perfectionism (Dickinson & Dickinson, 2015; McCarthy, 2017). Finally, students should be held to positive, yet, high achievement standards (Zeisman-Pereyo, n.d.) and then given the opportunity to understand and celebrate their academic successes (Sagor, 1996). The strategies outlined above to develop core self are applicable to co-op students in higher education, as core self is integral to psychological measures of resilience in the studies of Robbins et al. (2018). UNBC agencies that can assist with fostering students' development of their core self could be counselling centers (e.g., Wellness Centre), academic learning and success centers (e.g., ASC), learning resource centers (e.g., ARC), student academic

advising (e.g., Academic Advising), career and co-operative education centers (e.g., Student Career Centre and Co-op Office), and faculties. The development of co-op students' core self will facilitate academic, career, and stress/emotional resilience skills through co-op activities such as pre-employment training, the placement process, student interaction, and evaluation. Providing the resources and support necessary to motivate students provides them with reassurance of their core self, noted as part of their human development as indicated in the Canadian study of Masten (2009).

***Self-management.*** Building student resilience also involves strengthening the management of their feelings through teaching them social and emotional skills (Noble & McGrath, 2015; CAMH, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto, & Toronto Public Health, 2014). Self-management skills in co-op students is vital, as this resilience skill relates to self-esteem and stress-management skills and provides a measure of psychological resilience amongst higher education students (Robbins et al., 2018). An overarching strategy to help students with the management of their feelings is to encourage them to take care of themselves by being cognizant of their own feelings, engaging in physical activity, getting adequate sleep, eating healthy, and practicing stress management techniques that they enjoy (Mayo Clinic, 2017). Strategies to help teach co-op students social and emotional skills include encouraging them to build their self-confidence (Harrington, 2013). Additional strategies related to attitude include encouraging students to adopt a flexible attitude, optimism, and positivity (APA, 2014; Harrington, 2013; Noble & McGrath, 2015; Smith et al., 2013). UNBC agencies that can assist with fostering students' development of their self-management and self-confidence could be recreational facilities (e.g., NSC), student unions (e.g., NUGSS) and various student-led organizations such as JDC West and others focused on elements of leadership, as

well as counselling centers (e.g., Wellness Centre). The development of co-op students' core self will facilitate academic, career, and stress/emotional resilience skills through co-op activities such as pre-employment training, the placement process, student interaction, and evaluation.

***Coping.*** Students should also be taught positive coping methods such as self-soothing or methods to manage their feelings during times of distress (Boingboing, 2017a). Additional strategies to assist students with coping skills include encouraging them to learn from how they successfully coped with past hardships (Mayo Clinic, 2017), and employing leisure coping as a viable strategy for helping students develop a healthy mindset while helping them cultivate social support networks (Denovan & Macaskill, 2017). Leisure coping has also been linked to assisting individuals in taking care of themselves, which is another strategy students can be encouraged to adopt (APA, 2014). UNBC agencies that can facilitate the developing of coping strategies include counselling services (e.g., Wellness Centre) and recreational facilities (e.g., NSC). The development of co-op students' coping abilities facilitates stress/emotional resilience skills through co-op activities such as pre-employment training, the placement process, student interaction, and evaluation.

### **Facilitate growth and learning.**

Building resilience in students often includes growth and learning, as resilience must be built over time (Ackerman, 2018). Postsecondary staff can guide students through this growth and learning through encouraging a growth mindset, deeper engagement and planning, and reflection.

***Growth mindset.*** Students should be encouraged to adopt a growth mindset in which they come to understand their abilities as developed over time and effort (The Open University Scotland, 2017; Yeager & Dweck, 2012). A strategy to assist co-op students in developing a

growth mindset is to use specific language geared towards celebrating learning, hard work, effort, and constant improvement, and connecting those concepts with success (Duckworth, 2016) by constantly providing them positive and constructive formative feedback during work term placements and evaluations, as recommended by CAFCE (2005). The encouragement of the growth mindset for co-op students will facilitate academic, career, and stress/emotional resilience skills and competencies. UNBC agencies that can facilitate or support the development of growth mindset of co-op students include student academic advising (e.g., Academic Advising), academic success and learning centers (e.g., ASC), learning resource centers (e.g., ARC), career and co-operative education centers (e.g., Student Career Centre and Co-op Office), counselling centers (e.g., Wellness Centre), and faculties. Developing a growth mindset will impact co-op activities such as pre-employment training, the placement process, student interaction, and evaluation.

***Engage deeper and plan for the future.*** Generally, higher education students should be encouraged to engage with learning at a deeper level (The Open University Scotland, 2017). Students should be encouraged to think about their purpose in life (Smith et al., 2013). A strategy to help students learn more deeply is to provide them with opportunities to develop meaning through tasks and assignments that have impacts beyond themselves and having them pursue worthwhile goals (Noble & McGrath, 2015). Strategies to help students with their purpose in life include encouraging them to make their days meaningful by completing tasks that give them a sense of accomplishment, setting SMART goals frequently (APA, 2014; Woodworth, 2016), helping students map out their future (Boingboing, 2017; Mayo Clinic, 2017), and staying organized (Giamos et al., 2017). These strategies will largely impact co-op activities such as pre-employment training, the placement process, student interaction, and evaluation, and will lead to



students developing academic and career resilience skills and competencies. UNBC services and agencies that will facilitate these strategies include student services and departments such as student advising (e.g., Academic Advising), student learning and success centers (e.g., ASC), career and co-operative education centers (e.g., Student Career Centre and Co-op Office), faculties, and counselling services (e.g., Wellness Centre).

***Reflect.*** Finally, students should be encouraged to engage with active reflection (The Open University Scotland, 2017; Zeisman-Pereyo, n.d.). Strategies to assist with building resilience through reflection include having resilience as a topic for students during reflection-based exercises (Mate & Ryan, 2015). Co-op students are often encouraged to reflect during their work term placements and as such, reflection can be part of their self-assessment and evaluation of their performance after work term placements (CAFCE, 2005), which aids in the self-correction of work place errors and development of core self and self-management. Reflection is central to experiential learning for youth employment and experiential learning, which was addressed by the Canadian House of Common's 42<sup>nd</sup> parliament 1<sup>st</sup> session (May, 2018). Encouraging reflection for co-op students will facilitate academic and career resilience skills. UNBC agencies that can facilitate or support the implementation of reflection include career and co-operative education centers (e.g., Student Career Centre and Co-op Office), counselling centers (e.g., Wellness Centre), and faculties that have mandatory experiential learning components (e.g., School of Education, School of Nursing, and School of Social Work). Developing reflective practices will impact co-op activities such as pre-employment training, student interaction, and evaluation.

### **Encourage positive relationships.**

Higher education co-operative education emphasizes positive student relationships within the co-op activity of student interaction (CAFCE, 2005). Students' relationships with others also has a significant impact on their level of resilience. Postsecondary staff and faculty should encourage students to make connections and build social networks to develop positive relationships (APA, 2014; CAMH, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto, & Toronto Public Health, 2014; Dickinson & Dickinson, 2015; Gerstein, 2013; McCarthy, 2017; Noble & McGrath, 2015; The Open University Scotland, 2017; Wilks & Spivey, 2010).

Strategies to help co-op students build positive peer relationships during work terms placements include encouraging them to socialize in relaxing common areas for staff (Johnson, 2008).

UNBC spaces that could facilitate positive student relationships on campus include recreational facilities (e.g., NSC), student union offices (e.g., NUGSS), cafeterias, academic success and learning centers (e.g., ASC), safe spaces (e.g., FNC, Interfaith Chaplaincy, Northern Pride Centre, and Northern Women's Centre), and classrooms (e.g., Canfor lecture theatre), amongst others. Social spaces enable the development of social resiliency (Johnson, 2008) and leisure coping (Denovan & Macaskill, 2017) through facilitating discussions with friends (Giamos et al., 2017) and often allowing for programs that offer peer counselling (Boingboing, 2017a; CAMH, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto, & Toronto Public Health, 2014; Giamos et al., 2017), pairing academically struggling students with resilient students (Johnson, Taasobshirazi, Kestler, & Cordova, 2015), and mentorship between senior and junior students (Nevison & Pretti, 2016). Finally, positive student-teacher or educator relationships should also be encouraged (Noble & McGrath, 2015). Positive relationship building by co-op students leads to the attainment of academic, career, and stress resiliencies, identified in previous chapters, and

impacts co-op activities such as pre-employment training, the placement process, student interaction, and evaluation.

### **Input of University Agencies in Developing Student Resilience**

The inputs that will help create and actualize the resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program are the various UNBC student services, departments, and faculties that will provide additional supports for realizing these resilience building strategies. UNBC student services, departments, and faculties that will be able to provide assistance in implementing the resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program are areas such as Academic Advising, the Academic Resource Centre (ARC), Academic Success Centre (ASC), Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology (CTLT), Charles Jago Northern Sports Centre (NSC), Co-operative Education (Co-op) Office, First Nations Centre (FNC), Interfaith Chaplaincy, Office of Communications, Northern Pride Centre, Northern Women's Centre, Northern Undergraduate Student Society (NUGSS), Records Management, Student Career Centre, Student Life, and Wellness Centre, and faculties such as the Department of Psychology, School of Business, School of Education, School of Nursing, and School of Social Work. However, as UNBC is a small, research-intensive postsecondary institution, the student services, departments, and faculties mentioned above may have limited capacity to assist with the resilience building strategies outlined, which may hinder the success of the framework. Consequently, while there are inputs available, a strategic plan may need to be developed to ensure these inputs are able to be used to their full potential.

### **Competency Outputs and Effects of a Resilience Framework for the UNBC Co-op Program**

The alignment of co-op activities, resilience themes and building strategies, and university agency inputs in the resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program (see Table 1)

has results in several potential competency outputs for UNBC co-op students. The framework also has potential effects that could lead to a wealth of future research topics and studies.

**Competency outputs.** A direct result of the implementation of the projects' framework is competency outputs related to the four resilience building themes and their building strategies. For instance, developing coping and self-management skills and encouraging positive relationships assists with co-op student resilience and health, and the incorporation of leisure coping "proactively cultivate[s] positive emotion which counteracts the experience of stress and promotes well-being" (Denovan & Macaskill, 2017, p. 861). Developing coping and self-management skills also leads to co-op student resilience and an increased ability to cope with stress, increased well-being (Ramos-Díaz et al., 2018; Shellman & Hill, 2017), a better likelihood of accepting new "challenges that may eventually promote a more happy and fulfilling life" (Smith et al., 2010, p. 173-174), and improved physical health "by reducing the amount of time and/or the extent to which the organism is under stress" (Smith et al., 2010, p. 173).

All four resilience building themes identified lead to co-op student resilience, "conditions of psychological well-being in academic setting(s)" (Sagone & De Caroli, 2014, p. 468-469), and increased achievement due to their cognitive abilities, ability to be flexible and adaptable, and think critically (Walker et al., 2006). Building a supportive, learner-focused environment, developing core self, and encouraging positive relationships informs co-op student resilience and "a successful participatory learning experience," which adds to the "collective human and social capital of an individual" (Holdsworth et al., 2017, p. 1837). Facilitating growth and learning, specifically a growth mindset and reflection, and developing coping and self-management skills also leads to co-op student resilience and the sustainable development of identity "at home, in work and in... longer-term educational development" (Walker et al., 2006, p. 252).

For a second time, all four resilience building themes identified help foster co-op student resilience and success in academia and the workforce (Holdsworth et al., 2017; Patry & Ford, 2016). The increased success in the workforce is due to resilient co-op students “responding better to unfavourable feedback and showing greater flexibility and originality,” behaviours that are positively correlated with “productivity and performance at work” (Robertson, 2017, p. 48). Additionally, resilient co-op students as employees can “manage their emotions[,] may be more motivated toward achievement and success[,] and may show better performance and satisfaction” (Magnano et al., 2017, p. 16). Lastly, developing self-management positively impacts co-op student resilience and success in the workforce as these individuals can remain effective at work despite changing work conditions (Connor & Davidson, 2013, as cited in Ramos-Díaz et al., 2018).

**Effects.** The immediate, intermediate, and longer-term effects of this framework will need to be measured. One way to measure the effectiveness of the framework would be to implement the use of resilience rubrics throughout co-op activities of pre-employment training and evaluation. However, a more substantial way to measure the effectiveness of the framework would be to use one of the following self-reported measurement scales designed to assess various elements of resilience. Patry and Ford (2016) found the following measurement scales to be valid options for measuring resilience in postsecondary students: Resiliency Attitudes and Skills Profile (Hurtes & Allen, 2001), Resiliency Scales for Children & Adolescents (Prince-Embury, 2008), Brief Resilience Scale (Smith, et. al, 2008), Short version of the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (Connor & Davidson, 2003), and Short version of the Resilience Scale (Wagnild & Young, 1993). The implementation of any rubric or measurement scale would

require resources that the UNBC co-op program would need to establish and secure to fully realize the effectiveness of the framework.

Furthermore, UNBC co-op students act as a conduit to the program's other stakeholders, its employers and the institution, through their interactions in co-op work term placements (CAFCE, 2005). As such, to fully measure the environment's effectiveness in nurturing resilience in UNBC co-op students, the program may also need to implement employer surveys or questionnaires to assess employer perceptions of co-op student resilience and the effects it has had on their organization. The table below illustrates a resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program.

Table 1

*Resilience Framework for the UNBC Co-op Program*

<b>Co-op Activity</b>	<b>Resilience Theme</b>	<b>Resilience Building Strategies</b>	<b>University Agency Inputs</b>	<b>Competency Outputs</b>
Overarching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication/social</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate framework using common language to all stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office of Communications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and well-being</li> <li>• Taking on challenges</li> <li>• Physical health</li> <li>• Well-being in academia</li> <li>• Achievement in academia and the workforce</li> <li>• Cognition, flexibility, adaptability, and critical thinking in academia</li> <li>• Success in participatory learning</li> <li>• Positive responses to feedback, flexibility and originality,</li> </ul>
Overarching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication/social</li> <li>• Stress/emotion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build supportive, considerate, learner-centered environments with welcoming and safe physical spaces for students to socialize and connect</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASC</li> <li>• ARC</li> <li>• Cafeterias</li> <li>• Classrooms</li> <li>• Common spaces</li> <li>• FNC</li> <li>• Geoffrey R. Weller Library</li> <li>• Interfaith Chaplaincy</li> <li>• Northern Pride Centre</li> <li>• Northern Women's Centre</li> <li>• NSC</li> <li>• NUGSS</li> </ul>	
Overarching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Career</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work together to create a healthy and positive environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNBC community</li> </ul>	
Overarching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Career</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate staff and faculty receive adequate training in resilience building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CTLT</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> <li>• Department of Psychology</li> <li>• School of</li> </ul>	

<b>Co-op Activity</b>	<b>Resilience Theme</b>	<b>Resilience Building Strategies</b>	<b>University Agency Inputs</b>	<b>Competency Outputs</b>
			Education	increased motivation, productivity, performance, and satisfaction in the workforce
Pre-Employment Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Career</li> <li>• Communication/social</li> <li>• Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build supportive, considerate, learner-centered environments</li> <li>• Build positive learning environments in the classroom</li> <li>• Embed emotional and social competencies (emotional literacy, resilience, and personal achievement) in learning</li> <li>• Discuss resilience in relevant courses such as organizational behaviour, business communications</li> <li>• Use resilience in reflection-based exercises</li> <li>• Offer courses and workshops on relationship building and emotional management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Advising</li> <li>• ARC</li> <li>• ASC</li> <li>• Co-op Office</li> <li>• Department of Psychology</li> <li>• School of Business</li> <li>• School of Education</li> <li>• Student Career Centre</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and well-being</li> <li>• Coping</li> <li>• Taking on challenges</li> <li>• Physical health</li> <li>• Well-being in academia</li> <li>• Achievement in academia and the workforce</li> <li>• Cognition, flexibility, adaptability, and critical thinking in</li> </ul>



<b>Co-op Activity</b>	<b>Resilience Theme</b>	<b>Resilience Building Strategies</b>	<b>University Agency Inputs</b>	<b>Competency Outputs</b>
Pre-Employment Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Communication/social</li> <li>• Career</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate transparent problem-solving and thinking</li> <li>• Use oral and verbal reasoning in the classroom</li> <li>• Ensure knowledge regarding mental health supports and resources available to students</li> <li>• Staff must treat each other and students respectfully and considerately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CTLT</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> <li>• Department of Psychology</li> <li>• School of Education</li> </ul>	academia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Success in participatory learning</li> <li>• Positive responses to feedback, flexibility and originality, increased motivation, productivity, performance, and satisfaction in the workforce</li> <li>• Development of sustainable identity</li> <li>• Effectiveness despite change in the workforce</li> </ul>
Pre-Employment Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasize and encourage access to student services</li> <li>• Foster a sense of belonging through encouraging mentorship in the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Advising</li> <li>• ASC</li> <li>• ARC</li> <li>• Co-op Office</li> <li>• FNC</li> <li>• Interfaith Chaplaincy</li> <li>• Northern Pride Centre</li> <li>• Northern Women's Centre</li> <li>• NSC</li> <li>• NUGSS</li> <li>• Student Career Centre</li> <li>• Student Life</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	
Pre-Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Career</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage understanding of strengths and provide space to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Advising</li> </ul>	

<b>Co-op Activity</b>	<b>Resilience Theme</b>	<b>Resilience Building Strategies</b>	<b>University Agency Inputs</b>	<b>Competency Outputs</b>
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• practice</li> <li>• Encourage hope</li> <li>• Encourage search for new opportunities</li> <li>• Emphasize problem-solving skills</li> <li>• Focus on positive elements of perfectionism</li> <li>• Hold students to high standards and give opportunities to celebrate academic success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASC</li> <li>• ARC</li> <li>• Co-op Office</li> <li>• Faculties</li> <li>• Student Career Centre</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	
Pre-Employment Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Career</li> <li>• Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage feelings management through self-care, physical activity, rest, healthy eating, and enjoyable stress management techniques</li> <li>• Teach social and emotional skills through encouraging self-confidence, flexible attitudes, optimism, and positivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSC</li> <li>• NUGSS</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	
Pre-Employment Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach self-soothing or methods to manage feelings during stressful periods</li> <li>• Encourage learning from past experiences of successful coping</li> <li>• Encourage leisure coping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSC</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	
Pre-Employment Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Career</li> <li>• Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use specific language linking learning, hard work, effort, and constant improvement to success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Advising</li> <li>• ASC</li> <li>• ARC</li> </ul>	

Co-op Activity	Resilience Theme	Resilience Building Strategies	University Agency Inputs	Competency Outputs
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-op Office</li> <li>• Faculties</li> <li>• Student Career Centre</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	
Pre-Employment Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Career</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement tasks and assignments with meaning beyond themselves</li> <li>• Encourage students to think about purpose in life through completing tasks that give them a sense of accomplishment, setting SMART goals frequently for future development, and staying organized</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Advising</li> <li>• ASC</li> <li>• Co-op Office</li> <li>• Faculties</li> <li>• Student Career Centre</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	
Pre-Employment Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Career</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include resilience as a topic for students during reflection-based exercises</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-op Office</li> <li>• School of Education</li> <li>• School of Nursing</li> <li>• School of Social Work</li> <li>• Student Career Centre</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	
Pre-Employment Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Career</li> <li>• Communication/social</li> <li>• Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage students to make connections and build social networks with a focus on positive, supportive, significant relationships through leisure coping, discussing with friends,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASC</li> <li>• ARC</li> <li>• Cafeterias</li> <li>• Classrooms</li> <li>• Common spaces</li> <li>• FNC</li> </ul>	

<b>Co-op Activity</b>	<b>Resilience Theme</b>	<b>Resilience Building Strategies</b>	<b>University Agency Inputs</b>	<b>Competency Outputs</b>
		pairing academically struggling students with resilient students, and mentorship between junior and senior students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage positive student-teacher/educator relationships</li> <li>• Encourage appropriate socialization in common spaces in work settings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geoffrey R. Weller Library</li> <li>• Interfaith Chaplaincy</li> <li>• Northern Pride Centre</li> <li>• Northern Women's Centre</li> <li>• NSC</li> <li>• NUGSS</li> </ul>	
The Placement Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Career</li> <li>• Communication/social</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff must treat each other and students respectfully and considerately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and well-being</li> <li>• Coping</li> <li>• Taking on challenges</li> <li>• Physical health</li> <li>• Well-being in academia</li> <li>• Achievement in academia and the workforce</li> <li>• Cognition, flexibility, adaptability, and critical thinking in academia</li> <li>• Success in</li> </ul>
The Placement Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Career</li> <li>• Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage understanding of strengths</li> <li>• Encourage hope</li> <li>• Encourage search for new opportunities</li> <li>• Emphasize problem-solving skills</li> <li>• Focus on positive elements of perfectionism</li> <li>• Hold students to high standards and give opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Advising</li> <li>• ASC</li> <li>• ARC</li> <li>• Co-op Office</li> <li>• Faculties</li> <li>• Student Career Centre</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	
The Placement Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Career</li> <li>• Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage feelings management through self-care, physical activity, rest, healthy eating, and enjoyable stress management techniques</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSC</li> <li>• NUGSS</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	

<b>Co-op Activity</b>	<b>Resilience Theme</b>	<b>Resilience Building Strategies</b>	<b>University Agency Inputs</b>	<b>Competency Outputs</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach social and emotional skills through encouraging self-confidence, flexible attitudes, optimism, and positivity</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>participatory learning</li> <li>Positive responses to feedback, flexibility and originality, increased motivation, productivity, performance, and satisfaction in the workforce</li> <li>Development of sustainable identity</li> <li>Effectiveness despite change in the workforce</li> </ul>
The Placement Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach self-soothing or methods to manage feelings during stressful periods</li> <li>Encourage learning from past experiences of successful coping</li> <li>Encourage leisure coping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NSC</li> <li>Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	
The Placement Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic</li> <li>Career</li> <li>Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use specific language linking learning, hard work, effort, and constant improvement to success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic Advising</li> <li>ASC</li> <li>ARC</li> <li>Co-op Office</li> <li>Faculties</li> <li>Student Career Centre</li> <li>Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	
The Placement Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic</li> <li>Career</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage students to set SMART goals frequently for future development, and stay organized</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic Advising</li> <li>ASC</li> <li>Co-op Office</li> <li>Student Career Centre</li> </ul>	
Student Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic</li> <li>Career</li> <li>Communication/social</li> <li>Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build supportive, considerate, learner-centered environments with welcome and safe physical spaces to socialize and connect</li> <li>Embed emotional and social</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-op Office in partnership with:</li> <li>Academic Advising</li> <li>ARC</li> </ul>	

Co-op Activity	Resilience Theme	Resilience Building Strategies	University Agency Inputs	Competency Outputs
		<p>competencies (emotional literacy, resilience, and personal achievement) in learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use resilience in reflection-based exercises</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASC</li> <li>• Co-op Office</li> <li>• Department of Psychology</li> <li>• School of Business</li> <li>• School of Education</li> <li>• Student Career Centre</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical health</li> <li>• Well-being in academia</li> <li>• Achievement in academia and the workforce</li> <li>• Cognition, flexibility, adaptability, and critical thinking in academia</li> <li>• Success in participatory learning</li> <li>• Positive responses to feedback, flexibility and originality, increased motivation, productivity, performance, and satisfaction in the</li> </ul>
Student Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Career</li> <li>• Communication/social</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate transparent problem-solving and thinking</li> <li>• Use oral and verbal reasoning in the classroom</li> <li>• Ensure knowledge regarding mental health supports and resources available to students</li> <li>• Staff must treat each other and students respectfully and considerately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CTLT</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> <li>• Department of Psychology</li> <li>• School of Education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Success in participatory learning</li> <li>• Positive responses to feedback, flexibility and originality, increased motivation, productivity, performance, and satisfaction in the</li> </ul>
Student Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasize and encourage access to student services</li> <li>• Ensure students can identify at least one positive support, such as campus counsellors</li> <li>• Foster a sense of belonging through encouraging mentorship in the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Advising</li> <li>• ASC</li> <li>• ARC</li> <li>• Co-op Office</li> <li>• FNC</li> <li>• Interfaith Chaplaincy</li> <li>• Northern Pride</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Success in participatory learning</li> <li>• Positive responses to feedback, flexibility and originality, increased motivation, productivity, performance, and satisfaction in the</li> </ul>

<b>Co-op Activity</b>	<b>Resilience Theme</b>	<b>Resilience Building Strategies</b>	<b>University Agency Inputs</b>	<b>Competency Outputs</b>
			Centre <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Northern Women's Centre</li> <li>• NSC</li> <li>• NUGSS</li> <li>• Student Career Centre</li> <li>• Student Life</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	workforce <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of sustainable identity</li> <li>• Effectiveness despite change in the workforce</li> </ul>
Student Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Career</li> <li>• Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage understanding of strengths and provide space to practice</li> <li>• Encourage hope</li> <li>• Encourage search for new opportunities</li> <li>• Emphasize problem-solving skills</li> <li>• Focus on positive elements of perfectionism</li> <li>• Hold students to high standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Advising</li> <li>• ASC</li> <li>• ARC</li> <li>• Co-op Office</li> <li>• Faculties</li> <li>• Student Career Centre</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	
Student Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Career</li> <li>• Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage feelings management through self-care, physical activity, rest, healthy eating, and enjoyable stress management techniques</li> <li>• Teach social and emotional skills through encouraging self-confidence, flexible attitudes, optimism, and positivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSC</li> <li>• NUGSS</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach self-soothing or methods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSC</li> </ul>	

<b>Co-op Activity</b>	<b>Resilience Theme</b>	<b>Resilience Building Strategies</b>	<b>University Agency Inputs</b>	<b>Competency Outputs</b>
Interaction		to manage feelings during stressful periods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage learning from past experiences of successful coping</li> <li>• Encourage leisure coping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	
Student Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Career</li> <li>• Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use specific language linking learning, hard work, effort, and constant improvement to success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Advising</li> <li>• ASC</li> <li>• ARC</li> <li>• Co-op Office</li> <li>• Faculties</li> <li>• Student Career Centre</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	
Student Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Career</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage students to think about purpose in life through pursuing worthwhile goals, completing tasks that give them a sense of accomplishment, setting SMART goals frequently for future development, and staying organized</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Advising</li> <li>• ASC</li> <li>• Co-op Office</li> <li>• Faculties</li> <li>• Student Career Centre</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	
Student Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Career</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include resilience as a topic for students during reflection-based exercises</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-op Office</li> <li>• School of Education</li> <li>• School of Nursing</li> <li>• School of Social Work</li> <li>• Student Career</li> </ul>	



Co-op Activity	Resilience Theme	Resilience Building Strategies	University Agency Inputs	Competency Outputs
			Centre • Wellness Centre	
Student Interaction	• Academic • Career • Communication/social • Stress/emotional	• Encourage students to make connections and build social networks with a focus on positive, supportive, significant relationships through leisure coping, discussing with friends, pairing academically struggling students with resilient students, and mentorship between junior and senior students • Encourage positive student-teacher/educator relationships • Encourage appropriate socialization in common spaces in work settings	• ASC • ARC • Cafeterias • Classrooms • Common spaces • FNC • Geoffrey R. Weller Library • Interfaith Chaplaincy • Northern Pride Centre • Northern Women's Centre • NSC • NUGSS	
Evaluation	• Academic • Career	• Encouraging staff to give rapid feedback • Staff must treat students respectfully and considerately	• CTLT • Wellness Centre • Department of Psychology • School of Education	• Health and well-being • Coping • Taking on challenges • Physical health • Well-being in academia • Achievement in academia and the
Evaluation	• Stress/emotional	• Emphasize and encourage access to student services	• Academic Advising • ASC • ARC • Co-op Office • FNC	

<b>Co-op Activity</b>	<b>Resilience Theme</b>	<b>Resilience Building Strategies</b>	<b>University Agency Inputs</b>	<b>Competency Outputs</b>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interfaith Chaplaincy</li> <li>• Northern Pride Centre</li> <li>• Northern Women's Centre</li> <li>• Student Career Centre</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	workforce <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cognition, flexibility, adaptability, and critical thinking in academia</li> <li>• Success in participatory learning</li> <li>• Positive responses to feedback, flexibility and originality, increased motivation, productivity, performance, and satisfaction in the workforce</li> </ul>
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Career</li> <li>• Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage understanding of strengths and provide space to practice</li> <li>• Encourage hope</li> <li>• Encourage search for new opportunities</li> <li>• Emphasize problem-solving skills</li> <li>• Focus on positive elements of perfectionism</li> <li>• Hold students to high standards and give opportunities to celebrate academic success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Advising</li> <li>• ASC</li> <li>• ARC</li> <li>• Co-op Office</li> <li>• Faculties</li> <li>• Student Career Centre</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of sustainable identity</li> <li>• Effectiveness despite</li> </ul>
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Career</li> <li>• Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage feelings management through self-care, physical activity, rest, healthy eating, and enjoyable stress management techniques</li> <li>• Teach social and emotional skills through encouraging self-confidence, flexible attitudes,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSC</li> <li>• NUGSS</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	

<b>Co-op Activity</b>	<b>Resilience Theme</b>	<b>Resilience Building Strategies</b>	<b>University Agency Inputs</b>	<b>Competency Outputs</b>
		optimism, and positivity		change in the workforce
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage learning from past experiences of successful coping</li> <li>Encourage leisure coping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NSC</li> <li>Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic</li> <li>Career</li> <li>Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use specific language linking learning, hard work, effort, and constant improvement to success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic Advising</li> <li>ASC</li> <li>ARC</li> <li>Co-op Office</li> <li>Faculties</li> <li>Student Career Centre</li> <li>Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic</li> <li>Career</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement tasks and assignments with meaning beyond themselves</li> <li>Encourage students to think about purpose in life through completing tasks that give them a sense of accomplishment, setting SMART goals frequently for future development, and staying organized</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic Advising</li> <li>ASC</li> <li>Co-op Office</li> <li>Faculties</li> <li>Student Career Centre</li> <li>Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic</li> <li>Career</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include resilience as a topic for students during reflection-based exercises</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-op Office</li> <li>School of Education</li> <li>School of Nursing</li> <li>School of Social Work</li> <li>Student Career</li> </ul>	

Co-op Activity	Resilience Theme	Resilience Building Strategies	University Agency Inputs	Competency Outputs
			Centre • Wellness Centre	
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Career</li> <li>• Communication/social</li> <li>• Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage students to make connections and build social networks with a focus on positive, supportive, significant relationships through leisure coping, and discussions with friends</li> <li>• Encourage appropriate socialization in common spaces in work settings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASC</li> <li>• ARC</li> <li>• Cafeterias</li> <li>• Common spaces</li> <li>• FNC</li> <li>• Geoffrey R. Weller Library</li> <li>• Interfaith Chaplaincy</li> <li>• Northern Pride Centre</li> <li>• Northern Women's Centre</li> <li>• NSC</li> <li>• NUGSS</li> </ul>	
Policies and Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stress/emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable policies and procedures to be assessed for implications on mental health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Records Management</li> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> <li>• School of Education</li> <li>• Department of Psychology</li> </ul>	
Policies and Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic</li> <li>• Communication/social</li> <li>• Career</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff must treat students respectfully and considerately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wellness Centre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and well-being</li> <li>• Well-being in academia</li> <li>• Achievement in academia and the workforce</li> <li>• Cognition, flexibility, adaptability, and critical thinking in</li> </ul>

Co-op Activity	Resilience Theme	Resilience Building Strategies	University Agency Inputs	Competency Outputs
				academia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Success in participatory learning</li> <li>• Positive responses to feedback, flexibility and originality, increased motivation, productivity, performance, and satisfaction in the workforce</li> </ul>

## Overview of the Chapter

This chapter presented creating a framework; resilience frameworks; the resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program's intended use, resilience themes and building strategies, input of university agencies in developing student resilience, and competency outputs and effects. The chapter concluded with a visual presentation of the conceptual framework (see Table 1). Evidence-based resilience frameworks, concepts from empirical resilience studies, and co-op activities from a national co-op manual (CAFCE, 2005) were used and adapted to support the creation of a resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program. First, to build the foundation of the framework, co-op activities were aligned resilience themes. Second, resilience building strategies including building a supportive, learner-focused environment; developing core self, self-management, and coping skills; facilitating growth and learning; and encouraging positive relationships, were added to the framework, in correlation with university agency inputs that could aid in the development of student resilience. Finally, competency outputs relating to resilience skills and their impact on co-op students' health and success in academia and the workforce were identified. However, effects of the framework will need to be measured in the future using resilience measurement scales or rubrics, and surveys. Chapter 5 presents the project's summary, conclusions, limitations, recommendations, and personal reflections.

## **Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations**

This project focused on a resilience framework with the aim of fostering resilience in co-operative higher education students. Chapter 1 discussed the significance of the project as providing a resilience framework for the first time for the UNBC co-op program enabling the co-op office and partnering university agencies to facilitate co-op student resilience for their success in academia, the workforce, and in life. The chapter explained the background of the UNBC co-op program through exploring its foundation, diminished capacity for several years, and its return as part of the university's organizational capacity building initiative to addresses student needs and success. The chapter reiterated my personal location in the project, touching on my position as Co-operative Education Lead of the UNBC co-op program and my personal interest in making the co-operative education program align with the vision and mission of UNBC. Chapter 2 provided a review of various literature on higher education co-operative education. This section of the literature review focused on co-op programs with a Canadian focus, as illustrated in the co-op manual by CAFCE (2005), of which a past UNBC co-operative education staff contributed. Co-operative education program models and activities found in the co-op manual (CAFCE, 2005) were also discussed and identified as major themes. The chapter also explored empirical studies on higher education student academic, career, communication/social, and stress/emotional resilience. Chapter 3 outlined the project's methodology of an educational qualitative research orientation that adopted content and documentary data analysis designs, and identified themes of academic, career, communication/social, and stress/emotion resilience. These themes were identified due to their relation to co-op activities of pre-employment training, the placement process, student interaction, evaluation, and policy and procedures. The identification of major resilience and co-op themes provided the foundation for a resilience

framework for the UNBC co-op program in Chapter 4. Chapter 4 presented the framework's aims, practical strategies, and benefits to the university and co-op students, which were explained and visually presented (see Table 1). Chapter 5 presents the project's summary, conclusion, limitations and recommendations, and personal reflections.

## **Conclusion**

Through this project's developed resilience framework impacting and benefitting UNBC co-op students, it also impacts the program's employers and the institution, as students act as a direct conduit to the workforce (CAFCE, 2005) and are a representation of the quality of student leaders UNBC has to offer. The benefits of a resilience framework for UNBC co-op students, employers, and the institution is also important given the program's tenuous background, current revitalization, and focus on benefitting stakeholders for a sustainable future. This project will add to a limited amount of literature available on co-op programs and their activities, especially in Northern British Columbia. Finally, the creation of a resilience framework informs professional practice in higher education through providing the fields of experiential learning and work-integrated learning programs, such as co-op programs, and other student services and academic programs, with the importance of resilience in postsecondary students and a practical way of embedding resilience building strategies into everyday activities.

## **Limitations of the Project**

However, this project also has its limitations. Firstly, no empirical studies have been conducted on co-op student resilience at UNBC or with a focus on Northern British Columbia, hence, my literature review was limited to co-op programs and resilience as two separate areas. Additionally, the UNBC co-op program is in its first year of revitalization and as such I was unable to use well established instances of co-op activities to populate the resilience framework



and had to use general instances from the CEWIL Canada, formerly CAFCE (2005), co-op manual. Finally, as a new researcher using content and documentary analysis, I was limited in my abilities to make inferences with great accuracy. Despite the limitations, I strongly believe that this experience was worth the effort, as this project will serve as the very first to address co-op student resilience at UNBC and in Northern British Columbia.

## **Recommendations**

This project has inspired several recommendations related to the framework itself and further research. Firstly, this project recommends higher education co-operative education programs implement individualized resilience coaching (Marthers, 2017; Robbins et al., 2018) as a resilience building strategy. The UNBC co-op office should hire personnel with such training and expertise as part of ensuring the sustainability of the co-op program. This project also recommends the implementation of peer-assessment to evaluate and measure resilience (Joordens, 2019) in co-op students. This will not only encourage student interaction but will enable students to critically reflect on their performances in a positive way, considering the fact that peer assessment is seen as ‘friendly’ and less intrusive (Johnson, 2018).

Another recommendation is to assess the effectiveness of the framework in creating resilient UNBC co-op students through resilience measurement scales or rubrics to understand if the framework needs adjustment. UNBC faculties such as the Department of Computer Science could assist with creating a system to record data emerging from the use of resilience measurement scales or rubrics to enhance the feasibility for future framework adjustments and future research. Ideally, a UNBC computer science co-op student could be hired to create a data recording system for the UNBC co-op program’s resilience building efforts.

This project should also be shared with UNBC student services, academic programs, and any subsequent teams dedicated to experiential learning and work-integrated learning at UNBC to ensure all environments help develop resilient students. Finally, this project should be shared through the Association for Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning BC/Yukon and CEWIL Canada as this could lead to other Canadian co-op programs implementing similar frameworks or models, especially since many are already accredited through CEWIL Canada (CEWIL Canada, n.d.b) and therefore also use many elements of the CEWIL Canada model of co-operative education (CAFCE, 2005).

From a research perspective, this framework will add to the growing body of literature on co-operative education programs. This project could contribute even more significantly as a case study (Lucas, Fleming, & Bhosale, 2018) on the effectiveness of resilience building strategies in creating resilient higher education co-op students in Northern Canada using resilience measurement scales or rubrics. Additionally, when the UNBC co-op program expands and begins serving graduate students, the effectiveness of a resilience framework for a graduate co-op program should be studied separately as graduate students face different challenges than undergraduate students do when preparing for the workforce (Zepeda, 2015). This type of study would contribute to a limited amount of research available on graduate co-op programs considering most Canadian co-op programs are only available to college, diploma, and undergraduate students (Business/Higher Education Roundtable, 2016).

Additional studies could also explore the impact of resilience on co-op student relations with employers as this would provide valuable information for work-integrated learning programs' connections with postsecondary institution partnerships in the community. These studies could be broken down into co-op placements with industry and research-intensive

settings such as labs, as the different environments may highlight variances in the effects of resilient co-op students and their relations in the workforce.

Furthermore, the impact of a resilience framework on co-op student alumni could also be studied. This type of study could speak to graduate satisfaction and issues of student recruitment and enrolment in postsecondary institutions.

### **Personal Reflections**

Reflecting on this project, I believe that a resilience framework for the UNBC co-op program will be of value to its students, the program itself, and UNBC as an institution focused on creating leaders for tomorrow (UNBC, n.d.a). I learned that resilience is a complex and important skill that students must obtain to ensure future success and that an environment, such as the UNBC co-op program, must be carefully and strategically created and maintained to nurture resilience in students. A challenge I faced while creating this framework was being the sole staff member of the UNBC co-op program. I found myself frustrated while unpacking the newly revitalized UNBC co-op program and in my understanding of how far we would have to come to truly benefit our students and develop them for the workforce. However, being able to research resilience, its impacts on students, and the various resilience building strategies already available to postsecondary institutions made me optimistic that the UNBC co-op program can become an environment that fosters this important skill in its students and prepares them for the workforce and life after academia. This research has also enabled me to better connect what transferable skills students need for success in the workforce with how the UNBC co-op program fosters student development through its activities. As stated earlier, an instructional leader is integral to creating an environment that develops its students (BCPVPA Standards Committee, 2016) and I believe it is my responsibility as the current UNBC co-operative education lead to

ensure that the UNBC co-op program environment is conducive for developing resilient students and truly serves its purpose of developing students generally. This project has inspired me to continue developing co-op students for the workforce and find new ways to model transferable skills, such as resilience, and measure them for greater learning and development opportunities.

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*Appendix A*

## UNBC co-op historical enrolment data 1997-2005

	<b>Term</b>	<b>Work I</b>	<b>Work II</b>	<b>Work III</b>	<b>Work IV</b>	<b>Work V</b>
<b>Anthropology (15)</b>	199705	1				
	199801	1	1			
	199803	1				
	199805		1			
	199901		1			
	199903	1				
	199905		1	1		
	200101					1
	200103	2				
	200203	1				
	200403	1				
	200501	1				
<b>Chemistry (50)</b>	199805	1				
	199901	2	1			
	199903			1		
	199905	1				
	200003					1
	200101	1				
	200103	6	1			
	200105	1	3			
	200201			2		
	200203		1			2
	200301	1				
	200303	2	1	1		
	200305		1			1
	200401	1				
	200403	6	2			
	200405		4	2		
	200501	2		2		
<b>Business Administration (229)</b>	199905		2	1	1	1
	200001	4	6	6	2	
	200003	13	7	6	9	

<b>Computer Science (142)</b>	200005	3	2	1	2	
	200101	8	4	2		
	200103	13	13	7	7	
	200105		2	1	1	
	200201	5	3	1	2	
	200203	5	9	5	4	
	200205	1		1	2	
	200301	2	3	4		
	200303	7		3	6	
	200305	1	1	1		1
	200401	8	3		3	
	200403	3	6	3		
	200405		1		1	
	200501	3	1	4	1	1
	199703	8	2	1	1	
	199705		2	1		
	199801	1	3	1	1	
	199803	3	3	4		
	199805		2		2	
	199901	1	1	4		
	199903	7	1	1	6	1
	199905		3			
	200001	2		1		
	200003	4	2	1	2	
	200005	1	1	2	1	
	200101	1	2	1	1	
	200103	4	3	1	1	
	200105		2	2	1	
	200201		1			
	200203	6		1	1	1
	200205		1			
	200301	1	1	1	1	
	200303	3	3	3	1	
	200305		1		2	
	200401	1		1		
	200403	5	2	3	1	
	200405			1	2	
	200501	2				
<b>Economics (2)</b>	200103	1				
	200105		1			

<b>English (20)</b>	199703	2				
	199705		2			
	199801	1		1		
	199803		1		1	
	199901			1		
	199903	1				1
	199905		1		1	
	200003	1		1		
	200103	2				
	200403	2				
	200405		1			
<b>First Nations (8)</b>	199803	1				
	199805		1			
	200003	1				
	200005		1			
	200101			1		
	200103	1			1	
	200203		1			
<b>History (4)</b>	200103	1				
	200203	1				
	200403	1				
	200501		1			
<b>International Studies (26)</b>	199903			1	1	
	199905				1	
	200003	2				1
	200103	1	1	1		
	200105			1		
	200201		1			
	200203			1	2	
	200205	3				
	200301		2			
	200303	3			1	
	200305		1			
	200403	1		1		
<b>Mathematics (4)</b>	200103	1				
	200203	1	1			
	200301		1			
<b>MGAD (152)</b>	199605		1	2		



	199701	8	4	3	1	
	199703	10	8	7	2	
	199705		3	3	2	
	199801	7	2	1	2	
	199803	16	13	7	2	
	199805		3	1	3	
	199901	2	2	5	1	
	199903	13	7	5	6	
<b>Natural Resources (575)</b>	199603	4	2			
	199605	3	9	7	2	
	199701	6	3	2	4	
	199703	26	14	13	10	2
	199705	4	10	2	4	3
	199801	4	5	2		
	199803	17	11	13	6	
	199805	3	5	2	3	
	199901	5	1	2	2	1
	199903	16	8	10	9	1
	199905	1	4	4	3	1
	200001		4		1	
	200003	36	6	7	5	1
	200005	1	10	3	4	
	200101	2	2	5	1	
	200103	27	12	8	4	1
	200105		4	4	2	
	200201	1	2		1	1
	200203	15	11	9	10	1
	200205	1	4	3	1	1
	200301	3		2	3	
	200303	11	5	7	6	4
	200305	1	1	3	4	
	200401	2			2	1
	200403	16	8	1		
	200405		5	1	1	
	200501	1	4	1	1	1
<b>Physics (1)</b>	199903	1				
<b>Politic Science (27)</b>	199903	1				1
	200001		1			
	200003	2		1		
	200005	1	1			

<b>Psychology (36)</b>	200101		1		1	
	200103	1				
	200201	1				
	200203	2				
	200205		1			
	200301	1				
	200303		3	1		
	200305			2		
	200401				1	
	200403	1	1			
	200405			1		
	200501				1	
	199801	1				
	199803	1	1			
	199805		1			
	199901	1	1			
	199903	4	1	2		1
	200003		1	1	2	
	200005			1		
	200101				2	
	200103	2	1			
	200203		1			
	200303	2				
	200305		1			
	200401			1		
	200403	5				
	200501		2			
<b>Women's Studies (8)</b>	199703	1				
	199805			1		
	199903				1	
	200103	1				
	200203		1			
	200305			1		
	200401				1	
	200403					1
<b>Co-op Courses (386)</b>	200503	36	15	13	8	
	200505	3	10	8	6	1
	200601	6	6	8	4	3

	200603	31	18	16	15	
	200605	1	10	5	7	1
	200701	10	4	5	3	
	200703	17	17	9	10	1
	200705		2	2		3
	200801	1		4	1	
	200803	2	4	4	3	
	200805	1		1		
	200901	3	1	1		
	200903	2	3	1		
	200905	2	1	2		
	201001	1	1	2	1	
	201003	5	1			
	201005	1		1		
	201101	2				
	201103		3			
	201105	1				
	201201	1		1		
	201203	1	1	1	1	
	201205		1			
	201301	1		1		
	201303		1	1		
	201401	1		1		
	201403		1			
	201501	1				
	201503		1			
Totals by Work Term (1685)		608	447	338	254	38

*Appendix B*

UNBC co-op pre-employment curriculum topics and timeline

Topic	Proposed Delivery Semester	Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	Mandatory Hours	Optional Hours
Co-op process	1	M	1	
Job searching	1	M	1	
Resume	1	M	1	
Cover letter	1	M	1	
Interview	2	M	2	
Policy	2	M	1	
Employer expectations	2	M	1	
Emotional intelligence	3	M	2	
Learning objectives/competencies/transferring skills	3	M	1	
Writing skills/business writing		O		1
Time and process management (effective personal management skills)		O		1
Meetings, presentations, and professionalism		O		0.5
Aboriginal cultural competencies	4	M	1	
Exploring your labour market		O		0.5
Networking 101		O		1
Wage negotiations		O		0.5
Introduction to project management		O		0.5
Organizational behaviour in 3 hours	4	M	3	
Effective conflict management		O		1
Diversity		O		1
<b>Totals</b>			<b>15</b>	<b>7</b>

**Notes**

Proposed Delivery Semester begins the semester they enroll. Summer semesters will not have pre-employment training.

Students must complete 16 hours of pre-employment training throughout undergraduate degree.

Students can choose between optional topics. They will begin to be offered in January 2020.

## *Appendix C*

### UNBC co-op student evaluation



### Co-operative Education

#### Student Evaluation

Please use this form to evaluate the performance of your UNBC Co-op student. After completing your portion of the form, please review the evaluation with your student and ask the student to add his or her comments. Please return the form to the Co-op Office by the end of the student's work term. Thank you for your support and we look forward to working with you in the future.

<b>Employer</b>			
<b>Supervisor's Name</b>		<b>Supervisor's Title</b>	
<b>Student's Name</b>			

#### Evaluation Metrics

Please indicate where your UNBC Co-op student falls with regards to each category below.

- E**     Excellent, consistently exceeds expectations.
- G**     Good, sometimes exceeds expectations.
- S**     Satisfactory, meets expectations.
- NI**    Needs improvement, needs to improve meeting expectations.
- U**     Unsatisfactory, does not meet expectations.
- NA**    Not applicable, skill is not required by the student.

Please see the next page for the evaluation form.

1. How would you rate your UNBC Co-op student's fundamental skills?

<b>Fundamental Skills</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>NI</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Communication							
Information management							
Use of numbers							
Critical thinking and problem solving							

2. How would you rate your UNBC Co-op student's personal management skills?

<b>Personal Management Skills</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>NI</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Positive attitude and behaviours							
Responsibility							
Adaptability							
Continuous learning							
Working safely							

3. How would you rate your UNBC Co-op student's teamwork skills?

<b>Personal Management Skills</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>NI</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Work with others							
Participate in projects and tasks							

\*skills adapted from The Conference Board of Canada Employability Skills ([www.conferenceboard.ca](http://www.conferenceboard.ca))

### Co-operative Education

4. How would you rate your overall experience with your UNBC Co-op student?

<b>Overall Experience</b> (please check one box)	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>
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5. Can you comment on your overall experience with your UNBC Co-op student?

6. Can you comment on your overall experience with the UNBC Co-op program?

7. Student's comments:

---

Student's name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

---

Supervisor's name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your time and feedback.

## Appendix D

### UNBC co-op student terms and conditions



#### Co-operative Education

#### Student Terms and Conditions

This document outlines the standards UNBC Co-operative Education (Co-op) students agree to abide by while participating in the UNBC Co-op program. Please read the standards below and provide your signature after review.

---

##### *While participating in the program, I will...*

- be enrolled full-time in an undergraduate degree program,
- demonstrate a 2.50 GPA (minimum) (if the GPA is below a 2.50, students may be given provisional admission for a semester; however, cannot access the Co-op job board during this time),
- attend a Co-op Info Session (or equivalent, as agreed upon with the Co-op office),
- participate in meetings with the Co-op office,
- participate at least 16 hours of required workshops over the duration of my undergraduate degree (as outlined by the Co-op office), and
- submit a Learning Portfolio (as outlined by the Co-op office) for each Co-op work term I complete.

---

##### *Upon acceptance into the program, I understand that...*

- I must complete at least 30 credit hours before my participating in my Co-op work term,
- I will work towards meeting the requirements to obtain a Co-operative Education designation,
- the Co-op office reserves the right to determine whether I am a suitable candidate, and
- if I cannot demonstrate a 2.50 GPA (minimum), I will be withdrawn from the program and can only re-apply once I can demonstrate the 2.50 GPA (if the GPA is below a 2.50, students may be given provisional admission for a semester; however, cannot access the Co-op job board during this time).

---

##### *To receive a UNBC Co-operative Education designation, I will...*

- complete and pass a minimum of three, full-time Co-op work terms (or equivalent, as agreed upon with the Co-op office),
- attend a Co-op Info Session (or equivalent, as agreed upon with the Co-op office),
- participate in meetings with the Co-op office,
- participate at least 16 hours of required workshops over the duration of my undergraduate degree (as outlined by the Co-op office), and
- complete my undergraduate degree at UNBC on an academic semester.

---

##### *Regarding policies and regulations, I will...*

- adhere to the Co-operative Education and Student Conduct Statement of Principles regulations ([Official UNBC 2018-19 Undergraduate Academic Calendar PDF](#)),
- inform the UNBC Financial Aid and Awards office and/or my student loan program of my acceptance of a Co-op work term if I am the recipient of financial assistance, and
- conduct myself ethically and professionally, as I represent UNBC and the UNBC Co-op program.

---

##### *Regarding communication with the Co-op office, I understand that...*

- the relationship between the Co-op program office and I is key to my success and therefore I will:
  - respond within 48 hours to all messages from the Co-op office, and
  - notify the Co-op office of any changes regarding my work eligibility or status, and
- if I am unable to complete the Co-op program requirements and/or wish to withdraw, I will inform the Co-op office in writing as soon as possible.

---

##### *While searching for a Co-op work term opportunity, I understand that...*

- the Co-op program does not guarantee Co-op work terms,
- I am responsible for paying costs associated with relocation if my Co-op work term requires it,
- job opportunities on the Co-op job board are for UNBC Co-op students exclusively, as such, I will not share opportunities with students who do not have access to the job board,
- I will discuss any self-developed Co-op work term with the Co-op office (i.e., positions not found on the Co-op job board or UNBC Career Centre job postings board, or provided by the Co-op office),
- I will attend all interviews I am shortlisted for, and I will discuss any decision to not interview with the Co-op office prior to doing so,



## Co-operative Education

- if I am offered a Co-op work term I will respond within 24 hours (or within the timeline provided by my employer), and I will discuss any decision to decline with the Co-op office prior to doing so,
- once I have accepted a Co-op work term, I will not participate in other hiring processes, and
- I am required to provide the Co-op office and employers with accurate and appropriate information regarding my qualifications and interests.

### *Regarding Co-op work terms, I understand that...*

- when I accept a Co-op work term, I am committing to undertaking and completing that Co-op work term,
- for each Co-op work term I participate in, I must register in a Co-op work term course and pay the Co-op Work Term fee, as outlined in the Tuition and Fees section ([Official UNBC 2018-19 Undergraduate Academic Calendar PDF](#))
- I must obtain permission from the Co-op office if I wish to enrol in an academic course while on a Co-op work term (or additional academic courses while on a parallel Co-op work term),
- failure to complete a Co-op work term without agreement of the Co-op office will result in a failed grade (F) and dismissal from the Co-op program,
- in order to receive a passing grade (P) for my Co-op work term, I must:
  - successfully complete all requirements of my Learning Portfolio (as outlined by the Co-op office), e.g., learning objectives, a mid-term site visit, and a reflection paper, and
  - receive a "Satisfactory" evaluation, at minimum, from my employer and the Co-op office, and
- submitting late assignments will affect my Co-op work term evaluation.

### *Regarding issues of legality and safety, I understand that...*

- I am responsible for informing the Co-op office of my immigration status in Canada, and
- If I am an international student, I must apply for and receive a Co-op work permit, along with any additional documents, that will enable me to work legally in Canada, and
- I must inform the Co-op office if I am under the age of 19 prior to accepting a Co-op work term.

### *Regarding the Freedom of Information and Privacy, I give the Co-op office permission to...*

- disclose and release personal information to employers, including but not limited to my résumé and employment history, unofficial transcripts and academic performance,
- communicate with employers on my behalf, and
- use my Co-op work term compensation numbers for statistical purposes only.

I understand the standards listed above and agree to the terms and conditions stipulated by the UNBC Co-op program. Failure to comply with these terms and conditions, and policies and regulations listed in the Co-operative Education and Student Conduct Statement of Principles regulations ([Official UNBC 2018-19 Undergraduate Academic Calendar PDF](#)), may result in a failed Co-op work term and/or dismissal from the Co-op program. The Co-op office reserves the right to dismiss students for improper behaviour. The Co-op program reserves the right to update, modify, or revise these terms and conditions.

Student's name	Signature	Date

Co-operative Education Lead's name	Signature	Date

### *Optional*

I consent to the use of my name, quotes from my Learning Portfolio, and my photograph in publications and promotional materials of the UNBC Co-op program.

Student's name	Signature	Date