Program Development For The BMO UNBC Downtown Business Centre Of Excellence

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses programming and possible uses for the University of Northern British Columbia’s downtown campus. Thirty individuals working throughout the downtown core of Prince George BC were interviewed to gather information about the programs that would be of most interest to themselves and their organizations. A literature review showed that the location of a program was important but was secondary to the quality and relevance of the course (Simerly 1989). The interview results supported the hypothesis people working in the downtown core are most interested in career or work related programming. There was overwhelming support for courses at the downtown campus and participants had strong views on the time of day and week when courses and informational sessions should be held. The interviews further showed that the community was interested in utilizing the location for meetings, events and courses they planned to hold. This paper clarifies the interests of the downtown community in relation to the university’s presence in the downtown core.
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INTRODUCTION

The objective of this project was to determine uses for the University of Northern British Columbia’s downtown campus in Prince George. The university received the campus as a donation from the Bank of Montreal in 2005. The campus had an original value of $500,000 and was recently appraised by BC Assessment at an approximate value of $850,000 on July 1, 2007. Originally the building was used to alleviate space shortages at the main campus. These shortages were resolved in 2007 with the construction of the new Teaching and Learning building at the main campus. At present, the downtown campus remains virtually empty with the front doors covered in brown paper and locked. In 2007, the building was put under the direction of the School of Business and the name changed to “The BMO UNBC Downtown Business Centre of Excellence.”

Downtown campuses are linked to successful revitalization efforts and the ability to build stronger relationships between a university and the community (Perry and Wiewel 2005). After reviewing universities’ downtown campuses there are three common themes: continuing education courses, programming towards business activities or community specific needs, and rental of facilities for events and conventions.

The research results show people working in the downtown are very interested in taking courses at the downtown campus, particularly business and career related courses. They expressed specific class scheduling preferences and prefer not to return downtown in the late evening for classes or information sessions. Participants are willing to travel to Vancouver, Victoria or Toronto for courses of particular interest to them.
Concerns for safety seemed to be lower the closer a participant worked to the downtown campus, with those working in or next to the campus having little concern for safety and expressing the area is safe.

**Research Questions**

To obtain information on which types of programming individuals working in the downtown core are likely to take if held at the downtown campus, the following research questions were proposed:

1. Does the location of the downtown campus have an impact on whether someone working in Prince George’s downtown core will take a course?

2. What types of programs would individuals working in the downtown core be likely to take?

3. What other types of events, or programs would individuals in the downtown core like to have themselves at the downtown campus?

From the results of the research questions recommendations will be made for programming at the downtown campus.
LITERATURE REVIEW

Canadian Downtown Campuses

In the last 20 years, many universities across Canada have created downtown campuses. Simon Fraser University's Harbour Center in downtown Vancouver states, “SFU's program in Liberal and Business Studies is an innovative, part-time degree completion program for mid-career adults” (SFU http://www.vancouver.sfu.ca/academic/index.html). The University of British Columbia has UBC Robson Square, which offers credit and non-credit courses in business, arts and technology “with an emphasis on lifelong learning opportunities” (UBC http://www.robsonsquare.ubc.ca/index2.html). Other universities with downtown campuses are:

- British Columbia Institute of Technology in downtown Vancouver focusing on programs in “business and media,” and “computing and information technology” (BCIT http://www.bcit.ca/about/downtown.shtml).
- The University of Alberta’s Enterprise Centre, its mission to foster research, learning and partnerships (U of A http://www.enterprisesquare.ualberta.ca/).
- The University of Toronto’s St. George Campus offering a full range of programs at both the undergraduate and graduate level (U of T http://www.greatspaces.utoronto.ca/stgeorge.htm).
- Lakehead University’s Orillia Campus offering multidisciplinary studies programs, business and social work (Lakehead http://orillia.lakeheadu.ca/?display=page&pageid=22).
The similarities among the downtown campus are they, all offer credit and non-credit courses, provide rental space for business meetings and events, and have continuing studies programs. Finally they offer programming in business or a program targeted specifically to the downtown community’s needs including part time learners.

The difference between UNBC’s downtown campus and other downtown campuses is the size of the facilities. The closest in size is Lakehead’s Orillia campus with 14 thousand square feet of space and multiple classrooms, just under twice the size of UNBC’s downtown campus.

**UNBC’s Downtown Campus**

UNBC’s downtown campus is 7,148 sq ft on the main floor and the basement has 4,600 sq ft. It is located in the center of downtown Prince George, 8.5 kilometers or approximately 15-minutes from the main campus, located to the west on Cranbrook Hill. At the campus there is a multi-use classroom with seating for 30 students. The classroom features the latest technology including two plasma televisions, internet access with wiring for 30 laptops. The boardroom has meeting space for ten people.

The Atrium is approximately 3500 sq ft with several offices around its perimeter. The size of the Atrium makes it prefect for mini-conferences, open houses, and informal social gatherings. There is a small kitchen and lunchroom in the basement and room for one more classroom.

**UNBC and other Downtown Campuses**

From the review of several Canadian downtown campuses and a comparison of facilities with UNBC’s campus, it is clear there are differences in size, but it is likely that
programming and uses of these facilities will be similar to those found for UNBC's downtown campus. This leads to:

**Hypothesis 1:** UNBC's downtown campus would be best used in a similar manner to other downtown campuses across Canada specifically for Business and Continuing Education courses, as well as for an events or meetings centre by businesses in the downtown core.

**Marketing Continuing Education**

When marketing any product or service the 4 P’s of marketing or Marketing Mix immediately come to mind. They are Product, Price, Promotion and Place. These are the controllable factors for a marketing manager (Berkowitz et al. 2003). In this case, the Place or location of the product is set, so is less controllable. However, the University could decide to hold courses only at the main campus or some division between the main campus and the downtown campus. Those working in the downtown will likely find the downtown campus more accessible to them as Read (2005) notes the importance of the distances that students must travel as important for both the student and for the university, when looking to recruit students for their programs (32).

When O’Lawrence (2006) looked at why students took distance education courses, he found they had to balance multiple priorities and needed to reduce the time devoted to school. However, students were frustrated by the lack of face-to-face contact. The location downtown would allow students to expend a minimum of time traveling to the University and therefore balance their priorities and get the face-to-face contact they lack when taking distance courses.
Place (Location)

Carson (1989) also expresses the importance of location to a successful continuing education program (103). In determining programming for the downtown campus, location and how it relates those in the downtown are major considerations. There are a large numbers of downtown businesses, government agencies, non-profit agencies, and service agencies, all looking for training.

Good locations can be hard to secure (Carson 1989). The locations of courses or programs are a critical part in planning conferences, workshops or courses. Carson (1989) states that although location is important, the program should be the greatest selling point, and location should be an added feature to taking the course. Supervisory and management programs are becoming very popular as business and industry realize that to become strong leaders they must develop and cultivate their skills; (Carson 1989) the location in close proximity to these businesses will likely increase registration for courses.

An additional factor in location is consistency with the audience. The main campus is an excellent location for academic programs; however, for government agencies or other businesses this may be considered too academic for the types of programs they are interested in (Carson 1989). An entrepreneur may feel a course at the main campus is at too high a level for them after being out of school for several years and may dismiss the course.

All of these factors lead to:

**Hypothesis 2:** People working in the downtown core would find it more convenient to take courses at the downtown location.
Market

The market for this study is individuals working in the downtown core. Targeting this group for programming requires an understanding of their characteristics which can be accomplished by looking at their demographics.

Demographics of students enrolled in higher education have changed; Andres and Carpenter (1997) found more non-traditional students were attending universities and forecasted smaller cohorts of 18 to 24-year-old traditional students. This change was attributed to increased numbers of women, adults over 25 years of age and part-time students attending higher education. The changes were also related to well paying jobs and promotions going only to those who increased their education level.

These students are defined in two ways, as non-traditional students and as adult learners. In Schuetze’s (2002) work, which focused on non-traditional students in developed countries including Canada, he found that there are three criteria for non-traditional students:

1. They had a winding path to higher education and varying significance and motivation for studying in their life cycle
2. How and when they access higher education: through an entrance exam or based on work experience
3. The need to balance between study and other commitments, the most significant being work, domestic and social (Schuetze 2002)

Zakos (2006) described them as Adult Learners who have eight characteristics:

1. Delayed enrollment into post-secondary education
2. Attending part-time
3. Financially independent
4. Working full-time while enrolled
5. Having dependents other than spouse
6. Being a single parent
7. Not having a standard high school diploma
8. Frequently motivated to study for career/work-related reasons (Zakos 2006).

Schuetze (2002) looked at institutions non-traditional students usually attended and listed the relative importance of each factor for people in each country. Below is a list of these factors and how Canadians ranked them.

1. Attend a non-university institution or program, rather than traditional universities, particularly elite schools. Ranked Medium
2. An institution with policies and governance structures that encourage non-traditional students to be part of the organization. Ranked High
3. Institutions flexible in admissions or open for those without traditional qualifications and recognized prior learning. Ranked Medium
4. Mode of study (modular courses or credit courses, part-time study, distance learning or independent study). Ranked Medium
5. Availability of continuing education opportunities. Ranked High (Schuetze 2002).

This research on the market leads to the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 3**: Individuals working in the downtown core will have characteristics similar to non-traditional students and will be interested in taking courses related to their work or career.
Product

As the market in the downtown core is either adult learners or non-traditional students it is assumed they will have similar interests. This means they would be interested in taking continuing education rather than academic courses, and leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: Individuals working in the downtown core will be more interested in taking continuing education courses rather than academic or credit courses.

Non-traditional students balance multiple priorities and attend school on a part-time basis. They look for ways to reduce the time devoted to school. Working during the day will limit the times available to attend courses which leads to:

Hypothesis 5: Individuals working in the downtown core have scheduling preferences for courses.

Market Research in Higher Education and Continuing Education

Higher Education

A review of literature revealed several different approaches to market research and marketing. In higher education there were two main approaches to market research: “problem identification” and “problem solving” (Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka 2006, 333). Problem identification was used for image research, sales forecasting, trends and market potential. This type of research focuses on “identifying, justifying and analyzing a marketing problem,” (332) such as: What is the potential market for teaching courses in downtown Prince George? Problem solving was used for segmentation research, product research, pricing, distribution and strategy. This type of research focuses on a marketing theory and how to use it to resolve a problem. An example would be: How
could market segmentation be used to target the downtown community? The current research question is problem identification research as it is identifying the potential uses of the building and the areas of interest for courses in the downtown core. This type of research tends to be exploratory in nature.
Continuing Education

In the *Handbook of Marketing Continuing Education* Simerly (1989) reviewed marketing literature and broke down the approaches into three models. These are Traditional, Exchange and Adaptive, as described below:

**Traditional Model**

The organization looked inward to develop programs that fit the needs, wants and desires of that organization, which are more important than the needs, wants, and desires of the customers. The organization is able to build goods, products and services and use the marketing of the organization to sell them to students. The advantage to this system is there are fewer variables to consider when planning marketing activities and this often makes marketing easier for the organization. The disadvantage is that there is little change and customers are often neglected, leading to customer frustration.

**Exchange Model**

Kotler (1984) says marketing is “a social process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and values with others” (Simerly 1989, 7). By following this model, the organization builds a symbiotic relationship with their customers. The advantage of this model is it focuses on the customer, working with them to develop products to the mutual benefit of both client and organization. The disadvantage is that those accustomed to the traditional approach will become weary of the constant negotiation with customers to update programs. This can lead to those people involved from the organization dropping their support (Simerly 1989).
Adaptive Model

This model is outward directed and responsive to customer needs. The model places so much emphasis on the customer’s needs it will almost completely ignore the needs of the organization. The disadvantage is this can alienate groups used to the traditional model or the parent institution. The advantage is it keeps the clients satisfied and promotes change in the organization. This model also advocates giving the customer anything they want or need.

UNBC Continuing Studies

In 2007 UNBC’s Continuing Studies program had 2,547 students enrolled in Arts and Culture, Business and Career, Computer and Technology, General Community Interest, Health and Personal Wellness, Natural Resource Management, Safety and First Aid, and Writing and Publishing. The vision of Continuing Studies states they have “a professional commitment to contribute collaboratively with all other departments and to lead and serve the community by staying responsive to the needs of the North.” They build courses from inside the organization and are willing to adapt and bring in new programs to benefit clients. Continuing Studies offers courses eligible for credit towards a degree. Finally they work with clients to develop courses specific to a client’s needs. It follows that marketing at Continuing Studies is similar to the Exchange and Adaptive models focusing heavily on the needs of the customer and working to develop symbiotic relationships.
UNBC School of Business

The School of Business offers undergraduate Commerce degrees in Accounting, Finance, General Business, International Business, Marketing, and Human Resources Management. The School has a Master of Business Administration (MBA) program, currently located at the main campus, running two weekends a month from Friday to Sunday evening. Students travel to Prince George from throughout British Columbia, Alberta and the international community.

The School of Business has a strong community focus and recently developed a new mission statement and a set of goals in consultation with students and alumni. One area of focus in this statement was to “strengthen the relationship between the School of Business and the business community” and to “help the communities and organizations of central and northern British Columbia to act on a world stage.” It is because of the commitment to these goals that the development of the Business Excellence Centre in Prince George is important to the University and The School of Business.

Competition for Education in Downtown Prince George

There are several adult education institutions in Prince George including two provincially run facilities, The University of Northern British Columbia and The College of New Caledonia. These institutions have courses that transfer from the college to the university and they recently developed block transfers for students completing a diploma at the college. They are involved in partnerships and share facilities at several regional campuses. Both have continuing education programs which at times are in competition with each other.
School District 57 also provides continuing education programs, focusing on assisting those wishing to complete an Adult Graduation Diploma. This is not considered direct competition to the downtown campus.

There are two private educational institutions, Sprott Shaw Community College and the Academy of Learning. Both offer a variety of business and vocational training and are within walking distance and are considered competition for students.

When developing programming, for the university, duplication of efforts will need to be considered. Economic development programs are run by both Community Futures and the Innovation Resource Center. Both provide training for small businesses and business start ups with The Innovation Resource Center focused on assisting businesses with science and technology. Both organizations would also be considered potential partners for program planning and the use of the facilities.

The Prince George Downtown Core

The downtown core of Prince George is “… the city’s primary office and civic centre as well as maintaining a number of retail and service uses” (City of Prince George 11). This is similar to the community demographic given by Statistics Canada (2006) for occupations and industry. A listing of the highest number of occupations and industries are given in Appendix B.

The occupations represented in the downtown are sales and service, business, finance and administration, management, and health. The industries are services, business services, retail trade, health care and social services, educational services, finance, and real estate.
The Role of the Downtown Campus in Revitalization

Throughout the recent history of Prince George the city has made several efforts to revitalize the downtown core. These efforts include a revitalization of 3rd Avenue (the street where the downtown campus is located) in 2003, and a revitalization tax exemption for businesses in the downtown core in 2005. The city continues to have a strong commitment to revitalize the downtown core, a goal shared by the Chamber of Commerce.

A major reason for the donation of the downtown campus to the university was to help in the revitalization of the downtown core.

The donation of BMO’s branch building to UNBC fits in perfectly with our commitment to the Prince George community, UNBC’s need to expand, and the City of Prince George’s downtown revitalization plans, said Richard Rudderham, Senior Vice President, BMO Bank of Montreal for BC and Yukon Division. It’s a win-win-win situation all around, and we are very pleased to continue to have our name associated with the downtown core, added Mr. Rudderham (UNBC http://www.unbc.ca/releases/2005/10_21bmo.html).

A campus in the downtown has been shown to help develop stronger relationships between the university and the city as well as revitalizing the area (Perry and Wiewel 2005). A recent study by the city recommended more educational activities be brought to the downtown as it will increase the traffic in the area (City of Prince George 2006). Other studies confirmed when a university campus is started in the downtown the economic spin offs help to revitalize the community. This is a result of students being exposed to the downtown core, purchasing products and after graduation starting up businesses (Perry and Wiewel 2005).
Rationale for Research Methodology

Downtown industries and occupations are diverse and the area targeted for this study is very specific. Reaching this group presents a considerable challenge. The use of email was considered; however, developing a suitable email list targeting the downtown core was not easily accessible and was ruled out. Surveys using traditional mail could target the area through postal codes but the response rate tends to be low (Blankenship, Breen, and Dutka 1998) and there was a risk that not enough information would be gathered in the time available.

To ensure a cross section of the downtown core, and gather sufficient data in the time required, one-on-one personal interviews were selected. The researcher used semi-structured interviews, allowing answers to be followed up, and depth interviews to allow for the selection of respondents with specialized insight and for greater depth by probing for reasons behind responses. (Hair et al. 2003). Depth interviews have three main advantages (Stokes and Bergin 2006). They are uniquely applicable to those circumstances that involve personal topics, for example the course choices of an individual. They give sampling advantages that yield greater depth, context and flexibility in the inquiry process, due to a greater degree of control over respondent selection and they give a preferential outcome, yielding more depth and comprehensiveness of information, allowing a more precise interpretation of responses and a higher quality of data due to the rapport and trust developed in the interview process (Stokes and Bergin 2006).
METHOD

Sample

Participants in the Study

Data were collected from a sample of thirty individuals working full-time in the downtown core of Prince George. The sample ranged in age from twenty-eight to sixty-five years; thirteen were between twenty-eight and forty-four, and seventeen participants were forty-five plus as shown in figure 1 below. In the sample group, there were eight males and twenty-two females.

![Ages of Participants](image)

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**Figure 1 Ages of Participants**

The average length of time working in the downtown area was 10.4 years with the lowest being six months and the highest being twenty-seven years. The group aged twenty-eight to forty-four averaged 7.3 years working downtown and the forty-five plus group averaged 12.8 years.

Procedure

Selection of Participants

Three criteria were used to gather information about interests in the downtown core and how organizations would likely use the downtown campus. The first criterion was that the individual worked in the downtown core. Second, they had knowledge about
others' careers within their organization and about the meetings, events and courses their organization might hold. Therefore, if there was choice between a frontline staff member and a manager/supervisor, the manager/supervisor was asked to participate. Third, the sample as a whole represented a cross section of the downtown core.

The researcher sampled individuals known to fit the criteria and from referrals from people working downtown. By using this method the researcher was able find a cross sectional sample of the downtown core.

**Contacting Participants**

Participants were contacted by phone or in person and asked if they would participate in the study. The researcher explained he was completing an MBA project and the topic was courses or events that the people in the downtown community would like offered at the downtown campus. Prospective participants were told that recommendations would be used to assist in determining programming. Once they agreed a time was set up for the interview.

**Interview**

Before starting, the interviewer explained the purpose for the interview and informed the participant that their identity would remain anonymous although their comments would be used in the final report. The participants were informed once the project was complete all notes would be destroyed. After informed consent (Appendix C) was received the interview began.

During the interview the researcher took notes in full view of the participants. The interviews were between thirty and ninety minutes in duration depending on the
detail a participant wanted to give. A copy of the interview questions can be found in Appendix D.

The first part of the interview was designed to determine downtown core familiarity, where the person worked and what they did. Next, participants were asked about their educational background either credit, non-credit or continuing education courses taken. They were also asked to estimate the total number of years of post secondary and add all types of classes (credit or non-credit) and programs together. If it took five years to complete a degree participants would estimate 5 years. If a participant completed several years of either continuing education or academic programs they were asked to estimate the total number of years.

Participants were asked if they had a professional designation and if they required additional courses to meet educational requirements. Next, they were asked if they knew where the UNBC building was located. If they were not sure it was explained.

Participants were then asked if they would consider taking courses at the downtown campus. If yes, they were asked questions to clarify the types of courses and highest priority.

Next, the researcher asked questions as to the time of day or week participants would prefer courses and if they had concerns about taking courses at the downtown campus. If they did have concerns, they were asked to elaborate.

The participants were asked if it was more convenient to attend events and information sessions at the main campus or the downtown location and why. They were then asked if having a course at the downtown campus would influence their decision to take a course and to explain why.
Next they were asked if they would hold special events or courses at the downtown campus and if yes to elaborate. The interpretation of special events and courses was left to the participant to define; however, if asked it was clarified as company run courses or events, or community events. This question may have been inappropriate for some participants, who do not plan events or courses and were unable to answer this question. In these cases the interviewer moved to the next question.

Participants were asked their opinion as to how they thought the center should be used and which courses people in their organization would be interested in. The last part of the interview determined age and gender of the subjects to give a clear picture of the sample.
RESULTS

Participants represented a cross-section of individuals working in the downtown core. The results show that those working in the core are interested in taking courses at UNBC’s downtown campus. Their interests in courses related to career and work and have some of the characteristics of non-traditional students. Their organizations are interested in the facilities for meetings, events and courses. Industries and occupations of participants are outlined below, after which the results for each research question are presented.

Industries

Fifteen participants came from government agencies. Of these, nine were from provincial government including healthcare, four from federal government and two from municipal government. Ten participants were from for-profit businesses including banking, retail and the service industry. The final five were from non-profit service organizations in the downtown area as shown in figure 2 below. A complete list of industry and organizations is in Appendix E.
Occupations

The occupations of participants, indicated in figure 3 below, included fifteen managers; three frontline supervisors, and twelve knowledge workers. Knowledge workers included three provincial government appraisers, two federal government employees (responsible for training in their department), two human resources recruitment specialists (one each from local and provincial government), one workforce promoter (employment counselor), one human resources advisor (Training and Staff Development), one researcher involved in funding businesses, one an administrative assistant, and one court reporter. A complete description and breakdown is in Appendix F.

Figure 3 Occupation Areas

The results for each research question will now be presented.

Research Question 1

Does the location of the downtown campus have an impact on whether someone working in Prince George’s downtown core will take a course?
Research results indicated the location of the downtown campus definitely had an impact on whether people would take a course. Results pertaining to this research question are as follows:

**Would Take a Course Downtown**

When asked if they would take courses at the downtown location twenty-eight responded yes and two responded no. Six of the participants who responded yes said it depended on the course and how it fit their interests. The participants who responded no gave two different reasons. The first was they did not have time for courses and the second responded that their company provides all their training.

**Location Impact for Courses**

When asked if there was a course offered that a participant wanted to go to, would it influence the decision to attend the course if held at the downtown location, 43% said yes and 57% said no.

**Most Convenient Campus**

When asked if the downtown campus or the main campus was more convenient for courses, twenty-six said the downtown campus, one said the main campus and three said it does not matter. The participant that said the main campus routinely goes to the main campus so it was more convenient. When asked why the downtown was more convenient twenty-six said because of proximity to work, three indicated because they have parking downtown, and four said because of proximity to where they live. When asked why, some participants gave more than one answer, leading to the total responses exceeding the number of participants.
Participants pointed out several advantages to having courses available at the downtown location for employees. For courses not related to work, the employee would have to make up less time spent traveling to the main campus, which adds approximately one hour to the course length. If the course is work related, the employer has to pay for travel time, parking and transportation costs if not held downtown. Participants commented, that having a training location so close would be great for managers’ meetings and training. The downtown location would allow managers to focus on training without distractions or to attend a half a day meeting or training session and still be in the office for part of the day.

**Travel for Courses Outside Prince George**

Several of the participants expressed when living in Prince George it is necessary to travel to take courses. Some participants travel far as Vancouver, Seattle or Toronto.
for a specific courses. The question as to whether having courses at the downtown campus influenced their decision to take a course sparked several interesting comments regarding the need for higher quality courses in the north. The participants who answered yes it would influence their decision said location was the main reason.

**Day of Week**

When asked which days of the week the participants prefer for courses, the results are as indicated in figure 5 below. The highest preference was Wednesday at 97%, or Tuesday and Thursday at 93% and 90%. Monday was 70% and Friday was 47%. When asked if participants would take a course on a weekend, 83% said yes and 17% said no. Of these, the 28% who said yes remarked they would only take a course they really wanted. If the course was something, they were partially interested in, the yes response dropped to 55%.

![Graph showing the most convenient day to attend class](image)

**Figure 5 Most Convenient Day to Attend Class**

**Time of Day or Week**

When asked if time of day or week changed which location was more convenient, sixteen said yes and twelve said no with two saying it does not matter. Fourteen of the
sixteen said it changed because of where they live. For this group, if the course was during a weekday or in the early evening, the downtown location was more convenient. On the weekend, or after they had returned home on a weekday evening, it was more convenient for them to attend a course at the main campus.

**Scheduling Preferences for Information Sessions**

To determine if there was a difference between taking courses and going to an event or information session it was asked if it was convenient to attend an information session or event at the downtown campus or the main campus. The results indicated 80% would prefer the downtown location during the day but this drops to a 57% preference in the evening.

**Location Concerns**

Nine participants had safety concerns, and when asked to elaborate they said that later in the day especially after dark they had concerns, with one participant noting safety concerns during the day. Several participants stated if taking course with others or if there were an attendant, this would resolve their concerns. Six participants had concerns for parking during the day and it was pointed out that in the evening there is more parking available.

These results, in answer to research question 1, indicate that location is a strong factor for people downtown and they would take courses at the downtown campus, as this location is more convenient than the main campus, they have parking spaces downtown, and it cuts down on travel time. Preference for days of week and time of day was also a factor in their decision and they also voiced safety concerns for the area later in the evenings. The next research question relates to program types.
Research Question 2

What types of programs would individuals working in the downtown core be likely to take?

Results indicate people working downtown are likely to take programs in business related areas of study. Results pertaining to this research question are as follows, and are presented to show first which courses participants wanted in the future, and second the history of courses and education levels of the sample:

Participant Interest in Types of Courses

When participants were asked the types of courses they wanted to take at the downtown campus, the results spread across a wide spectrum so are grouped into subject areas, as shown in figure 6 below. Exact responses are in Appendix G. The area with the highest response was business courses with twenty-nine responses. These included marketing, strategy, economic development, how to run or start a business, project management and proposal writing. The largest area of interest was management with thirteen responses. Here general management and change management had the highest responses.

Next were accounting and personal development courses, each with ten responses; accounting included introductory and advanced courses along with personal and business finance. For personal development, responses indicated motivation and general personal development courses. Computer courses received eight responses with Microsoft office programs mentioned including Excel, Word and Outlook.

The final areas with five responses each were Human Resources, communications and credit courses. In Human Resources the highest responses were conflict resolution,
employment related courses and health & safety. For communications, respondents asked for general communication courses and in credit courses, it was toward any degree or business program.

Areas in Which Participants Would Take Courses at the Downtown Campus

Figure 6 Interest in Types of Courses

Highest Priority of Course Interests

Courses of most interest to participants were spread across a wide area, so responses were summarized by subject area and are graphed below with the summary of responses in Appendix H. The area with most responses was business related with fifteen which breaks down to four main areas, the first being leadership including societal leadership, general leadership, and people relationships. The second was business, relating to how to run a business for profit and non-profit organizations. These included how to market, provide better service and write proposals. Management had eleven responses, with the highest response in project management, and general skills each having three responses. Other courses in management were team building and supervisory courses. Personal development, human resources and accounting each had
five responses. Personal development included general courses, courses that affect my job, how to administer medications and community information sessions. Human resources included general courses, conflict resolution and dealing with employees. Accounting included general and Certified General Accounting (CGA) courses, dissecting financials and getting a company on the stock market. Next were computer courses, which had three responses including Microsoft Office programs and e-commerce.

![Highest Priority for Courses](image)

**Figure 7 Highest Priority for Courses**

The research also addressed participant education levels and courses previously completed. The results are as follows:

**Education Levels**

All participants have completed either post secondary education or professional development classes, with the average estimate of 4.5 years of post secondary.

**Highest Level of Education**

The highest level of education ranged from completing high school to completing a master’s degree as indicated in figure 8 below. Six-responded high school as the highest level of education, two indicated completion of college level certificates in business related fields, seven indicated college level diplomas completed, of which five
were business related diplomas, and one each was in social work and medical laboratory technology. Two indicated they were currently completing a business related diploma. Four indicated completion of university degrees, two in Commerce and one each in Arts and Biology. One indicated they were working toward completion of an arts degree. Five responded completion of a master’s degree; two in Business Administration, one each in International Business, Education and Social Services. The final three are working toward a Master of Business Administration.

![Figure 8 Highest Level of Education Completed](image)

**Professional Designations**

Ten participants indicated they held designations with one recently giving up their designation, as their role in the organization no longer required it. Four are working toward designations and fifteen have no professional designation. Details of designations are listed in Appendix I. Nine of the participants require continuous courses to maintain their designation.

**Types of Courses Taken**

Courses taken were divided into groupings based on the area of business that the course related to. Nineteen gave a partial listing as they were unable to remember all
courses taken. Continuing education courses were largely in the business area. Specialty
courses, defined as branded courses such as Myers Briggs, or Steven Covey courses, or
in-house courses designed specifically for an organization, had the highest response rate
at twenty-seven. Business related courses were next with twenty-one responses.
Business related courses included running a business, marketing, strategy, negotiation,
leadership, and communications, running a non-profit organization, managing risk,
budgeting and proposal writing. Human Resources had fourteen responses, including
health and safety, conflict resolution, labour relations and employment standards.
Accounting and Finance had twelve responses, including advanced accounting courses,
investing, payroll, and financial planning. Management had six responses, which
included management of employees and managing a business. Figure 9 below shows the
full results. A complete listing of responses is in Appendix J.

![Area Courses Taken In](image)

**Figure 9 Areas Previously Taken Courses in**

These results for research question 2 indicate that the types of courses people in
the downtown core are interested in taking are continuing education courses relating to
business or work. Previous education of participants and courses they have completed
also supports this. The next research question relates to how others would like to use the
downtown campus.
Research Question 3:

What other types of events, or programs would individuals in the downtown core like to have themselves at the downtown campus?

Results indicated that people working in organizations in the downtown core were interested in using the downtown campus for meetings, events, and their own courses. Results pertaining to this research question are as follows:

Uses of Downtown Campus

There was considerable interest in using the downtown location for courses or special events, with 77% answering yes to this question. Several participants commented at this point that they were unaware the downtown campus was available. Special events grouped into three areas with 11 responding meetings, 12 responding events and 15 responding courses. Meetings included community organizations’ annual general meetings, off-site manager meetings, regional meetings, and business or strategy meetings. Events were company sponsored, conferences, open houses for businesses, and community, Chamber of Commerce, and client events for 35 to 40 people. Courses included staff training, specialty staff training, manager training, business development, bringing in outside trainers, “how-to courses” and computer training. Figure 10 shows areas participants would consider holding events at the downtown campus. For specific responses refer to Appendix K.
Priority of External Uses

The priority of special courses and events fell into the same three groups of meetings, events, and courses, with actual responses in Appendix L. Fourteen responded that the highest priority would be courses, which included staff training, business, business development, manager training, and video-conferencing. Meetings were second with eight responses that included team building, community meetings with food, wine and cheese, business meetings and regional meetings. Finally, five responded that an event would be their highest priority, which included conferences, business open houses and celebrations.
Participants were asked how they thought the downtown campus should be used. At this point they were also encouraged to think of courses or programming which would help others in their organization. As the answers were varied, they were again categorized into five areas: courses, meetings, university exposure, local knowledge and special events.

**Courses**

Courses had 22 responses and included management, computer upgrading, courses for seniors, helping people get off the streets, professional designation courses, exporting, social development and becoming a training center of the north.

**Meetings**

Meetings had 21 responses, and included annual general meetings, community meetings, business meetings, video conferencing, regional meetings and meetings for 20 to 40 people, which several participants said was difficult to find in Prince George. They commented that it was easy to find space for larger groups than this or smaller groups, but space for groups of 20 to 40 was not easy to find.
University Exposure

University exposure had 12 responses, with participants suggesting the campus be used for promotion, marketing, selling books for courses or souvenirs. So those who might be intimidated by the main campus and normally would not go to the main campus could have an initial introduction to the university downtown.

Local Knowledge and Special Events

Local knowledge had 10 responses, which include open houses, sessions about community, and industrial overviews. The final group was special events, which had nine responses that included community group events, First Nations events, film nights, private engagements, and career and social events. Figure 12 shows number of responses in each area, and Appendix M lists actual responses.

Facilities and Equipment

Participants were asked what type of facilities or equipment they needed to hold events at the downtown campus. For company meetings, participants said a lunchroom or kitchen would be helpful but catering would not be important. The advantage of having catering would be that everyone returns to the meeting or event on time after breaks. A complete list can be found in Appendix N.
These results for research question 3 indicate that people working in the downtown core would use the downtown campus for their own courses, as well as for their organization’s meetings and events.

As the results relating to the above three research questions have been reviewed, the hypotheses relating to these results will now be summarized.
SUMMARY OF HYPOTHESES

**Hypothesis 1** stated the best use the downtown campus in Prince George would be similar to other downtown campuses in Canada. This was supported by the results which showed people in the downtown core are interested in business courses and using the location for their own events or programming.

**Hypothesis 2** stated people working in the downtown core would find it more convenient to take courses at the downtown campus. This was partially supported by the results. If the course is during the day or in early evening, they did find it more convenient but after a start time of 6:30pm it was more convenient for 50% to take courses at the main campus. A similar result was found for the weekend where it is more convenient to take courses at the main campus.

**Hypothesis 3** stated individuals working in the downtown core will have characteristics similar to non-traditional students and will be interested in taking courses related to their work or career. The results supported this hypothesis as all participants were in the age bracket of non-traditional students and were working full-time so would be considered non-traditional students. The results of the study for interest in courses were directly related to career or work which supports hypothesis 3.

**Hypothesis 4** stated individuals working in the downtown core would be more interested in taking continuing education courses rather than academic or credit courses. This was supported by the results with only 5 of the 30 participants requesting credit courses and all participants expressing interest in continuing education courses.

**Hypothesis 5** stated individuals working in the downtown core have scheduling preferences for courses and this was supported by the result of the interviews.
DISCUSSION

Sample Characteristics and Specific Needs

The sample consisted of people working full-time and all were over 28 years old so they would all be considered non-traditional students or adult learners. Flexibility in scheduling is a characteristic shared among most of the participants and as a group there are optimal times to schedule classes as discussed above. Many of the government and non-profits have the ability to take time off during the day but this time usually had to be made up if it was not related to work, so courses that were held downtown were more convenient as they saved approximately an hour’s round trip to the university main campus. Smaller businesses, and banks said that courses during the day were not possible, and only under special circumstances would they take a course during the day.

Continuing Education is a defining characteristic of this sample. Remarkably, all of the participants have taken either professional development or continuing education courses in the past. All participants talked about taking courses related to their career. Everyone interviewed referred to courses they had either taken or wanted to take that were directly related to their work or career, although a few were interested in non-career courses.

Courses and Programming for UNBC Downtown Campus

The following discussion relates to the three research questions.

Research Question 1: Does the location of the downtown campus have an impact on whether someone working in Prince George’s downtown core will take a course?
Day of Week

Participants showed a preference for the day of the week when taking courses. Tuesday through Thursday were the most preferred days of the week, with Friday being the least preferred day. For courses on Saturday and Sunday, the participants said they would take course but the course would have to be of high importance to them. Fifty-five percent of participants did not set the condition that the course had to be of high importance and would attend a course on the weekend at the downtown campus. For workshops related to work, the preferred time was during regular work hours.

Optimal Times for Programming

The results show strong support for programming to begin at the downtown campus. People prefer specific times of day and week and once a participant has arrived at home on a weekday, 50% of the sample said it was more convenient for them to take a course at the main campus. Several commented that after they get home at night they do not want to go back downtown, although before they leave the downtown it is still convenient for them to take courses. This indicates there is an optimal time for courses at the downtown campus.

During the day 50% are available for courses for the individual, which are not company sponsored trainings, but the number goes up to over 83% at the end of the work day. The optimal start time for a course seems to be between 4:30 pm and 6:30 pm. After a 6:30 pm start time there is too much time between end of the day at work and the start of classes and 50% of the people working downtown would rather take a course at the main campus.
Safety Concerns and Optimal Program Timing

After a 6:30 pm start several of the participants stated concerns about safety in the area after dark. The perception of safety had been a challenge to the revitalization efforts in Prince George (City of Prince George 2006). An interesting result of the study was the closer the participant worked to the downtown campus the less concerned they seemed to be about safety. This could be a perception problem with the downtown rather than a reality.

Length of Class

Length of class will impact success at the downtown campus. In a study of marketing students and optimal length of classes, research indicated that a 1.5-hour class two times per week was the most preferred length of class (Reardon et al. 2008). Older students tend to prefer intense courses that are 3 hours in length (Daniel 2000). This would suggest that with Wednesday as the preferred day for courses, a 3-hour class would still attract students. The alternative is to have Monday - Wednesday classes with the class being 1.5 hours, two days per week. The Monday-Wednesday split would incorporate the most popular day and the second least popular day. This could allow four courses to be taught each week in the optimal time slots and most preferred days of the week.

Importance of Right Programming

Literature and participant comments agreed that the most important factor for choosing a course was its relevance and quality (Simerly 1989). The participants commented they travel great distances to take courses relevant to their work and they assumed that living in Prince George made it necessary to travel in order to get the best
courses. Dispelling this perception will be important, before people downtown will look to the university as their first choice for training. It is unlikely that all the needs for courses and training will be resolved by the downtown campus but there are courses and programs that people in the downtown core travel great distances to take which could be held at the downtown campus.

**Research Question 2:** What types of programs would individuals working in the downtown core be likely to take?

**Credit Courses**

With only five of the respondents interested in credit courses and the others interested in continuing education or specialty courses, the results indicate that those working downtown are most interested in continuing education style courses. The sample is, however, more highly educated than the norm for Prince George as compared to the Statistics Canada (2006) Community Profile.

**Programming**

The fact that courses could not be narrowed to specific courses is not surprising for two reasons. First, the research was meant to be exploratory in nature and to determine where the downtown core workers’ interests lay. Second, the researcher specifically attempted to get a cross-section of the downtown core, which meant talking to people with varied educational backgrounds and therefore varied educational needs.

**Programming Areas of Most Interest to Downtown Community**

When combining the courses taken in the past by participants, courses they would like to take in the future and those that came up when asked how they thought the downtown campus could be used; there are specific areas that are frequently mentioned.
These areas were grouped to recommend programming for the downtown campus.

Business courses came up with almost all participants.

The areas of clear interest were management and supervisory training, human resources, accounting (introductory and advanced) communications, computer software training, leadership, how to run a business (profit and non-profit) and social service issues related to downtown. All of the results relate to business or commerce except for the last one so the new name of the downtown campus as a business excellence centre is in line with the best uses of the campus.

**Management/Supervisory Training**

Management/supervisory training came up in both courses previously taken and courses which participants wanted to take. During the interview participants said they were interested in this from the perspective of becoming a better manager by being more efficient or by dealing with people more effectively. They were also interested in this area for future opportunities for promotion.

**Human Resources Training**

Human resources was an area several of the participants worked in and they were interested in upgrading or learning new skills to benefit their organization.

**Accounting Training**

Accounting was an area that several of the participants were interested in from many perspectives, and one of the government agencies has college level classes in their building to help their employees who do not have these skills. The downtown also has several financial institutions and workers who are employed in a related field. Statistics Canada in 2006 reported that over 7000 people in Prince George have occupations in
Business, finance and administration. This is likely an indicator that accounting courses would do well in the downtown core.

**Communications**

Communications was also an area participants were interested in and this included writing skills and giving presentations.

**Computer Training**

Computer training was not beginning level training but advanced training or upgrading to the newest version of Microsoft Office products.

**Leadership**

Leadership was an area that the participants were not very specific about, but indicated interest in a general leadership course or seminar. How to run both a non-profit and profit business, as the researcher did not clarify this area with participants, may need further research.

**Social Service**

Social service type courses and workshops were mentioned; for example how to deal with social problems in the downtown core. Developing courses and workshops in this area would also lead to co-operation with many of the social service agencies in the downtown core.

**Research Question 3:** What other types of events, or programs would individuals in the downtown core like to have themselves at the downtown campus?
Events the Community Would Like To Have

Benefit to the Community

The results show that the downtown community is interested in the possibility of using the downtown campus for their own meetings, events and courses. From the comments, they expressed that the location provides a place which is neutral for them to hold meetings or events (neutral meaning that the university does not have a stake in some of the projects they are working on with other agencies). If meetings were held at one of the agencies’ locations, the dynamics would change and some may not want to participate. Other participants who were involved in training said the location is better than their offices because it gets managers and employees away from their phone and the office. This would ensure that when training is held off site there is greater focus on the task. The location was also only a few minutes walk from the office.

Meetings

Size of the meeting room was also important; the optimal size would fit between 20 and 40 people for a meeting. The participants commented that if they had a meeting of this size they could either have a room that was too big, or their group had a room that was far too small.

Events

The events that participants thought they could use the location for were larger social and business seminars or mini conferences. These mini conferences could be job fairs or open houses for local businesses. The one concern some had for larger meetings was the ability to provide catering.
Courses

They were also interested in having their own courses at the location. As for meetings and events, it allows staff to get way from the distractions of the office. Video conferencing was thought to be very important because either outside training agencies could have training this way or they could involve other communities in their training with this technology. One participant would like to access telecast experts in the financial field by video conference and have his clients or others in the community come to the courses. Courses like the leadership Simulcast that brings in speakers to present information to businesses could be held at the location.

Benefit to UNBC

Allowing the community to use the downtown campus for meetings, events and courses has several benefits for the university. These types of events could be scheduled when the campus is not being used by the university thus increasing the overall use of the building. Having others book events at the downtown campus will also increase the exposure of the university to the Prince George community and others in the region.

The presence of the university will make it easier for people working in downtown businesses to meet with university representatives. During the interviews several of the participants mentioned it would be more convenient for them to meet at the downtown campus. This would foster the relationship between the university and the downtown community, one of the goals of the university and the School of Business.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the exceptionally strong interview results the university has a great opportunity to bring business programming to the downtown campus. It is recommended they implement this programming in the following manner:

1. Conduct the Master of Business Administration program at the downtown campus. The program runs from Friday to Sunday two weekends a month, which is a perfect match to when the downtown community is least likely to use the campus. Many of the students travel to the program from outside of Prince George and stay in hotels within walking distance of the building. The downtown is also closer to the airport than the main campus cutting travel time for those who fly in for the program. The Director of the program is also interested in using the building so it would be easy to gain support for this recommendation. During the interviews, two of the participants taking the MBA program stated they would support this initiative. The MBA program fits the concept of a business excellence centre and adds credibility to other programs held at the location. An additional benefit is the exposure of the building to business people from Prince George and throughout the region.

2. Schedule an evening for-credit business class, running from 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm Tuesday and Thursday at the downtown campus for the fall of 2008. The participants indicated this was the most convenient time for courses. The literature indicates a one and a half-hour class length is optimal for both instructor evaluations and student performance (Reardon et al. 17). An alternative would be
to run a three-hour class on Wednesday evenings, which many of the older students prefer (Reardon et al. 17). This would allow the university to test the response of the downtown community without exposing itself to undue risk. After the fall semester, the university could make a decision as to how to expand the academic schedule. By choosing these time slots, the concerns with regard to safety and parking would not be a factor. In the future scheduling could expand to four classes, two on Tuesday and Thursday and two on Monday and Wednesday. Scheduling at this time would also allow for other programming during the day for longer workshops, meetings or events in the classroom without overlap with the early evening courses.

3. Schedule continuing studies workshops and seminars in the downtown campus in the following areas:

   • management/supervisory training
   • human resources
   • accounting (introductory and advanced)
   • communications
   • computer software training
   • leadership
   • how to run a business (profit and non-profit)
   • social service issues related to downtown

The participants were very interested in continuing education courses in the downtown core. The one hour travel time to and from the main campus is eliminated by having courses offered at the downtown campus. If half-day
workshops are offered, the participants are able to return to their offices before the end of the day. By having sessions away from the office setting, it prevents interruptions for many of the managers and allows them to focus on the training.

4. Invite the downtown community to rent the facility for events. The classroom is well set up for the majority of the events, meetings or courses that people in the downtown are looking for. Participants are also interested in using the large open atrium for small conventions and larger meetings.

5. Hold information sessions in the downtown. The participants are interested in what is happening at the university but the added travel time from the downtown to the university often makes attending these sessions inconvenient so they do not attend. If held downtown it is within walking distance and they would attend. The information sessions would be held on Monday to Thursday either at lunch time and a start time no later than 6:30.

6. Open access to the downtown campus to anyone walking by. The paper on the front doors of the downtown campus should be removed and the building doors unlocked at the front of the building.

7. Promote the university at the downtown location. An information booth at the site will serve two purposes, to promote all university programs and additionally, to create exposure for the downtown campus. The information booth could double as a place for students to order textbooks or buy souvenirs. Participants felt having an information booth would build a bridge between the university and the downtown area and allow easy access to the universities programs. The
information booth would be open during regular business hours Monday to Friday.

By following these recommendation the university can further its mandate to be a University in the North for the North as well as taking full advantage of the downtown campus location. Use of the downtown campus will bring the university opportunities to forge partnerships with the community.

The School of Business states that one of its goals is “to strive toward building our society by fostering dialogue and cooperation with the leaders of its organizations and communities” This can best be accomplished through establishing programming in a location close to community and organizational leaders. Many who took part in this project look forward to future partnerships with the university.
CONCLUSION:

The participants expressed excitement about the opportunity for a downtown campus. Research results clearly show that people working in the downtown core of Prince George are interested in taking courses at the downtown campus. The course style they are looking for most fits the continuing education format but there is interest in taking academic courses. The interest in academic courses was lower than that expressed in continuing education but this may have been a result of the age and education level of the sample.

The greatest interest is in continuing education courses related to business or careers during the daytime. Credit courses in the early evening would be of interest to people in the downtown core. The weekends are of less interest to the downtown core; however, the Master of Business Administration program would fit this time slot and this fits with the theme of the building a business excellence centre.

Location was an important factor in the decision to take courses but the relevance of the course was of more importance to participants. The comment, which stands out in the researcher’s mind, is “the location is important but the course is the most important factor; quality and relevance are always the most important factors when choosing a course.”

The downtown core would also welcome the opportunity to use the location for their own events, meetings and courses, which would work well with the set up of the building. The added exposure to the university would also help further the university’s mandate of:

“A University in the North for the North.”
This would strengthen the relationship between the university and the downtown core.

Currently many of the participants surveyed are interested in taking courses either through Continuing Studies or the academic programs at UNBC. Bringing programming downtown will open new opportunities for prospective students who are working.

The results of this study, although focused on the downtown core, could be extrapolated to all non-traditional students, adult learners and people who are working full-time throughout Prince George, many of whom are working toward completion of a degree or diploma. This opens a new segment of the population to the university which is currently being under-served. By utilizing, the building there would be:

“A University Downtown for those in the North.”
AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The results have been grouped into areas of interest and not the specific courses individuals are interested in. Further clarification of these courses would need to be investigated. The sample consisted of individuals 28 years of age and older, so further study in this area may be required to identify the types of programs specific to this group. Many participants stated that they were not aware of programs held by the university’s Continuing Studies department indicating the need for further study in communicating or marketing to this group.

The final area of further research is how to develop an accredited program for those working at the City or for a large employer. This type of program would take courses that the employer provides for employees and combine them with accredited courses, resulting in an academic credential. These employers would be able to use this certification for both training employees and as a job requirement for employee promotions. An alternative could be, as one participant suggested, a set of non-concurrent courses which allow students to begin taking courses directly in areas of interest. If the student finished all the courses, they would receive a certification. These types of programs would allow an individual to gain further education while working. This would likely be accomplished through a partnership between the University, Continuing Studies, or the College of New Caledonia. One participant explained, for example, how the college is bringing work-specific courses to their organization to address employee needs for accounting training. The university could further examine organizational needs in the downtown core and consider a partnership with the college to
meet both lower and higher level course requirements, leading to either professional designations, employee promotion criteria, or degrees.
LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

The sample represents those working full-time in the downtown core over 28 years of age. This group may have differing needs than those working less than full-time or a group less than 28 years of age. The results represent the interests of the people working in the downtown core; and these interests may be different from those working in other areas of Prince George. The educational backgrounds of the sample are higher than the average in Prince George and educational needs across Prince George may differ from this study.
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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Definitions

Demographics: describing the population according to selected characteristics, such as age, gender, ethnicity, income and occupation (Berkowitz et al. 2003).

Downtown Core of Prince George — for purposes of this study runs from 1st Avenue in the North direction, south to 15th Avenue and Patricia Boulevard, and from Victoria Street in the west direction to Queensway Street in the east direction.

Knowledge Workers for the purposes of this paper were defined as anyone who develops knowledge from data given.

Programs for the purpose of this paper will be Continuing Studies courses, credit courses toward any degree, events, or meetings which people in the downtown core may be interested in.

Managers for the purposes of this paper were defined as owners, executive directors, or presidents.

Market is defined as “people with the desire and with the ability to buy a specific product” (Berkowitz et al. 2003).

Market Research is defined as “the process of defining a marketing problem and opportunity, systematically collecting and analyzing information, and recommending actions to improve an organization’s marketing activity” (Berkowitz et al. 2003).

Marketing is defined as “the process of planning, executing the conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives” (Berkowitz et al. 2003).
Marketing Mix: The marketing manager’s controllable factors: the marketing actions of product (service in this case), price, promotion, and place that he or she can take to solve a marketing problem (Berkowitz et al. 2003).

Non-Traditional Student

A North American view:

Every school has its own definition of what a ‘non-traditional’ student is, but generally a non-traditional student is:
- An older student, usually over the age of 24
- A student who has previously attended college or is returning to college after a few years break
- A student who graduated from high school and went directly into the workforce and is now attending college for the first time (Harvey 2004).

Traditional Student is defined as a student who goes directly from high school to higher education without a break (Phillips 2003).
### Appendix B: Occupations and Industries in Prince George

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sales and service occupations</td>
<td>10240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations</td>
<td>7540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business, finance and administration occupations</td>
<td>7010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupations in social science, education, government service and religion</td>
<td>3485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management occupations</td>
<td>3395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health occupations</td>
<td>2240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities</td>
<td>2120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural and applied sciences and related occupations</td>
<td>2110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupations unique to primary industry</td>
<td>1475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other services</td>
<td>8440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business services</td>
<td>6960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail trade</td>
<td>4700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care and social services</td>
<td>4475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing industries</td>
<td>4345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational services</td>
<td>2975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and other resource-based industries</td>
<td>2445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction industries</td>
<td>2365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale trade</td>
<td>1850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and real estate</td>
<td>1710</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C: Interview Consent Form

I understand that the purpose of this interview is to gather information for a University of Northern British Columbia Master of Business Administration (MBA) project requirement. The topic is Education Programs for the BMO UNBC Downtown Business Centre of Excellence. The intent is to learn the types of programs or courses that could be held at the site which would benefit the community, especially those who live and work downtown. The researcher, Robert Quibell, is a graduate student in the School of Business at the University of Northern BC.

I have been selected as a person working in the downtown community of Prince George, to provide insight into which courses or programs held at the BMO UNBC Downtown Business Centre of Excellence would be most beneficial to this community.

1. This consent is given on the understanding that the researcher, Robert Quibell, will ensure that my identity is protected and my confidentiality is maintained by the following methods:
   - The interview notes will not show participant names.
   - Audio recordings will be kept in password protected files and notes and files will be locked in a filing cabinet at the home of the researcher, Robert Quibell.
   - Once the MBA project is completed all notes and files will be destroyed.

   Selected comments may be quoted in the MBA report, but will not be linked with identifying data. I give my consent freely and I understand I can withdraw from the research interview at any time.

2. I agree and understand that the information I will give to Robert Quibell in the research interview from February 18th to March 31st 2008 will be treated as follows:
   a. The interview will be tape recorded and hand written notes will also be taken
   b. The written notes and all audio recordings will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in a password protected laptop at the home of Robert Quibell
   c. The information will only be used for the MBA Project
   d. The research notes will be shredded at the end of the project
   e. The audio files will be destroyed upon completion of project in May 2008

3. I can contact Robert Quibell at 250-962-1785, Robert Ellis, Professor and Project Supervisor at 250-960-6491 or the UNBC Vice President of Research at 250-960-5820, if I have any questions or concerns.

NAME: ___________________________  SIGNED: ___________________________

Researcher: Robert Quibell  SIGNED: ___________________________

DATE: ___________________________
Appendix D: Interview Questions

Experience with Downtown Area
The first set of questions is designed to determine your level of familiarity with the downtown area.

How long have you worked in the downtown area?
____________________________________________________________________________

What type of industry or organization do you work in?
____________________________________________________________________________

What is your role in your organization?
____________________________________________________________________________

Educational Background
The second set of questions is designed to understand your level of education to determine the level of courses to be provided.

Highest level of educational achievement:

Primary: ___ Secondary: ___ Post Secondary: ___ College: ___ University: ___
Technical Training: ___

Have you completed any post secondary education classes?
Yes ________ No _________

Number of years completed in post secondary? ___

Have you completed continuing education or professional development courses?
Yes ________ No _________

Which courses have you taken?
____________________________________________________________________________

Do you have a professional designation?
Yes ________ No _________

If so which designation do you have, and which organizations are you a member of?
____________________________________________________________________________

Do you require continual professional development courses to maintain an active status for your designation?
Yes ________ No _________
BMO Business Excellence Centre
The Third set of questions is designed to determine your knowledge of the BMO UNBC Downtown Business Centre of Excellence and if you would consider taking courses there.

Are you aware of the location of the BMO UNBC Downtown Business Centre of Excellence?
Yes __________ No __________

If courses, workshops, or presentations were offered at the BMO UNBC Downtown Business Centre of Excellence would you attend?
Yes __________ No __________

Which types of courses?
________________________________________
  University credit courses
  Continuing education courses
  General topics

What subject or topic areas would be of most interest to you?
________________________________________

What time of day would you consider taking courses or workshops?
________________________________________

Which days of the week would you be most likely to take courses or workshops?
________________________________________

Would you consider taking courses on the weekend?
Yes __________ No __________

Is it more convenient for you to attend courses at the downtown campus or the main campus?
________________________________________

Does time of day or day of week change your decision?
Yes __________ No __________

Do you have any concerns about taking courses at the BMO UNBC Downtown Business Centre of Excellence?
________________________________________
Would information sessions or other community events be more convenient for you to attend at the main campus of UNBC, or at the BMO building downtown?

Why?

If there was a course you wanted to take, would the location of this course at the downtown BMO building influence your decision?

If you were planning a special event or course would you consider using the BMO building?
Yes ______ No _______

If yes, What types of events or courses?

If there were multiple courses or events, how would you prioritize them?

What facilities and equipment would you need to schedule events or courses at the BMO Building?

We have considered several uses for the BMO building are there any other uses that come to mind for you?

Age
27 years and younger _______
28 years to 44 years _______
45 and up _______

Gender
Male _______ Female _______

Thank you for participating in this study.
### Appendix E: Industry Worked In

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Area Given by Participant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Banking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Employment Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Financing/Investing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Grocery Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Residential Appraisal (non government)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Retail Clothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Social Services (Pre-employment Program)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Software Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Federal</td>
<td>Government Federal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Federal</td>
<td>Government Federal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Federal</td>
<td>Government Federal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Federal</td>
<td>Government Federal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Federal</td>
<td>Government Federal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Municipal</td>
<td>Government Municipal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Municipal</td>
<td>Government Municipal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Provincial</td>
<td>Government Provincial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Provincial</td>
<td>Government Provincial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Provincial</td>
<td>Government Provincial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Provincial</td>
<td>Government Provincial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Provincial</td>
<td>Government Provincial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Provincial</td>
<td>Government Provincial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Provincial</td>
<td>Government Provincial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>Hospital Healthcare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonprofit</td>
<td>Nonprofit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonprofit</td>
<td>Employment and Training (Nonprofit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonprofit</td>
<td>Non Profit Business Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonprofit</td>
<td>Service Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonprofit</td>
<td>Tribal Council Non-Profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services to Businesses</td>
<td>Community/Economic Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services to Businesses</td>
<td>Services to Business</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix F: Occupations of Participants

- Administration
- Appraiser
- Appraiser
- Appraiser
- Corporate Learning and Training Coordinator
- Corporate Recruiter
- Court Clerk Reporter
- HR Advisor (Training and Staff Development)
- Learning and Corporate Development Advisor
- Recruitment
- Researcher
- Work force Promoter
- Learning and Corporate Development Advisor/Team leader/Manager
- Branch Manager
- Chief Executive Officer
- Chief Executive Officer
- District Manager Northern BC
- Executive Director
- Executive Director
- Executive Director
- Manager/Owner
- Manger/Owner
- Office Manager
- Oversees Education Department for member Communities
- Owner
- President
- Self employment Benefits
- Supervisor
- Supervisor
- Supervisor Admin

Note k for knowledge worker, m for manager, s for supervisor
## Appendix G: Courses Participants Would Like to Take

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Computer</th>
<th>Business Related</th>
<th>Personal Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher level MS Office</td>
<td>Operations</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Updates on MS Office</td>
<td>Business Development</td>
<td>Job seeking courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecommerce</td>
<td>Law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excel</td>
<td>Setting up a business</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word</td>
<td>Growing a business</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outlook</td>
<td>General courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Customer service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Economic Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proposal Writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Building relationships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict resolution</td>
<td>Change management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment related</td>
<td>General management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and safety</td>
<td>Upper level management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increasing productivity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Managing strengths and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>weaknesses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Team Building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supervisor courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>Credit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>Any degree (Business)</td>
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<tr>
<td>communication courses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upper level accounting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Accounting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Simply Accounting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Payroll</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(personal and business)</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
### Appendix H: Highest Priority for Courses Would Like to Take

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Business Related</strong></th>
<th><strong>Management</strong></th>
<th><strong>Personal Development</strong></th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>General skills</td>
<td>General courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General courses</td>
<td>Certificate program</td>
<td>Courses that affect job future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational</td>
<td>Project Management</td>
<td>Information on community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>Practical Management Skills</td>
<td>How to administer medication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership and People relationships</td>
<td>(saves time or money)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to provide clients better service</td>
<td>Team building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing your business</td>
<td>Supervisory courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Societal Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Funding sources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Human Resources</strong></td>
<td><strong>Accounting</strong></td>
<td><strong>Computer</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General courses</td>
<td>Dissecting financials for investing</td>
<td>Excel (advanced)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conflict resolution</td>
<td>How to get a company on stock market</td>
<td>e-Commerce</td>
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<td>Dealing with employees</td>
<td>Financial topics (Business and personal)</td>
<td>Current software</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CGA courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General accounting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix I: Professional Designations

Registered Rehabilitation Professional
Certified Human Resources Professional
Certified Executive Coach
Accredited Appraiser Canadian Institute
RI (Real Estate Institute of British Columbia)
Accredited Appraiser Canadian Institute
Accredited Appraiser Canadian Institute
Accredited Appraiser Canadian Institute
RI (Real Estate Institute of British Columbia)
Member
Member
Professional Artist
Certified Human Resources Professional
Laboratory technologist
Certified Human Resources Professional
Personal Financial Planner
Certified Financial Planner
Appendix J: Courses Taken by Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialty Courses</th>
<th>Business Related</th>
<th>Personal Development</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Myers Briggs training</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appraisal courses</td>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>Facilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branch manager training</td>
<td>Negotiation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certified Executive Coach</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOWS Testing Training</td>
<td>Communications</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APEC International Business (Business Counseling)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Technology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justice of Peace</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BDC Angel Investment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Analysis</td>
<td>Running non profit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bio Energy</td>
<td>Running a business</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittsburgh Conference</td>
<td>Risk management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myers Briggs Type Indicator</td>
<td>Budgeting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Counseling</td>
<td>Fund Raising</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proposal writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and safety</td>
<td>Advanced classes</td>
<td>Managing problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Investment Finance</td>
<td>time management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Resolution</td>
<td>Payroll</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour relations</td>
<td>Financial Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment standards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

70
**Appendix K: Meetings, Events, and Courses Participants Would Hold**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Meeting</strong></th>
<th><strong>Events</strong></th>
<th><strong>Courses</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meetings with food</td>
<td>Festive Gatherings</td>
<td>Staff training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning sessions</td>
<td>Client events with 35 to 40</td>
<td>Business courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luncheons if seating up</td>
<td>people</td>
<td>Management Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to 100</td>
<td>Add on to events at civic</td>
<td>Team building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business meetings</td>
<td>centre</td>
<td>Workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff forums</td>
<td>Public Speakers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company planning events</td>
<td>Organizing events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Conferencing</td>
<td>Conferences</td>
<td>Dakelh Language training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGM's for sports</td>
<td></td>
<td>Private training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use conference room</td>
<td></td>
<td>Microsoft office staff training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team building</td>
<td></td>
<td>Managers onsite courses/workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bringing in trainers for courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Management Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing sessions on employing people with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>disabilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Meeting**
  - Meetings with food
  - Planning sessions
  - Luncheons if seating up to 100
  - Business meetings
  - Staff forums
  - Company planning events
  - Video Conferencing
  - AGM's for sports
  - Use conference room
  - Team building

- **Events**
  - Festive Gatherings
  - Client events with 35 to 40 people
  - Add on to events at civic centre
  - Public Speakers
  - Organizing events
  - Conferences

- **Courses**
  - Staff training
  - Business courses
  - Management Courses
  - Team building
  - Workshops
  - Dakelh Language training
  - Private training
  - Microsoft office staff training
  - Managers onsite courses/workshops
  - Bringing in trainers for courses
  - Management Courses
  - Ongoing sessions on employing people with disabilities
### Appendix L: Highest Priority for Meetings, Events, or Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Events</th>
<th>Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Annual General Meetings</td>
<td>Conferences</td>
<td>Staff Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings</td>
<td>Client events</td>
<td>Manager training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings with food</td>
<td>Wine and Cheese</td>
<td>Company related courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Building</td>
<td>Company open houses</td>
<td>Business development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td></td>
<td>Train the trainer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Conferencing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing sessions on employing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>people with disabilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix M: Other Suggested Uses

Local Knowledge
- Downtown initiatives or events
- Mingle place to meet others in community
- Regular information sessions downtown
- Business around town meetings
- Lunch and learns (30 to 45 minute learning sessions at lunchtime)
- Helping people to understand the people who live in area

University Exposure
- Introduce people in downtown area to university
- University or businesses information Kiosks
- Collaborations between downtown and University
- Information Booth on what is happening downtown (monthly)
- Business start ups
- Incubator for technology
- Introductory courses to university topic so people can learn which ones they want to study without
- UNBC Practicum students
- Small retail component (Selling UNBC souvenirs)

Special Events
- Film night
- Social Events
- Career fairs
- Private engagements
- Drama and performing arts
- Aboriginal first nations studies
- Events over 30 people
- Larger Community events
- Open up to community for events

Courses
- Canadian Securities Institute testing 2x per month
- Out of town speakers
- Business planning
- Leadership simal cast
- Social development training
- Training center of the north having to take full course. (could be a 2 to 3 hour course after work)
- Central training place
- Export sessions
- Courses to help people get off the streets
- Computer courses for seniors
- Seminars related to seniors
- Classes that cater to downtown
- Continuing Studies
- First Nation Awareness programs
- First Aid upgrades
- Computer upgrades
- Management workshops that saves time
- Email workshops how to be efficient with
Meetings
Open houses to promote the area or local businesses
Town hall meetings
Coffee and Tea Meetings before and after work
Meeting to advertise
Municipal meetings
Bring regional meetings for Northern BC companies
Association Meetings
Meeting place for people with professional designations
Meetings where catering is important
CGA and CMA events
Chamber of Commerce meetings
Meetings for 25 to 40 is difficult to find meeting space
Video conferencing
Regional meeting rooms for groups larger than 20
Meeting rooms for Community
Appendix N: Facilities and Equipment

Classrooms
Meeting rooms
Computer hook ups
Computer (with latest software)
Internet
Speaker systems
Mini Kitchen (lunchroom)
Food Service (Catering)
DVD Player
TV
Event planner
Flip Charts
Video Conferencing
Whiteboards
Projector
Overhead projector
Ability to serve liquor
Book store
Satellite facilities