

# UVic Indigenous International WIL Exchange

*Presented at:*

***Thompson Rivers University  
Learning at Intercultural Intersections:  
Toward Equity, Inclusion and Reconciliation***

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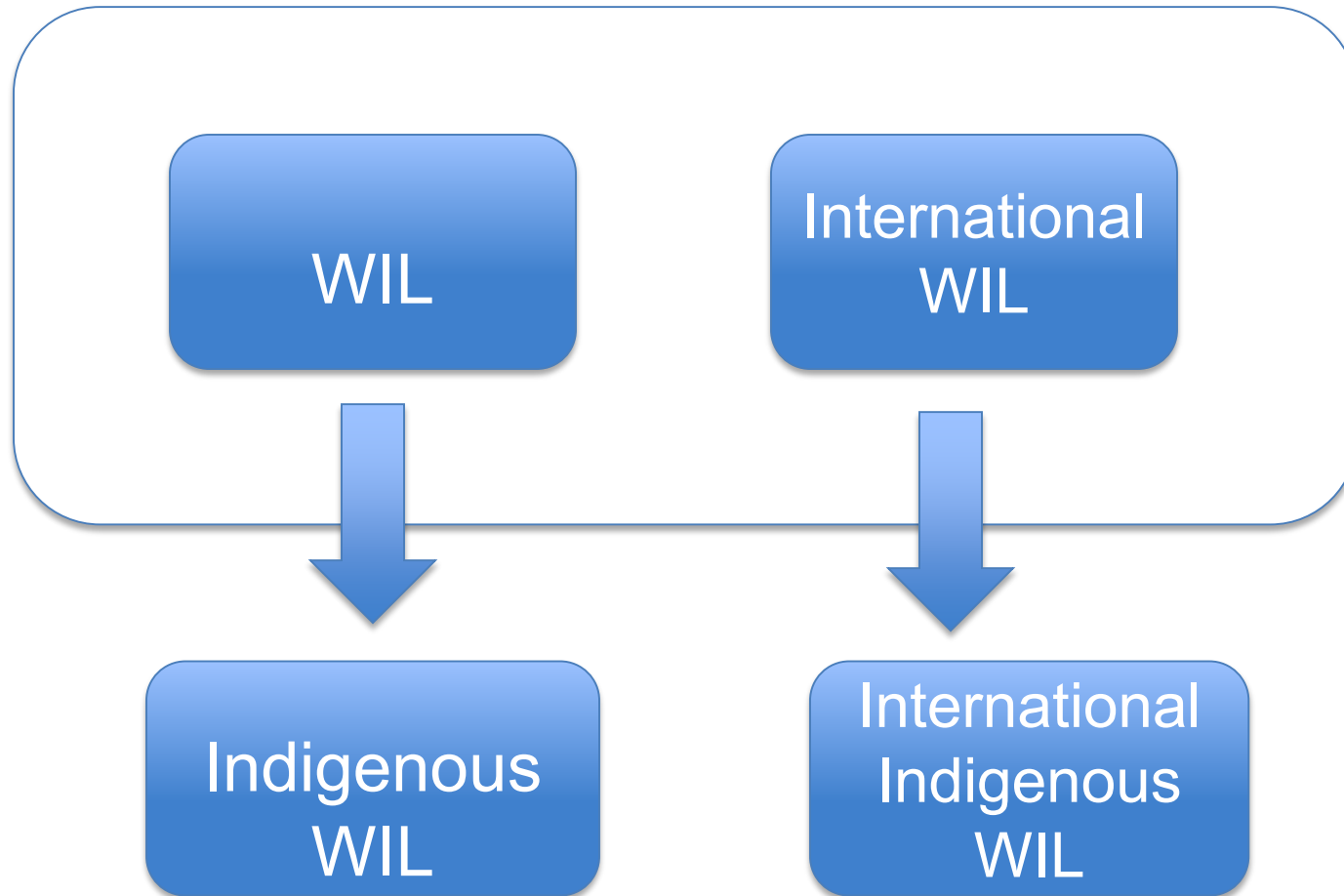
# Session outline

- The UVic context
- Indigenous International WIL Exchange
- Assessing the Learning
- Success factors and lessons learned
- Future directions

# The UVic context

- UVic's Co-op program has extensive experience in international WIL and international exchanges
- We exchange students with countries in Asia, Oceania, Europe, South and North America
- We prepare students for international experiences using curriculum designed to prepare students for living and working abroad, developing and assessing intercultural competencies and linking to global readiness for career

# Evolution of WIL programs at UVic



# Indigenous International WIL Exchange:

A partnership between University of Victoria (Co-op program and the LE, NONET program) and 3 Australian universities

- Indigenous students from UVic have an international WIL (co-op) term in Australia
- Indigenous students from Australia have an academic term with a WIL experience in Canada (community internship)

# LE, NONET

- An integrated suite of holistic supports for Indigenous students (academic, cultural, social, financial)
- The academic component includes a Preparation Seminar (Indigenous research and community engagement methods) and experiential learning opportunities (research apprenticeship, community internships)

# Principles for supporting Indigenous student success

- Reciprocal learning
- Supporting Indigenous identity development
- Culturally relevant programming
- Community building
- Relationship building
- Individualized programming

*Hunt, S., Lalonde, C., Rondeau, Y., Phillips, A., DeKorne, H., & Po, I. (2010). Supporting aboriginal student success: Report on the LE,NONET research project. Victoria, BC:*

*University of Victoria.*

# Indigenous International WIL Exchange:

- Outgoing UVic students
  - 2 students to University of Newcastle
  - 2 students to Macquarie University
  - 1 student to RMIT Australia
- Incoming Australian students
  - 1 student from University of Newcastle
  - 1 student from Macquarie University



## Reciprocal Learning

- Shared Indigenous traditions, culture, history
- Community Internship at WSÁNEĆ School Board
- Enhanced intercultural competencies.

## Supporting Indigenous Identity Development

- Welcome to the Territory/blanketing ceremony by Elders
- Community internship at WSÁNEĆ School Board
- LE,NONET Preparation Seminar
- Intercultural Competencies

## Culturally Relevant Programming

- Welcome/blanketing ceremony
- LE,NONET Preparation Seminar
- Link to Elders in Residence and in community
- Campus Cousins Program
- Farewell / presentation

## Community and relationship building

- Campus tours/orientation
- Campus Cousins
- Elders in Residence and Community
- Community internship at WSÁNEĆ School Board
- Student check-ins

## Individualized Programming

- LE,NONET and other courses were pre-approved by partner institution
- Research paper topic freedom in LE,NONET Prep Seminar
- Community internship at WSÁNEĆ School Board









Lisa's Blog: Work So Far

The UVic Indigenous International WIL Exchange  
program

# Success Factors

- The LE,NONET program provided the socio-cultural context critical for their successful understanding and integration
- Prior co-op experience helped adapt to an international workplace
- Campus cousins provided a supportive student network
- The involvement of the Elders
- Supportive Homestay family
- Experience with international exchange and navigating this complex program



# Lessons Learned

- Indigenous students benefit from Indigenous cultural preparation in addition to the cultural preparation of the country to which they are exchanging
- Additional supports that involve Elders, the student community, homestay family
- Regular and extensive communication above the normal amount for a typical international exchange
- Consideration of the dimensions of intercultural training and assessment from an indigenous perspective

# Commitment to Decolonizing WIL

- Ensure assessment is culturally safe
- Include elders in all aspects of the program
- Training staff, faculty and employers
- Ensure workplaces are supportive
- Programs need to be designed to meet the needs of Indigenous students, not visa versa

Thank you and stay in touch!

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