

Meeting:	Board of Governors		
Meeting Date:	March 6, 2026		
Agenda Item (as on the agenda):	B7.1 – Provost & VP Academic Report		
Purpose (1 of):	Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation (motion) <input type="checkbox"/> Decision (motion) <input type="checkbox"/>		
Prepared by:	Bronwyn Hancock	Approved by:	Shelagh Rowles

### **New program development and program review**

Elders Circles were held to seek guidance on two of YukonU’s new degrees. The Elders Circles focused on guiding the Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies and Bachelor of Social Work degrees and included Elders with lived experience in areas related to these degrees. Elder guidance was rich and impactful. The university will continue to hold dialogue with Elders through Elders Circles as it progresses in degree development and welcomes the guidance the Elders are providing to the degrees and in relation to continued involvement in education at YukonU going forward.

A program review is being initiated for the foundation year program in the School of Visual Arts. A program review was also launched for the Bachelor of Business Administration. To support this program review, an engagement plan is currently in development.

A program review is also underway for the Bachelor of Indigenous Governance and First Nations Governance and Public Administration program. The self-study document completed in 2023 has been updated to reflect current student enrollment and retention data, as well as input from current faculty, and preparation for the external review are on-going.

### **Knowledge sharing events**

The second annual YukonU Research Celebration was held in February and featured three days of research talks, workshops and conversation featuring YukonU students, faculty and staff. Engagement in the event was high, and feedback to the event was very positive.

YukonU participated in Conference Øne, the Arctic Summit held in Whitehorse in February. This included hosting a panel featuring YukonU faculty and graduates focusing on the expertise and lived experience of YukonU panelists in areas associated with security, sovereignty and resilience.

### **Community program highlights**

The Mayo – Trades Sampler (CROW Project) concluded, running from September 29, 2025 to January 30, 2026. Of the nine students registered, six successfully completed the program. Over the past several months, participants engaged in a wide range of modules—including Life Skills, Home Smart, Math for Trades, Welding, Carpentry, Electrical, and Environmental Mentoring—and earned certifications in Fall Protection, Confined Space, WHMIS, and First Aid.

The Teslin – Office Skills (CROW Project) began on January 12, 2026 and will run until April 24, 2026, with four students registered. Over the past month, students have completed their Life Skills module and have been

working with Yukon Learn to strengthen their digital literacy. In addition to developing essential office skills with Gord Curran.

The Watson Lake – Yukon First Nation Arts program (Empowering Traditions funded) runs from October 14, 2025 to March 6, 2026, with eight students registered. Under the instruction of local artist Charlene Stewart, and with support from student assistants Valarie Shepherd and Colleen Dennis, students have been actively engaged in their beading, sewing, and footwear studio courses. They are currently completing a series of small craftworks before progressing to the final two studio courses: Drawing and Carving, and Small Crafts and Product Development.

The Haines Junction Empowering Traditions program has begun, delivered as Haines Junction – Make It Real from January 19 to April 22, 2026, with four students registered. Instructor/Coordinator Angie Charlebois is guiding students through weekly workshops designed to help them develop their ideas into sustainable businesses. Students have expressed interest in learning more about structured bookkeeping, funding opportunities, networking, and conducting market research, and the workshop content is being shaped to reflect these interests.

The Burwash Landing K'ààd?dluh – She-He Is Sewing program—another Empowering Traditions initiative—has recently begun, with a target start date of February 6, 2026 and a target end date of March 31, 2026. This program is designed to support learners who want to develop their beading and regalia-making skills, as well as those who have already begun projects and are seeking additional guidance. Throughout February and March, Alyce Johnson and Janice Dickson will work closely with participants to build their skills and confidence. The program will culminate in a dinner, fashion show, and performance scheduled for March 28, 2026, providing students with an opportunity to celebrate their work and share it with the community.

The Dawson Bridging Program began at the end of January and represents a new 12-month, land- and community-based educational pathway developed in partnership between Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation (THFN) and Yukon University. Designed to support adults in pursuing personal, educational, cultural, and employment goals, the program offers a flexible, culturally grounded, and student-directed learning environment. Rooted in Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in values, the program is guided by Elders, mentors, and knowledge keepers, and blends on-the-land learning with community activities, classroom sessions, and one-on-one mentorship. Participants are encouraged to shape their own learning pathways by defining their goals, schedules, curriculum directions, and assessment methods.

The Old Crow – Yukon First Nations Garment Making Program runs from January 26, 2025 to April 7, 2026, with six students registered. Under the leadership of Bree Josie, the program launched successfully and has created a strong foundation for learners. Students began their studies with John McDonald, focusing on life skills, goal setting, sewing with intention, and building a supportive, safe learning environment—starting each morning with a healing circle. They have now progressed to sewing fundamentals and the foundations of pattern making.

### **Other program highlights**

The Education Assistant Micro-Credential hosted 47 education assistants from Whitehorse schools for a full day of programming on January 16. This inaugural cohort will complete reflective work and additional learning activities through YukonU's Moodle platform in advance of the next professional development day in May. In parallel, the J program is developing delivery models to better support education assistants working in schools outside of Whitehorse, as well as those under the auspices of the First Nation School Board.

Enrolment across trades programming remains strong, with 95 students currently registered in various apprenticeship levels and pre-apprenticeship programs—approaching an all-time high for this time of year. This winter, the first plumbing level since Covid-19 was launched, and plans are being developed to offer plumbing levels and pre-apprenticeship pipe trades courses on a regular, annual basis. Two carpentry levels and a Heavy Equipment Technician (HET) Level 4 were also initiated. Several HET students have completed all

of their technical training through YukonU, and the program looks forward to graduating a new cohort of Red Seal journeypersons this spring.

### **Winter orientation and student activities**

Winter Orientation Week offered a variety of events to welcome students, build community and introduce available supports. This included events to showcase services to students available on campus, as well as an Elders Meet and Greet in the Samay Thia Lounge.

Working in collaboration with the Elders-on-Campus program, Tutors continued to host the weekly Tuesday tutoring drop-in in the Elders' Lounge, and a pop-up Library has also been regularly hosted in the Lounge.

The Campus Resources Fair connected 80 students with essential campus services in an informal, welcoming environment, supported by a complimentary pizza lunch to encourage engagement. YukonU's Student Support team also attended an open house in Haines Junction, strengthening community outreach and student engagement efforts.

The Indigenous Student Dinner brought Indigenous students and their families together for a shared meal and bingo with prizes for all ages, creating a meaningful opportunity to strengthen community.

Bell Let's Talk activities included 60 and was co-hosted by the Office of the Registrar and Human Resources to promote mental health awareness through activities and supportive connections.

### **Faculty Workshops, Research Grants, Publications and Presentations**

YSPOR was awarded a CIHR Indigenous Gender and Wellness – Knowledge Sharing Operating Grant as a co-applicant for the project *Sharing Indigenous Knowledge through Intergenerational Mentorship: Strengthening Cultural Identity and Community Wellness among Indigenous Boys and Young Men through Relationships with Elders*.

In January 2026, YSPOR also finalized a research agreement with the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun First Nation to support YSPOR Junior Researcher Nicole Anderson in leading youth interviews in Mayo as part of the *Building the Future* project.

YukonU student Taylor Jobin (YSPOR Junior Researcher) presented as part of a panel at the Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN) Health Summit, delivering a talk entitled *Youth Leadership in Food Security and Sovereignty: From Values to Implementation*. In addition, Taylor Jobin and Piper Fordham (YSPOR Research Assistant) are participating in the Arctic Frontiers 2026 conference and the North-to-North program in Norway.

Northern Energy Innovation (NEI) recently signed a one-year agreement valued at \$540,000 with Natural Resources Canada to support the Clean Energy Research Team's Northern Grid Impact Studies.

Dr. Tara Howatt, from the School of Science, delivered a public lecture titled *Impacts of Ship Noise on Arctic Marine Mammals* at the Beringia Centre as part of the January Research in Progress Talk, co-hosted by Yukon University and the Yukon Science Institute, alongside her research partner from Wildlife Conservation Society Canada. Dr. Howatt was also featured in a CBC Radio interview discussing the research project and presentation.

Senior Research Professional Dr. Ashley Dubnick delivered an invited presentation at a Taku River Tlingit First Nation workshop in December, providing an update on the Yukon River Headwaters research project.

The Research Services Office (RSO), in partnership with the Library team, hosted a student research skills workshop in January with 25 students in attendance. The RSO also hired a recent YukonU graduate to support the Research Celebration and related initiatives. YukonU students are being engaged to provide IT support for the event, and student researchers will be featured in several presentations.

Tara Stehelin presented to the Whitehorse Men's Breakfast Club on January 6, sharing insights from her work on microplastics in the environment.

David Silas attended the annual AME Roundup mining conference in Vancouver. Norma Kassi participated in a Land Guardians gathering in Fairbanks, Alaska, and also attended a workshop on Chronic Wasting Disease in Saskatoon; knowledge gained from both events will support the development of a Land Guardians program at YukonU.