Yukon University

Briefing Note

Meeting:	Board of Governors		
Meeting Date:	June 1, 2026		
Agenda Item (as on the agenda):	Provost & VP Academic Report		
Purpose (1 of):	Information ☒ Discussion ☐ Recommendation (motion) ☐ Decision ☐		
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Ayamdigut and community campus program offerings

In early April, the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun hosted a Community Safety Guardian Celebration Dinner recognizing the 10 Micro-credential graduates. Yukon University's President, Provost, and the Department Head of Continuing Education attended the event.

In Teslin, three students completed the Clerical Skills CROW program, instructed by Gord Curran, which ran from January to April. At the end of April, Gord Curran also concluded instruction of the Community and Economic Development course (FNGA 304 / ECDV 301 / AREC 365), which enrolled 17 students from four programs: FNGPA, Indigenous Governance, Business Administration, and Northern Environmental and Conservation Sciences.

In Haines Junction, four students completed the Make It Real: Arts Business Support program, funded by CanNor, in April.

In Old Crow, five students completed the First Nation Garment Making program, funded by CanNor, on April 9.

Kimberly Joe of Pelly Crossing has begun her role as Campus Coordinator at the Hetsa Edan Ku Pelly Crossing Campus.

In April, Dawson City hosted a four-week Intro to Carpentry program delivered by the School of Trades, Technology and Mining in partnership with Wildstone, the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government, and Robert Service School, with all nine students offered employment upon completion. Also in Dawson City, the EleV-funded, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in–Yukon University co-managed Bridging Program completed the first of its three phases, and five students are now preparing for summer mentorship placements. The Dawson City EleV campus art project was completed with the arrival of commemorative pins featuring Hän language elements and participant artwork, now exhibited at both the campus and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Heritage Department. In addition, the YU–TH 17.7 Agreement for the co-management of the Tr'odëk Hätr'unohtän Zho campus in Dawson City has been formally approved, with a signing ceremony scheduled for June 1.

The School of Trades launched the Kickstart Carpentry program in partnership with Yukon Women in Trades and Technology (YWITT), supporting women and gender-diverse learners entering the skilled trades. The School of Trades continues to deliver core programs, including Electrical Level 1, Electrical Level 4, and the Welding Pre-Apprenticeship program. In addition, a shed-building program was recently completed in Dawson City through a partnership with Wildstone Construction, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, and the Chief Isaac Corporation. The School also hosted the National Council of Deans of Apprenticeship, Trades and Technology (NCDATT) in Dawson City at the end of May, bringing together national leaders to strengthen collaboration in anticipation of increased federal investment in trades training.

In April, as the winter term ended, the Ayamdigut Campus Library supported strong student use during exams and final projects, with 312 items borrowed or renewed, 368 study room bookings, and 912 views of online study guides. The library also partnered with Teaching and Learning to host a staff and faculty book club on Katherine Denial's A Pedagogy of Kindness, and continued updating physical collections by reviewing storage and reference materials and removing outdated or damaged items to keep the collection current.

Student Achievements

Yukon SOVA student Olive Siemens received the Made in the Yukon (MITY) Emerging Artist Award at the Dawson City International Short Film Festival for an experimental video created in YSOVA's 4D Studio course. The award includes $1,000 in cash, $500 in film support services from either the Yukon Film Society or KIAC, and a handmade sculpture by local artist Anna Edell.

Yukon SOVA student Amelia Sieben won the Yukon round of the Wonderbrands Design Competition, which covered her full tuition for the past academic year. Her winning artwork will appear on Country Harvest Bread packaging in 2026.

Office of the Registrar & Student Success

Student engagement remained strong throughout April, with several well-attended events supporting connection and community. On April 2, seventy-five students participated in a Student Easter Event that included an egg hunt, free lunch, and painting activities. This was followed by a Coffee & Study Break on April 7, which was attended by sixty students. On April 15, twenty-five Indigenous students gathered for the Indigenous Student Dinner, hosted by Jamie Joe Hudson, First Nations Student Engagement Coordinator. To conclude the term, eighty students took part in the Last Day of Class Bash on April 16, featuring music, free lunch, trivia, and a pop-up vintage store.

In addition, Ryan Alric, First Nations Student Navigator, participated in a two-day Health Fair in Watson Lake, delivered a YukonU presentation to Grade 10 students, and facilitated a campus tour in collaboration with Erin Kenny, University Navigator.

Faculty Workshops, Research Grants, Publications and Presentations

The Old Crow Research Round-Up was attended by Piper Fordham (YSPOR), Benoit Turcotte (CCR), Allison Perrin (SSH), and Davon Callander, Director of Research and Innovation.

The School of Social Sciences and Humanities is hosting two British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) articulation committee meetings in May for English and Sociology. These committees support seamless academic credit transfer between postsecondary institutions in British Columbia and Yukon.

Dr. Drew Lyness's April 14 lecture on the Phantasmagoric Yukon attracted a capacity audience in the Lecture Theatre, with strong interest from members of the wider public.

The inaugural *In the Pit with Peter Johnston* event was held on April 15 and featured interviews with Dave Joe, Judy Gingell, and Piers McDonald. Designed as a pilot, the event established a forum for future conversations that will bring together students, staff, faculty, and community members to explore Yukon land claims, self-government, and broader issues shaping the North. In the Pit will resume in the fall and is planned to run on a monthly basis.

IGD faculty also attended the CAFN Career Expo in Haines Junction on May 1 to showcase the Indigenous Governance and Development (IGD) program and the First Nations Governance and Public Administration (FNGPA) program to students and community members.

YSPOR conducted outreach through booths at the CAFN Career Fair in Haines Junction and the Watson Lake Health Fair, with Junior Researcher and YukonU student Sean Barnaby representing YSPOR at the CAFN Youth Gathering. Michelle Leach also participated in the Integrated Youth Services Summit (May 5–7, Ottawa), contributing to the program and presenting nationally on Indigenous youth health, mental health research, and the impacts of IYS in Yukon.

In April, the RSO launched its fifth round of OCAP discussion groups, with 17 participants enrolled across two six-week sessions running alongside the online OCAP course. Two Research in Progress talks were also held: on April 12, leading seabird biologists presented on Cape Parry Thick-billed Murres at the Beringia Centre to an audience of 45, and on April 14, Dr. Drew Lyness presented "Popular Culture, Claims and Confusion in 'America's Yukon'" in the Lecture Hall, attracting 73 attendees from YukonU, YSI, and the public.

Northern Energy Innovation updates included continued partnership with UVic PRIMED through the ACET program to develop energy system modelling in support of the Haida Gwaii Diesel Reduction Strategy, and ongoing collaboration with the community of Sambaa K'e on a community-scale solar project. Work also included delivery of a fourth Community Energy Systems Course in Old Crow, with advanced planning underway for a co-developed course in Gjoa Haven and early planning for a course in Paulatuk. In addition, a proposal is being developed in response to a collaborative tender on northern and remote renewable energy systems, alongside a review of renewable energy communities in northern Canada and the Nordic countries. Policy work is also underway, including development of NEI's organizational structure following the sunset of NSERC funding.

This period included participation in major energy and research initiatives and conferences, including the NSERC Alliance PATH-STORE project with McGill University, the Arctic Security Conference, and the organization of the UVic PRIMED/NEI modelling workshop. Engagement at the S-Access conference identified mid-term collaboration opportunities in Africa, the Pacific, and South America and resulted in invitations to present at two European conferences. Additional participation included the Prime Power Diesel Inter-Utility Conference, the Wind Energy Institute of Canada Annual Wind Conference, and the Nordic Hydrogen Valley Conference in Trondheim. Key reports completed and submitted included the final NRCan CERRC report, the Government of Nunavut Net Zero Strategy report, and the State of Renewable Power in Canadian Microgrids report to BC Hydro.

In April, Dr. Tara Howatt received an NSERC ARD grant to support the hiring of a student and summer fieldwork. Dr. Katie Aitken and her graduate student, Shyloh van Delft, were awarded $15,000 from the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Trust to hire a summer student for fieldwork.

Dr. Aubyn O'Grady is a co-applicant on a successful SSHRC Insight Grant awarded to a research-creation project led by Principal Investigator Dr. Stephanie Springgay (McMaster University). The four-year project, Weathering Research-Creation: Interventions into Extractive Infrastructures, Media Systems, and Weather Knowledge, has received $415,268 in funding and also includes Alana Bartol, Assistant Professor at the Alberta University of the Arts, as a co-applicant.

The Scholarly Activity and Research Community Awards (formerly SAG) are underway, with the inaugural March 2026 intake supporting knowledge mobilization, new and ongoing research, and conference participation and organization that centre northern perspectives. Successful applicants to date include:

- Victoria Castillo — Travel Stream: "An Interdisciplinary Approach to Food Security Research in the Yukon: Ensuring Community Representation is Always at the Table" (UArctic Congress)
- Dana Jennejohn — Travel Stream: "Working in a Good Way; Social Work Practice in the Yukon" (Canadian Association of Social Work Education Conference)
- Sara McPhee-Knowles — Travel Stream: Governor General's Canadian Leadership Conference (workshop participation and study tour)
- Chad Morgan — Travel Stream: GAC-MAC 2026 Conference (two presentations and organizational roles)
- Shawkat Shareef — Travel Stream: "Single Fathers in Yukon and their Social, Legal, and Economic Experiences" (Canadian Sociological Association Conference)
- Reed H. Reed — Stepping Stone Stream: "Use it or Lose it: Creative Reuse Materials Research"
- Katie Aitken — Stepping Stone Stream: "Year-round Ecology of Cavity-using Wildlife in a Firesmart Northern Boreal Forest"
- Jeff Wolosewich — Gather North Stream: NCDATT Spring Meeting/Conference (conference organization)
- Jon Gelinas — Travel Stream: Shifting Ground Graduate Conference (University of Calgary)

Jamella Hagen's new poetry collection, Perfect Weather, has been published by Gaspereau Press. The collection explores themes including climate change, life in the Yukon, parenthood, and the complex, sustaining work of building and maintaining human connections. (Perfect Weather – Gaspereau Press).