



Information Regarding COVID-19

Academic Update: June 12, 2020

Dear Students and NVIT community partners,

NVIT is busy preparing for the 2020-2021 academic year and looks forward to a gradual and safe return to our campuses in Merritt, Burnaby and in First Nation communities throughout the province. NVIT's plan to achieve this is based upon the recommendations of BC's Public Health Officer. NVIT's focus is on a quality learning experience for our learners and the safety and well-being of the learners, employees and communities we serve. The COVID19 pandemic has impacted us in many ways causing anxiety and stress. We acknowledge the pressures of trying to lead a normal life, returning to school and work in an unprecedented time.

Faculty are exploring alternative learning platforms while learning new technologies to enhance the skills necessary to offer students an adaptable and enriched learning experience. Intensive efforts are underway to bring students back to our beautiful physical campuses while also developing and building the NVIT virtual learning community and supports. In understanding that our NVIT Community includes those who will teach and learn through alternative methods, faculty are engaging in preparatory activities to ensure that the content of the courses, regardless of delivery mode, continue to have the rich Indigenous content for which NVIT is known.

NVIT acknowledges some students and employees may not return to campus for a variety of reasons. NVIT's commitment to offer synchronous hybrid/remote video teaching and learning environment is intended to support continuous learning and teaching opportunities for those individuals. To support this virtual environment, Faculty and Student Services are preparing to do both in-person and hybrid/remote teaching and support. In preparation, NVIT is working closely with faculty and support services and our colleagues in IT to enhance our remote teaching platforms and capabilities. Ideally, regardless of where students choose to learn, they have access to classes and learner supports that encourage a rich, relevant and quality virtual academic experience.

NVIT will begin to offer in-person instruction in trade shops and practicum placements this spring and summer, both on-and-off campuses. More specific program plans will be provided

through the summer. Some terminology students can expect to hear about delivery modes include:

- Hybrid/Remote Video – With a schedule (synchronous) students will be expected to attend classes aided by remote technology such as MS Teams, Bluejeans or Zoom. Instructors will provide lectures and other learning activities in real time.
 - If a student has concerns about attending face to face classes, they can join the class remotely.
- In-person – Where students will attend scheduled on-campus and off-campus learning activities related to their program.
 - These activities include live lectures, studios, labs, field work, practicum and others where students are physically in the classroom.
- Hybrid/Blended – Where students will learn with a range of scheduled remote learning, online asynchronously and in-person instruction.
 - If classes are large, students will be offered either in-class or remote delivery.

As part of this new approach to teaching and learning, students require a laptop or computer, an opportunity for private study and sufficient online connectivity capacity. Learners who do not have these requirements are encouraged to advise Enrolment Services to receive priority access to on-campus learning and supports.

NVIT continues its commitment toward an exemplary learning and teaching community. Our NVIT Community has faced many challenges over the past year and NVIT is confident we are prepared to work together through the challenges of the COVID 19 environment. These challenges highlight the many opportunities to enhance online and virtual classrooms and better connect with all members of the NVIT community. NVIT's duty has always been to improve the quality of life of Indigenous people, and our extension of virtual and alternative access to post-secondary education further advances this concept.

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