



Work-Integrated Learning Guide

FOR INDIGENOUS STUDENTS



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



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Adding Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) experiences to your degree is a valuable way to explore career opportunities, develop professional skills, and apply your learning in professional settings. Students who graduate with WIL experiences also tend to have higher starting salaries than their peers without, and are more likely to find jobs in their chosen industries.

WIL encompasses a variety of opportunities from formal programs like Work Learn, co-operative education, and Go Global, to volunteer experiences, research, and more. If you look at your academic studies as the basis of your future career, WIL opportunities complement those studies through hands-on experiences that add to your resume and grow your professional network before you graduate.

This guide will walk you through some of the WIL opportunities available to you at UBC Vancouver, how to get started, and personal wellbeing considerations to make in relation to your career planning.



WIL OPPORTUNITIES AT UBC Vancouver

ARTS AMPLIFIER / arts.amplifier@ubc.ca | Graduate Students

Design your own community-based project, your own internship, or your own freelance or consulting company, and get one-on-one support from experts in public scholarship, business planning, and non-academic grant applications.

CAPSTONE PROJECTS | Undergraduate Students

Solve challenging real-world problems that demonstrate what you've learned in a specific degree program. Two undergraduate examples at UBCV include the [Engineering Capstone Projects](#) and [School of Community and Regional Planning Capstone Projects](#).

CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMMING | Graduate & Undergraduate Students

Get paid, full-time work experience with businesses, organizations, non-profits, and more as part of your degree. Many faculties at UBC offer co-op programs, for example:

- [Arts Co-op](#)
- [Engineering Co-op](#)
- [Forestry Co-op](#)
- [Land and Food Systems Co-op](#)
- [Science Co-op](#)
- [Sauder Co-op](#)

"My experience with the Co-op program allowed me to enter the workforce soon after graduation... [This work-integrated learning] experience taught me what it takes to succeed after securing my Bachelor of Arts degree. I strongly recommend the Co-op program as it provides you with a diverse skill set that translates well for finding and securing employment in your post-university life."

- Indigenous Studies Undergraduate Alumnus

COMMUNITY ENGAGED LEARNING | Undergraduate Students

Give back to the community in a meaningful way through academic courses and co-curricular programs that help to create social change. Two programs at UBCV that offer opportunities like this:

[Centre for Community Engaged Learning \(CCEL\) / *community.learning@ubc.ca*](#)

Community-based opportunities to learn, participate, and collaborate on projects in the community. You can learn from amazing community partners at an event, participate in an immersive community experience like Reading Week, lead a project by writing a grant, or by joining a Collaboratory project.

[Office of Regional and International Community Engagement \(ORICE\) / *ubc.orice@ubc.ca*](#)

Through its interdisciplinary, community-based and experiential approach, ORICE offers a wide range of programs and courses that focus on what it truly means to build collaborative, trust-based relationships and to address complex community challenges.

"All these experiences have afforded me the opportunity to build connections with amazing Indigenous youth and Elders. This has contributed to the strength and empowerment I feel as I move forward in my career as a nurse and as a strong Indigenous woman."

- School of Nursing Undergraduate Alumnus

ENTREPRENEURSHIP | Undergraduate & Graduate Students

Explore your entrepreneurial ideas with mentorship support and training. Two programs that offer opportunities like this include:

[entrepreneurship@UBC](#)

Available to UBC-related startups. At least one of the founders of the must be a UBC student, faculty, staff, or recent alumna/alumnus (up to 5 years from graduation).

[Ch'nook Indigenous Business Education](#)

Part of Sauder School of Business, Ch'nook works with community, business, and academic partners to promote business as a viable career choice for Indigenous students and provides support to develop crucial business skills and capabilities.





INTERNSHIPS | Graduate Students

Gain professional workplace experience and meet industry contracts. One example at UBCV is the [Sustainability Scholars Program](#), a paid internship program where UBC graduate students in any discipline are matched with on- and off-campus sustainability partners to work on applied research projects that advance sustainability across the region.

“The role as an Indigenous Mentor has allowed me to connect with a diverse group of individuals which has led to lasting friendships. It provided me with the opportunity to support students, opened me up to new perspectives and taught me about different cultural backgrounds. It also encouraged me to reconnect with my Métis identity.”

- Indigenous Studies Undergraduate Alumnus

PRACTICUM OR FIELD EDUCATION | Undergraduate Students

Develop skills for professional and ethical practice in your field of study. Certain programs at UBCV offer practicum opportunities, for example the [School of Social Work](#) and [Faculty of Education](#).

“The hands-on learning that I participated in at UBC took my undergraduate experience to a whole new level. Through my work as a Co-op student, I was able to make super strong connections to people across the province. Each one of my [work-integrated learning] experiences really accelerated my professional development.”

- Indigenous Studies Undergraduate Alumnus



RESEARCH | Undergraduate & Graduate Students

Build your CV for grad school or explore a topic of interest in depth. There are various formal programs at UBCV that offer research opportunities:

[Indigenous Research Support Initiative \(IRSI\) / irsi.info@ubc.ca](#)

IRSI facilitates research developed and conducted in collaboration with Indigenous communities and led by Indigenous perspectives. They support undergraduate and graduate students engaging in (or looking to engage with) research with Indigenous communities.

[Go Global / go.global@ubc.ca](#)

Travel abroad to study, conduct research, or take a course overseas with UBC students and professors. Opportunities include exchange, Global Seminars, Research Abroad, Summer Abroad, International Conference or an International Education practicum.

[Indigenous Undergrad Research Mentorship Program \(IURMP\) / indigenous.mentorship@ubc.ca](#)

Gain a glimpse into the world of research. Undergraduate students are paired with a faculty member at UBC Vancouver for a four-month mentorship program (January – April).

[Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council Undergraduate Student Research Award \(NSERC USRA\) / nserc.usra@ubc.ca](#)

Gain valuable research experience as you work closely with a faculty member on a research project while developing skills in communication, problem-solving, and project management.

Tip: Is there a specific topic you want to research or a professor you'd like to work with on a research project? Many professors actively engaged in research associated with their field. Consider approaching your professor with your research idea or research inquiry directly.

VOLUNTEER | Undergraduate & Graduate Students

Give back to your community with flexible, hands-on experiences. While many volunteer opportunities offer valuable and rewarding experiences, the [Alma Mater Society \(AMS\)](#) (Food Bank, Peer Support, etc.), [UBC Peer programs](#), [Student Leadership Conference](#), and [UBC Sustainability](#) are three programs with opportunities at UBCV, and you can also browse community postings on [CareersOnline](#).

WORK EXPERIENCE | Undergraduate & Graduate Students

All work experience is valuable, even if it is not in the industry you intend to work in after graduation! Whether you're honing your customer service skills in a restaurant or retail environment, learning the ropes of administration in a UBC department, or managing your time in a physical labour job, general work experience offers an opportunity to both develop transferrable skills and earn money. To find jobs on campus at UBCV, search [CareersOnline](#), follow departments' social media accounts, sign up for their newsletters, and talk to staff from these departments to find out about work opportunities.

"WIL has entirely contributed to the ongoing job opportunities I received. I have stood out in job interviews because I can speak to my work experience in university. I have applied for scholarships that have contributed immensely to my success and taken away extra financial burden stress."

- School of Nursing Undergraduate Alumnus

WORK LEARN / work.learn@ubc.ca | Undergraduate & Graduate Students

Develop professional skills, apply your disciplinary knowledge, and expand your professional and peer networks with paid part-time positions (10-20 hours/week) that work with your class schedule. Enhance your career learning and gain mentorship from UBC faculty, staff, and/or community partners. Opportunities are posted on [CareersOnline](#) in March and August.

Note: There continues to be new and changing WIL opportunities for students at UBC. Direct and indirect costs may be required to participate in some WIL experiences, however, there is funding available for Indigenous students that can offset these costs. Talk to your Indigenous Student Advisors to explore ways in which you can cover such costs.





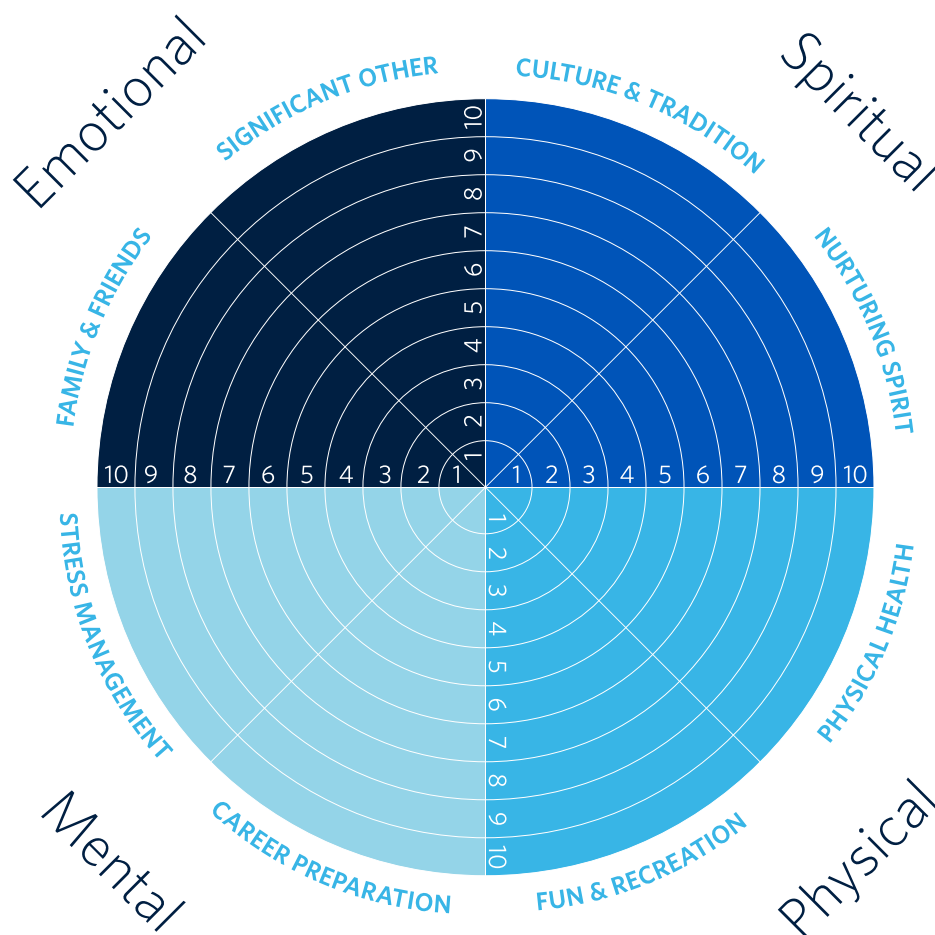
HOW TO Get Started

- **Explore this guide.** Check out the links associated with the WIL opportunities throughout the guide. Email the contacts to explore these opportunities in greater detail.
- **Check out the Centre for Student Involvement & Careers (CSI&C).** Access CareersOnline for on-/off-campus opportunities, check out the What Can I Do With My Degree pages (Arts, LFS, Engineering, Science), attend [workshops and events](#), watch the [Career Activation video series](#), or meet with a [Career Advisor](#) who can help with job search strategies, career exploration, resume reviews, mock interviews, grad school exploration and general career-related questions.
- **Talk to your professors.** Is there a specific topic you want to research or a professor you'd like to work with on a research project? Consider approaching your professor with your research idea or research inquiry directly. If you don't feel comfortable talking to your professor directly, your Career Advisor or Indigenous Student Advisor can assist you.
- **Talk to your Indigenous Student Advisor.** If you're unsure which opportunities are the best fit for you, start by reaching out to your Indigenous Student Advisors. Your advisors can connect you to the various WIL opportunities outlined in this guide.

What does wellbeing have to do with career success?

Career success rarely happens in isolation. Your professional development is a part of a larger equation that includes your education and experiences in addition to your emotional, spiritual, physical, and mental wellbeing.

Take time to reflect on how you might fill in the wheel below to determine your personal wellbeing balance. For example, if you are moderately satisfied with your physical health, shade in the first five levels of that section. Do the same for each section, beginning from the center and moving outward. Use the table below to help guide this exercise.



How balanced is your wellbeing wheel, and what does it say about you? What factors do you feel you need to work on to achieve better balance? If your "Career Preparation" section appears out of balance, then WIL opportunities might help to change that!

Your university experience is uniquely your own. While you may or may not choose to take part in WIL opportunities at UBC, please keep us informed about your experience. Let us know how we can help improve the ways you learn.

Contact Centre for Student Involvement and Careers: csic.support@ubc.ca