

## **Regionalism, Regionalisation and Regional Development in a University Context: The Case of the University of Northern British Columbia**

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In June 1990 legislation was passed in the Province of British Columbia creating the first university to be established in northern British Columbia and the fourth publicly financed university to be created in the province (British Columbia 1990). This followed a lengthy campaign by citizens of the region for a university intended to not only reduce the costs of access to university education for northern residents but a university that would help in the economic development and diversification of the region both directly and indirectly. This effort on the part of the northern citizens was itself an indication of a growing sense of regional identification in a province where the concept of there being a distinct northern region was weaker than in most of the other Canadian provinces with extensive northern territories. This paper discusses the process of defining and the regional role of the university and the difficulties that were encountered and are still being encountered.

The paper begins by pointing out the major characteristics of northern British Columbia and how they compare with the characteristics of other northern regions in which universities have been established in recent decades. This is followed by a discussion of the imperatives these characteristics place upon northern regional universities if they are to be successful and the drawing of a number of conclusions based upon the experience of the older circumpolar

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universities. The paper then analyses the nature of regionalism in northern British Columbia and the particular difficulties that this gives UNBC in attempting to successfully meet its goals. In the next section there is a discussion of the process by which the university has attempted to regionalise its operations and the problems that it encountered in so doing. The final section of the paper discusses the impact the new university needs to have on its region and concludes that if the appropriate type of institution is created initially, and if government agencies and private industry regard and treat the university appropriately, then it can become an important element in, and perhaps a catalyst for, the type of regional development that might provide northern British Columbia with a reasonably secure economic future.

### The Region

The basic facts about northern British Columbia clearly affect how the new university should be structured, how it should operate and what it can reasonably hope to achieve. There are a number of regions that are very similar to northern British Columbia many of which had universities established within them over the past twenty five years. These are the northern parts of a number of other provinces, namely Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec. In addition, northern Norway, Finland and Sweden are also comparable, as are parts of Alaska and northern Russia (Weller 1987a: 4-7).

These regions have a great many characteristics in common. They all cover very large land areas, especially in relation to the southern areas of the jurisdictions of which they are a part. Northern British Columbia covers 68% of the province's land mass. Their populations each constitute small percentages of the total for the political jurisdictions of which they are a part and are usually widely scattered in small pockets. The population of northern British Columbia is 301,000 or less than 10% of the provincial total and it is widely scattered, with the single largest community, Prince George, having a population of just over 70,000. In addition, the population of each of these regions contain relatively high percentages of indigenous peoples, be they Saami, Komi, Chukchi or Indian. First Nations' peoples constitute 10% of the total northern population of northern British Columbia but they are heavily concentrated in the northwest, where they constitute almost 35% of the population. They all have fairly extreme climates, although northern British Columbia's is much more varied than many of the other regions mentioned.

These northern regions of the globe all have economies that are heavily dependent upon mineral extraction, forestry, power generation and tourism. This is certainly the case with northern British Columbia where although the forest sector dominates (in some places as many as seven out of ten jobs are dependent upon this sector) there is significant mining activity, hydro-electric power generation, and tourism. They all have a second economy, the tradi-

tional economy of hunting, fishing and trapping. This is the case with northern British Columbia where, as elsewhere, it is an economy heavily identified with indigenous peoples. Each of these regions has little agriculture and little manufacturing outside the forest sector. Northern British Columbia fits this general pattern, although there are significant areas where the soil and climatic conditions are far more favourable than in most of the other northern regions mentioned. All of these northern regions have transportation systems that link the north with the south for the purpose of exporting bulk commodities from the north, but are poor for internal regional purposes. This is true of northern British Columbia and is reflected in the pattern of commodity movement and in such things as the use of Vancouver as a hub for airline travel even when travelling between different parts of the north.

All of the northern regions are less developed than the southern regions of their respective political jurisdictions. British Columbia is no exception, in fact the province has been characterised as having two distinct regional economies (Davis and Hutton 1989). There is the economy of the Vancouver/Victoria areas and then the economy of the rest of the province. The economy of the south is urban based, service oriented and doing quite well. The economy of the rest of the province, including the north, is small community based, resource oriented and doing poorly. Not only are most economic status indicators poorer for the north than for the south so are health status indicators (British Columbia 1991a: B57-B64) and educational status indicators. The university participation rate is 8% in northern British Columbia compared with 23% for the Vancouver/Victoria areas (British Columbia 1991b: 8-9).

It is clear that the period of rapid growth in northern British Columbia that was based on infrastructure development and resource extraction has come to an end. The period of growth began in earnest with the onset of the Second World War and the building of the Alaska Highway and then continued apace for about four decades. The period was marked by large scale investments in roads, railways, hydro-electric projects, and oil and gas pipelines. All of these were built with the main purpose being to extract the natural resources of the region (Wedley 1991, Munro, 1975, Tomblin 1990). This period saw the population of the region rise from 47,000 (or 5.4% of the provincial total) in 1941 to 301,000 (or 10% of the provincial total) in 1991 (Wedley 1991: 61). The changing nature of the world economy, the development of competing resource sources elsewhere, the rapidly increasing capital intensity of the resource sector, environmental issues, the uncertainty caused by First Nations' land claims settlements, and other factors have all combined to create a situation where the northern British Columbia economy and population is not only static but in danger of decline.

All of the circumpolar northern regions tend to be regarded by their related southern centres in much the same way. The north/south gulf is summed up in B.C. by the phrase "beyond Hope", Hope being a small town at the end of the Fraser Valley. In sum, the nature of the economies of these

regions, their population characteristics and their lack of internal cohesiveness all clearly reveal that they are hinterland regions of the respective larger political jurisdictions (Weller 1977). As a result of their being hinterland regions, it is interesting to note that there is in each of them a sense of alienation that has political manifestations -- usually in the form of a greater vote for the political left than elsewhere (Weller 1985). While this tendency holds true for much of northern British Columbia it does not apply very well to the Peace River area which has a long record of political conservatism.

These basic facts about northern British Columbia are important to note because they clearly influence the nature of the university to be established there. For example, given the nature of the region it would be ill-advised to establish a liberal arts college there to serve the regional population. The need is for a type of institution that would be a convenient access point to university education by removing cost, social, cultural and distance barriers to access to university education. The need is also for a type of university that would assist the region support the resource sector and diversify economically in an effort to remove dependence upon a largely declining (at least in terms of unskilled or semi-skilled employment opportunities) resource sector.

### **Regional Imperatives and University Education**

The nature of the imperatives operating on UNBC can be drawn not only from the nature of northern British Columbia itself but also from the experience of universities that have previously been established in similar regions. A significant number of universities have been established relatively recently in many northern regions that are very similar to northern British Columbia. These include Lakehead, Laurentian, Oulu, Lapland, Umea, Lulea, Tromso, Yakutsk, Novosibirsk, Syktyvkar, Kemerovo and new branch campuses of the universities of Alaska and Quebec (Weller 1987a).

Representatives of all of these universities have come together at a series of three conferences (at Lakehead University, Tyumen University and the University of Lapland) that started in late 1989 to compare their experiences. A number of these experiences were noted and borne in mind during the process of planning and establishing the University of Northern British Columbia (Lakehead University 1991). The first point to note is that all agreed successful northern frontier universities have to have dual roles. They have to be access points to university education for their northern populations, many of whom cannot afford to go to southern universities. That is, they have to offer standard programs in the core subjects one would expect to find at any university. In short, they have to be universities in the north. They also must help in the economic, social and cultural development of northern regions. To have this regional impact, their fields of instruction and research should be focused on strengthening and modernizing the existing network of services and production

in the area. That is, they have to offer professional degrees that help existing employment areas and which also help diversify the economy. In short, they have to be universities for the north.

The second point to note is that all agreed that to be successful, northern frontier universities have to offer both undergraduate and graduate degrees. In the words of the Rector of the University of Lapland "it is essential that both undergraduate and graduate degree programs are offered" (Riepula 1991: 15). He gave three main reasons for stating this. Firstly, graduate degrees are required and desired by many northern residents. Secondly, the regionally relevant research needed cannot easily be undertaken without the supporting graduate programs. Thirdly, it is easier to attract high quality faculty if most departments have graduate programs.

The third point to note is that all agreed that quality has to be emphasized throughout. Again in the words of Rector Riepula "instruction and research at regional universities must be on a par with that carried on elsewhere, if they are to have a favourable impact locally. One could even say that the quality of these activities in smaller institutions takes on a greater significance than in larger ones" (Riepula 1991: 15). Quality assurance is important especially because prospective students want to be assured that the degree they get from a new, small and northern university will be the equal of degrees obtained elsewhere.

The fourth point to note is that all agreed that a northern university should be diverse and versatile enough to have a noticeable impact on its surroundings. That is, it shouldn't be so small that it cannot perform its dual role or have a reasonable range and depth of programming. Basically this means that they should not be regarded as just regional northern universities. They should be regarded as provincial or national resources that have a special role in and for the north. They should not be regarded as having to be dependent solely upon students from the north any more than southern universities should be regarded as being solely dependent upon students from their immediate vicinities. One of the roles of northern universities should be to attract people to the north from the south, some of whom may well stay in the north. Not only will this make the point that northern universities are a provincial or national resource but it helps them achieve the critical mass needed to offer a reasonable range of degree programs.

A fifth point to note is that all agreed that an international orientation is also important for regional impact and success. Through international work, universities can bring new ideas and innovations to their regions and take part in an exchange of experiences. Thus, UNBC has emulated most of the other northern universities and has already developed international contacts with selected foreign universities. In the case of UNBC there are two logical sets of connections that arose from its geographic location. The first results from the fact that northern B.C. is located on the Pacific Rim and most of the exports of the region go to Asian Pacific Rim nations. Thus UNBC has a few faculty

and student exchange agreements as well as joint research agreements with selected universities in Asian Pacific Rim nations. The second results from the fact that northern B.C. is located in a northern region. Thus UNBC has a few agreements with some of the circumpolar northern universities mentioned earlier (University of Northern British Columbia 1991, British Columbia Centre for International Education 1993).

A final point to note is that all agreed that the experience of the northern regional universities indicates that it is not enough for a university to set itself up on the top of a hill and wait for its ideas and initiatives to filter down to the surrounding valleys on their own. In short, northern universities should not be ivory towers. Such universities must stress the importance of work aimed at practical goals and lively connections with their regions (University of Northern British Columbia 1991).

### Regionalism

Although those who pushed for the establishment of the University of Northern British Columbia and those who constituted the initial group hired to establish the university recognise the imperatives just mentioned, regionalism within British Columbia and within northern British Columbia make for a great many difficulties that have to be overcome if the university is to be successful.

One of the major difficulties is the lack of knowledge of, and lack of empathy for, northern potentials and problems in the south. This applies not only to the general public, many of whom have never been to the north, but also to much of the bureaucracy, the media and other important sectors of society. A great deal of the information about this sort of thing is impressionistic or based upon stories that are many times told by northerners about the ignorance of southerners concerning northern British Columbia. It is significant that British Columbia is the one province that has not had a Ministry of Northern Affairs, as have Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario, or a specialised government agency for the entire north, such as Alberta and Quebec (Weller 1987b). This lack of knowledge of the north might also be connected with the fact that in British Columbia the north/south divide is less clear than in the other provinces. The divide is really Vancouver/Victoria versus the rest of the province, with the southern interior region having an economic base in many ways very similar to the north and having a larger population than the north.

Another of the major difficulties is a lack of consciousness of the north within northern British Columbia itself. There is much more argument about what the "north" actually consists of than is the case in the other provinces. Generally, "north" is used when referring to all of the province north of Williams Lake or the 53rd parallel. In fact, the term is relatively new and many residents of the region are more likely to describe themselves as coming from a sub-region of the north, such as the Peace River region, than coming

from northern British Columbia. The College structure in northern British Columbia reflects this sub-regional identification. Each sub-region has its own college, with the College of New Caledonia serving the Prince George region, Northern Lights College serving the Peace River region and Northwest College serving the Northwest. The lack of a regional consciousness is reflected in the fact that there are, indeed, few institutions that are region-wide. One of these few is the North Central Municipal Association (NCMA). Apart from there being no region-wide Ministry or agency, there are few region-wide items such as the publication *Northern Ontario Business* in Ontario. This lack of region-wide consciousness is also partly revealed in the wide variation in the boundaries used by the various government agencies to denote the sub-regions of the north. It is perhaps significant that one of the clearest definitions of what constitutes northern British Columbia is the definition of the region embodied in the founding legislation for the University of Northern British Columbia, and it is one that uses a mixture of boundaries used by government agencies. If there is no clear definition of the north it is hardly surprising that there is not a very well developed consciousness of the north and of the items needed for its development, or of the appropriate role for a university.

Another major difficulty is the very marked and debilitating intra-regional and community rivalry that is evident in northern British Columbia. The sub-regions compete with each other and most of them seem to resent the success and growth in recent decades of the City of Prince George, not least for its recent adoption of the title "B.C.'s Northern Capital" and its recent acquisition of the core campus of the University of Northern British Columbia. This rivalry has been intense at times and is rarely overcome.

Yet another difficulty is that UNBC has few other region-wide bodies or plans to link with. There is no Ministry, no bureaucratic agency and no clear set of regional economic development plans. Apart from the few who were involved in applying pressure for a university in the region, there seems to have been very little awareness that northern British Columbia was in fact very similar to many other northern regions around the world. There was also a very evident reluctance to learn from others, even when it was realised that British Columbia was coming on stream with a northern university a quarter of a century or more later than others. These feelings were not confined to those in the provincial capital, Victoria. A lot of people in the region itself had, and still have, difficulty with the belief that any useful comparisons can be obtained from northern Quebec or Ontario, let alone northern Finland or Sweden. There was something of a public outcry when part of the UNBC campus design team gathered information on the building designs used in other "circumpolar" universities, as they are now commonly called and, worse yet, actually visited the campuses of the northern Scandinavian universities. UNBC thus began its life as a regional university in a kind of regional vacuum and was itself one of the earliest and certainly clearest example of a rising consciousness of there being a "northern" region in British Columbia and the beginnings of an aware-

ness that similar regions existed in other nations.

## Regionalisation

One of the major points to be noted from the experience of the circumpolar universities is that, as with any university, they need to have a strong core in one location, but are only truly successful if they are able to offer a reasonable level of programming and other services throughout their extensive regions. The manner and the extent to which UNBC should regionalise its operations has been a contentious issue since the concept of a northern university originated.

Part of the problem of regionalising effectively is created by the fact that the population of northern British Columbia which UNBC aims to serve is distributed very widely and in different ways. There are some groupings of communities that could be treated as nodes such as Terrace and Kitimat in the Northwest, the Prince George area, and the Peace River cities of Dawson Creek and Fort St John. Then, there are strings of communities along highways such as the Bulkley Valley towns and the communities between Prince George and Williams Lake. Beyond these communities there are a great many, very small, quite isolated ones scattered throughout the north. UNBC needs to, and intends to, develop approaches whereby as many courses and whole degree programs are offered in these sub-regions as possible.

However, another part of the problem is the extent to which it is expected that UNBC will be able to use on-site instructors, especially in facilities located outside Prince George. UNBC hopes to offer as many courses as possible using on-site instructors and to use distance education techniques only where numbers are not sufficient for any other approach. UNBC is committed to being quite literally what its name implies, the University of Northern British Columbia, and not the University of Prince George. The object of the exercise of developing the University is to get the degree programs to where people live in the north as much as is practicable both pedagogically and economically.

Effective regionalisation, which would have been a difficult exercise in the best of circumstances, has been made even more difficult by the level of expectations created in northern British Columbia by the way in which the concept of a northern university was marketed, some of the early commissioned reports, and the expectations of the three northern colleges. The Interior University Society, the group that initially pressured for a university, campaigned very successfully throughout northern British Columbia to obtain support for the project. In part, they were successful because they argued that every part of the region would benefit from the project and that it would be regionalised. While not being specific and while not promising significant numbers of faculty or extensive physical facilities in each major community the interpretation

was frequently made that such would be the case.

This interpretation was only strengthened with the publication of a two volume report entitled *Building a Future of Excellence* (Dahllof 1988). The report suggested a university that would have its various units, including faculty and facilities, distributed in various communities throughout the region. The report stated that "a network of university centres should be planned" (Dahllof 1988: 6) and "it is appropriate to contemplate as many as 14 regional locations" (Dahllof 1988: 35). The report did not clearly state what exactly would be done in each of these locations, although it did state that about \$1.5 million (in 1987 dollars) might be spent on each of the locations and it did hint that some of the centres might be major branch campuses. Based on these comments, and not unreasonably, a very wide popular view developed that what was being advocated was a distributed university in the sense that different Faculties might be located in different communities. This led to a number of the communities, via their mayors and councils, asking the initial administrators of the new university what Faculty their city might expect and when. The suggestion of a distributed university, certainly in the popular interpretation, was rejected by those involved in pushing for the university and by the provincial government. The report of the Implementation Planning Group (IPG), a group established in 1989 to develop a plan for a university, rejected the Dahllof approach when it stated that "no university can be a collection of small bits and pieces sprinkled throughout a region. That would be unworkable. Instead, and perhaps paradoxically, the new university must be provided with a major headquarters campus in order to fulfil its mission of dispersing services" (Implementation Planning Group 1989: 24). While not rejecting the idea of some regional presence and some small regional facilities it clearly rejected the dispersed university concept.

The development of a detailed plan for the regionalisation of UNBC's operations was left to the administration of the new university as it began to be hired, starting in the fall of 1990. This turned out to be a very difficult task for them for a variety of reasons. Not the least of these was that, although the report of the IPG had become the officially approved blueprint, not all members of the Interim Governing Council seemed to approve of it. Some clearly wished to have something more closely resembling the Dahllof model. In addition, many of the cities and towns in the region claimed that they did not know that the Dahllof model had been rejected and continued to press strongly for their "promised" part of the action, which included both buildings and staff. For some at the three established colleges, the Dahllof model was also preferred as it was interpreted as giving them a greater role in the delivery of post-secondary education in the north. In addition, the election of a new government in 1992 led to the addition of new board members rather than the replacement of the old and this, in turn, led to a very public and vocal attempt by some members of the new governing party throughout northern British Columbia to get rid of the old board members who were almost entirely of

another political persuasion. A combination of these forces and others led to a Ministerial inquiry led by an MLA from the north (British Columbia 1992). Nevertheless, in the fall of 1992, after three major drafts and much controversy the administration finally managed to obtain the approval by the Interim Governing Council of a Regional Policy and Implementation Report (University of Northern British Columbia 1992).

The expectations of the three northern colleges were also a major complicating factor in UNBC's struggle to develop an effective plan for the regionalisation of its programs and services. Much like the communities their thinking had been moulded by the Dahloff report, although it could be argued that the Dahloff report had been moulded by their thinking. In any event the reaction to the coming of UNBC was divided within each of the colleges and between the colleges. Within each of the colleges there tended to be different reactions on the part of the strongly unionised university transfer faculty members, (colleges in British Columbia, unlike other provinces in Canada, can teach the first two years of university subjects), the non-University faculty and the College administrations and boards (Harris 1992). A President of the College of New Caledonia had been one of the earliest advocates of a university for northern British Columbia (McCaffrey no date). This did not endear him to those faculty members at that college who had hoped that their institution would become one of the growing number of University Colleges throughout the province that were permitted to grant a limited range of undergraduate degrees. All of the college administrations and Boards, as well as the faculty worried, given the small population of the north, that they would be expected to give up their first and second year university transfer offerings altogether to ensure the economic viability of the new university, or that the new university would compete with them in those years for the same reason.

UNBC's protestations that it intended to work co-operatively with the colleges in northern B.C., the Open Learning Agency and the three southern universities to maximize the benefit for all residents of the region were initially not given much credence. It was only with the signing in late 1992 of what were called Protocols with each of the three northern colleges that it came to be partially recognised that UNBC did wish to work closely with the colleges both academically and in terms of the joint use of physical facilities. Academically, UNBC wanted to plan a post-secondary education structure that maximised the educational opportunities for northerners. It wanted to have ladderred or articulated programs in the university transfer areas offered by the colleges and it was also especially interested in seeing what can be done in the technology area in this regard. The whole idea being to maximise the offering to northerners by the judicious use of limited resources. In terms of physical facilities UNBC wanted to make use of the fact that the three colleges are regionalised and have facilities throughout northern B.C. If it used existing facilities or added to them this would enable UNBC to immediately have a physical presence throughout the region that it would not otherwise have.

Moreover, it would be able to make joint use of libraries, computer facilities and the like.

The controversy over regionalisation as it related to the three northern colleges obscured the fact that UNBC hoped to work co-operatively with the other three universities as well and act as a facilitator to get more of their programs offered in the north that UNBC would not be able to offer itself in its early years because of its small size. When UNBC opened in the fall of 1994, it only had about 120 faculty members and offered degrees in only 22 undergraduate and 10 graduate subject areas. Thus the other three universities are still able to usefully offer some of their degrees in northern British Columbia. UNBC's resources, spread throughout the region, can assist them in doing this and assist them in contemplating an expansion of their operations in the north. Thus, UNBC sees itself as something of a facilitator in that if it is unable to offer something itself, for whatever reason, then it will try to assist another university to do so.

The controversy over regionalisation as it related to the three northern colleges and undergraduate courses also obscured the fact that UNBC intends to undertake a number of actions to regionalise its activities in graduate studies, research and other areas. UNBC intends to concentrate on graduate programs and research that are of relevance to the economic, cultural and social development of northern British Columbia. UNBC is planning on establishing a series of regionally and sub-regionally specific research institutes such as a Maritime Studies Research Institute in Prince Rupert and a Forest Areas Research Institute in Prince George (University of Northern British Columbia 1992: 25-26). These institutes are being developed in conjunction with industry, business and community interests. Already the federal government has signed a statement of intent to locate its Prince George research facility on the Prince George campus of UNBC. The university plans not only to locate research parks alongside its instructional facilities, it also plans to establish a few industry innovation facilities alongside them as well. The university has noted that some of the other circumpolar universities, especially the University of Oulu in northern Finland, have achieved considerable success in helping to diversify the economic base of their regions away from a heavy dependence on the resource sector with such endeavours (Korhonen 1991). It should be emphasized in this connection that UNBC can only have a full range of truly positive impacts on northern British Columbia if the region is able to receive the products of the University -- that is, the graduates and the results of the research endeavours. As Rector Riepula has pointed out (Riepula 1991: 15) a university may sow the seeds of development, but they need a cultivated soil in which to grow. If simply thrown into the forest, they are likely to germinate only occasionally. By having facilities of the kind just mentioned, UNBC hopes to create its own cultivated soil. However it would like to work closely with the cities and towns of the north, and the governmental and private agencies to develop more extensive stretches of cultivated soil in which the University's

seeds can germinate.

## Conclusion

The economy of northern British Columbia with its heavy resource dependence, lack of certain types of infrastructure and lack of a work force as highly educated in those in other regions is not well positioned to withstand the economic challenges of the present and the future. The phenomenon of the growth of the global economy has meant that many low value-adding jobs are exported to other countries that are poorer than Canada. The phenomenon of automation means that those jobs that do stay in the richer nations, such as Canada, are increasingly done by machines not men. This is quickly seen even in the forest sector upon which northern British Columbia is so dependent by examining the control room of a modern pulp mill or the heavily computerized equipment now being used in saw mills. In addition, the very rapid rise in the importance of information technology to economic success has put a premium on the production of managers, engineers and scientists by universities. It has also meant that a premium has been placed on everyone being educated enough to be competent in the use of the new technology. All of this means that if northern British Columbia is to survive and prosper in the modern world it must develop an educational system capable of producing an appropriately educated labour force that will not only strengthen the existing resource industry base but help diversify it away from such a heavy dependence upon that base.

The creation of the University of Northern British Columbia is one of the keys to the creation of the educational system that northern British Columbia needs for the region to prosper in the future. By creating more jobs within the region and by significantly improving university participation rates, it will have the effect of markedly improving the educational level of the northern labour force. The availability of skilled labour is an important factor in locational decision making in business and industry. To create an appropriately trained labour force UNBC will have to offer the correct mix and the right type of programs. If it were to offer simply undergraduate Arts and Science programs, the experience of the other circumpolar universities would indicate that it would be largely training the youth of the region for out-migration to jobs that do not exist within northern British Columbia. As previously remarked, UNBC will have to offer regionally relevant professional programming at both the undergraduate and graduate level. It would also be well advised to offer as many of its programs in the cooperative education format as possible and to target much of its programming at the adult student; that is, at the existing members of the regional labour force.

Because UNBC got the formula right from the outset it attracted students not only from northern British Columbia but also from the south. It is also did this because it is the only small university alternative in the province. In any

event, by so doing it will provide the basis for a wider range of program choice for those from the north. In addition, some of those attracted from the south will stay in the north, thereby adding to the educational level of the northern population and, as a result, the attractiveness of the north in locational terms for business and industry. There is some justification for this belief if only from the experience of some of the other northern universities established a quarter of a century ago (Lane 1983, Varjo and Hultenan 1977).

Thus, the creation of UNBC will have a number of indirect benefits that are likely to exceed in long term importance the direct benefits that derive from having a relatively large number of fairly highly paid, steady jobs in the north and a retention and attraction of a significant number of students. It should be noted that even when it opens in 1994 at its small initial start size UNBC will be one of the largest employers in northern British Columbia. While the multiplier effect of a university is not as high as even a new highly automated pulp mill it is significant. One estimate for UNBC puts it at 1.5 for salaries and student spending (Reid and Enemark 1992). Then there is also the effect of the expenditure on buildings and equipment. These multipliers are also relatively low but that is in part because of the nature of the region not the nature of the university. Even the largest of the communities in northern British Columbia is quite small and not very diversified, therefore more spending will be done outside the community and region than would be the case for universities in bigger and more diversified communities and regions.

These short term benefits are likely to offset the greater per student cost of operating universities in northern regions. These greater costs relate in part to the general factors such as added heating costs, communications costs, and travel costs within and without the regions. They also relate to the need to have a relatively wide range of programs with relatively small enrolments and the need to use extensively various techniques and technologies to bring service to small population nodes scattered across their huge regions. These added costs are calculated differently in the various jurisdictions. In Ontario these additional costs of northern operation come in two packages labelled "in the north" funding and "for the north" funding. In British Columbia the added monies (up to 35% over the allocation to the other three universities on a per capita basis) were intended to cover both the categories used in Ontario and the "emergent" costs of a new university. In Ontario the initial diseconomies of scale costs of the newly "emerging" universities established in the sixties were accounted for by a steadily decreasing special "emergent" grant largely tied to enrolment levels. British Columbia's special premium is in fact an "emergent" grant as it is currently intended to end when UNBC's enrolment reaches 2,500 full time equivalent students. Thus British Columbia does not at the moment take account of the ongoing "in" and "for" the north costs as does Ontario for its northern universities. However, this may change as a recent report submitted to the government recommends that universities in British Columbia be funded on an envelope basis and that UNBC be funded via its own envelope

with that envelope taking into account all of the appropriate special factors associated with northern operations or the special tasks assigned to the university from time to time (Dupre 1992).

If UNBC develops steadily along the lines it intends to then it should have a considerable long term (15 to 25 years) impact on northern British Columbia that will be an added bonus to the short term benefits that will themselves easily repay the initial investment. It will increase the opportunities for degree completion for residents of the region and generally increase the opportunities for academic study. It will increase the range and level of qualifications of the population of the region. It will bring new intellectual capacity to the region. It will strengthen and diversify the economic, social and cultural foundations of the region. It will increase the range and intensity of interactions between northern British Columbia and places elsewhere and will, thereby, make the "voice" of the north heard more loudly and frequently on the provincial, national and international level. It will help diversify the economic base both directly by means of the entrepreneurs and professionals it will train and indirectly by simply making northern British Columbia a place people and companies are more likely to wish to move to (Felsenstein 1993, Brownrigg 1973, Caffrey and Isaacs 1971).

Instruction and research are a university's most important means of serving its region. UNBC, by extending the range and enhancing the level of professional qualifications of the population of northern British Columbia will help create an expanded infrastructure in the region that will better enable the region to develop and to withstand the pressures of social and economic change.

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