



Salish Kootenai College

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Fostering Success Among Native American and Non-Traditional Students: Student Support at Salish Kootenai College

Salish Kootenai College works to promote a rich, diverse, and intellectually stimulating college experience for every student and strives to create campus opportunities that expose students to new ideas and experiences as well as infuse the campus with a sense of community and family. In an effort to ensure success of its predominantly non-traditional and socio-economically disadvantaged students, the college also offers extensive, comprehensive, and strategic support services. As over half of SKC's student population represents Native Americans from tribal communities across the country, very strong emphasis is placed on the services and activities that foster students' sense of community and meet their unique needs.

Additionally to the specific services listed below, the college hosts numerous events, including but not limited to the weekly Friday Coffee Hour, Founders Week, Career Fair, Harvest Dinner, Spring Fling, Culture Night, Games Day, Student Awards Dinner, Women for Wellness fair that offers free healthcare screenings to attendees, special events and forums, cultural craft nights, guest lectures and presentations, kids' events in the library, free swimming for students and staff at the local swimming pool, free movie screenings, and pow-wows in order to serve its students and the entire community. Many departments host feasts, barbeques, and weekly soup days for students, providing not just nourishment but also much needed social support as well as a sense of home for those who are far away from their families.

Although the tangible programs and services offer students strong social and academic support, it is the intangible culture of caring, manifested in the lengths the faculty and staff go to welcome students as family – from free breakfasts, coffee, doughnuts, and soup they share with their students and their tireless volunteerism at the basketball tournaments to the willingness of the instructors to consult with students after the work hours and on the weekends – that makes SKC a truly unique, deeply student-centered place to learn and an exemplary minority-serving institution in the country.

New Student Orientation

Salish Kootenai College New Student Orientation is designed to provide students with important information about college services, learn to navigate campus, and make connections with advisors, staff and faculty. Students will become part of the SKC family by learning academic expectations and requirements and familiarize themselves with campus life. Through engaging fun activities, new students will have their questions answered, meet one another, and become connected with SKC.

Department of Academic Success

The SKC Department of Academic Success' (DAS) mission is to help students and community members achieve academic success, progress toward the attainment of their career goals, and master some of the critical skills needed to be successful in school, work, and life. By employing a comprehensive, holistic, research-based approach, the DAS helps students improve their core academic skills, persist in their course of study, and achieve degrees & credentials. The DAS coordinates various programs and services to help fulfill this mission, including Adult Basic & Literacy Education, High School Equivalency Test (HISET) Preparation, Developmental Studies Coordination (for students starting college without college-level academic skills), the Academic Improvement Curriculum (for student on financial aide and/or academic suspension), Lifelong Learning (CEU Program), Academic Advising, and Placement (TABE) Testing.

The TABE measures each student's skills in reading, English, and mathematics. Incoming SKC students are placed in the correct courses based on these scores. In some cases, prospective SKC students may also need to take an Advanced Placement assessment in English or math to determine correct course placement. Numerous other community partners also refer participants for TABE assessments.

Academic Advising

Upon enrollment, all students are assigned an academic advisor. Students with declared majors are assigned to a faculty advisor in their major department. Advisors work with students to decide on a plan of study, complete paperwork for transferring courses to SKC, and to complete graduation applications. Advisors also refer students to campus resources and work with students to make sure that any additional program requirements are completed. Students should expect to meet with their advisor prior to each academic quarter, as the advisor's signature is required for registration each quarter. Academic Advisors should be contacted before withdrawing from any course, as there may be consequences for the students' plan of study. Students may also consult with their academic advisor if they have questions about their academic progress or career plans. While faculty advisors provide advice and guidance, students are ultimately responsible for their own academic progress, including following the curriculum plan as outlined in the SKC Catalog. Students who do not follow the curriculum plan may not be able to complete their degree program in the expected length of time and may need more time to complete requirements for graduation. As explained in the SKC Student Handbook, SKC places full responsibility upon the student for registering for the proper courses and fulfilling all requirements for a degree as set forth in the catalog.

Tutoring Labs

Tutoring labs are available to all students on campus at no charge to the student. (Good news! Coffee and snacks are available at all locations for students to both fuel minds and stomachs.)

Writing Center

The Writing Center is available for students to receive support in communication-based projects. The Writing Center supports students in writing and speaking assignments for all classes, scholarship applications, and resume completion. Nationally certified tutors are available daily for one-on-one and group tutoring sessions. (A lab fee is charged

through the Composition courses.) Additionally, any student passing Composition I with a B or higher may apply for a tutoring position.

Math and Science Lab

The Math Lab provides qualified tutors and instructors to students that need assistance in all math and science-based projects.

Career Center Tutoring

Students may apply to schedule time with a qualified tutor for any subject area through the career center.

Computer Labs

There are multiple computer labs on campus available for student use. The library also has a number of computers available for general Internet use. For the safety and protection of all, the labs are to be used under the SKC Acceptable Use Policy, which is posted in all labs.

Student Success Coaches and the Early Alert System

SKC has created a Student Success Department that employs two full-time Success Coaches and implemented a campus-wide Early Alert System. The system allows timely, effective, and coordinated intervention with students who are experiencing personal or academic difficulties, missing classes, or not performing well in their classes. Instructors, advisors, and other employees submit early alerts for any reason; the Success Coaches immediately follow up with the student, providing referrals, advice, and support, as well as communicate with the advisor, instructor, or other staff member. In 2016-2017, the Success Coaches received 764 alerts from 38 faculty/staff members on 158 students, an average of 4.8 alerts per student. The coaches are working very closely with advisors, TRiO, HealthCare MT Transformation Specialist, and the Department of Academic Success. The coaches sent students more than 500 text messages, 300 emails, and had numerous phone and in-person meetings.

Library

The D'Arcy McNickle Library is the hub for information resources and library instruction, supporting the research needs of students and faculty at Salish Kootenai College. The Library, a Government Depository, serves also as the Tribal Library for the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) and all residents of the Flathead Reservation. Library patrons include SKC students, faculty, staff, and Reservation residents. A special effort is made to collect all materials relating to the Tribes' history and culture. These materials are found in the CSKT Special Tribal Collection. The Library website and online catalog <http://skclibrary.sk.c.edu/> provide access to a wide selection of databases, full textbooks, and government documents. The Library provides Internet access, Interlibrary loan, and Class Reserves. Computers in the library provide access to the online catalog, electronic materials, and the Internet. A wireless Internet Hotspot is accessible throughout the library. Patrons can renew and place holds on items, and check their records through the Internet. Hours during school sessions are: Monday through Thursday 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. During term breaks library hours are Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Library is located on campus between the Three Wolves Deli and the North Parking Lot. Library Instruction, both formal and informal, in the use of the library's

resources, electronic, media, and print is provided by Professional Librarians. The Library Learning Lab is available for instructional presentations by library staff and school faculty. Library Materials include over 50,000 books, periodicals, DVDs, Music CDs, Videos, Audio Books, and CD-ROMs. The Library's membership in regional, state, and national library cooperatives such as the University of Montana Libraries Shared Catalog, OCLC World Catalog, LVIS (Libraries Very Interested in Sharing), Montana Library Network Databases, and Lonesome Doc programs complement the library's endeavors.

Career Center

The Career Center is a place where students can locate information about educational opportunities, services such as tutoring and financial assistance, career preparation, and job placement. The Career Center is funded, in part, through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Native American Career and Technical Education Program (NACTEP). This grant serves tribal members enrolled in the following certificate and/or associate degree programs: Information Technology, Elementary Education, Early Childhood Education, Dental, Nursing and Highway Construction Training. However, Career Center services are available to all SKC students in all disciplines at no cost. Following is a list of services:

Career Planning

The Career Center administers the Montana Career Information System (MTCIS). This is an Internet based program that will help you determine if you are in the field that best suits you. There are educational requirements and other in-depth details available on hundreds of careers. In addition, you will have the opportunity to complete an on-line resume for submission to employers in your particular field of study in any area you choose! You may also set up an appointment with the counselor to discuss your career goals, opportunities, and decisions.

Job Search, Placement & Job Placement File

The career staff can help you prepare for the right job with resume writing, cover letters, interviewing, and portfolios. You may also request a placement file that contains a copy of your resume, cover letter, and reference letters to provide to potential employers as needed, free of charge. The Center maintains bulletin boards with current job listings from tribal, local, state, federal government agencies, and private entities.

Career/Job Fair

SKC, in collaboration with the local job service, hosts an annual Career/Job Fair in the Joe McDonald Health Education Center. This event takes place during winter quarter. Attendees may find part-time, full-time, summer, or internship opportunities offered by a wide range of businesses/organizations.

Cooperative Education

This is a course that applies academic learning at a specific work site through an internship. Students can earn college credit for time-spent working. An internship lasts ten weeks and students can take 3 to 12 credits per quarter. Students will be matched with a relevant field of study. A number of tribal, federal, and state organizations, including SKC, provide student placements.

Computer Lab

Nine computers, a typewriter, and a scanner are available for student use in the Center.

Personal Counseling & Referrals

The Center provides limited personal counseling and refers students to social services and other agencies for additional assistance to meet student needs.

Scholarships

A wide variety of scholarships are available through the Career Center. Students can apply for the “SKC scholarship” in BOTH the fall and winter quarters. Tribal and non-Tribal students are eligible to apply if application criteria are met.

Tutoring

The Career Center provides tutors to students upon request to help with academic subjects in all areas. Like all other Career Center services, tutoring is provided at no cost to the student.

Disabilities Services

Students with documented disabilities may access direct academic support tailored to their personal needs. Reasonable accommodations are provided for eligible students with identified disabilities. The College complies with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Veterans’ Benefits

Students may be eligible to receive benefits under the Veterans Educational Assistance Programs. Applications for veterans’ educational benefits should be initiated with the Registrar’s Office. Veterans should be prepared to provide certified copies of Form DD-214, marriage and children’s birth certificates and some personal history. Salish Kootenai College also offers fee waivers to all American Veterans, honorably discharged, but who are no longer eligible for Federal benefits. For more information contact the Registrar’s Office.

Veterans Priority of Service Policy was adopted at SKC in 2016. The policy states that a veteran (or a qualifying spouse) will get the priority in the admission process in competitive programs over an applicant with exact same qualifications.

Support Groups

SKC hosts numerous student support groups for veterans, victims of domestic violence, single parents, LGBT community, and more.

Counseling

The SKC Counseling Office offers confidential, short-term counseling to individuals and groups who are part of the SKC community. Services include assistance with personal concerns, relationship issues, academic skills, and life transitions. The office also maintains an extensive referral network with counselors and other service providers in the Flathead Reservation area. The Counseling Office is committed to contributing to a campus environment that promotes the

academic success and general well-being of SKC students. The Counselor is available to provide a variety of educational presentations to staff, students, and community groups and to facilitate support groups and talking circles.

Student Health Center

In 2016, SKC opened a Student Health Center on campus in collaboration with the Tribal Health of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. The center offers free vaccinations and acute healthcare to all students regardless of their race or health insurance coverage status.

Child Care Center

The Mission of the Salish Kootenai College Childcare Center is to provide professional quality care for the whole child and their family as we nourish healthy values and responsibility while upholding the mission of Salish Kootenai College. We see SKC Childcare as a dynamic place of wonder, curiosity, and engagement where young children, their families, cultures, and communities are valued and respected as integral pieces in the tapestry of Salish Kootenai College. Located just north of the student housing area, the SKC Childcare Center is licensed with the State of Montana for 41 children, 2-12 years of age. The Center accepts Block Grant and State Best Beginnings Scholarship program pay. Charges are \$4.80 per hour up to 6 hours and \$29.30 per day for over the 6 hours. Free comprehensive preschool services are available for 3 and 4 year olds. The hours of operation are 7:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Visitors and volunteers are welcomed at the SKC Childcare Center.

Student Housing

Salish Kootenai College has a limited number of family housing units and dormitories available for students. SKC Family Housing consists of one, two, three, and four bedroom units with a total of 55 units. A 42 room dormitory is also available. A student in a dorm room is the only occupant of that room and shares a bathroom with one other student and a kitchen and living room with up to 3 other students. The SKC Student Housing Department also provides a referral service for off campus housing. It is a database of rentals in the surrounding area. It is important that housing arrangements be secured prior to the student's arrival on campus. SKC has no last minute or emergency housing available. Student housing is very popular with the students because it is close to campus and affordable. In order to be considered for student housing you must first submit your housing application to SKC Student Housing Department. Applications for housing are received and processed in the order they are received. All applications expire on April 30 of each year. The size of the unit is based upon the student's needs. Applicants are placed on a wait list for fall openings.

Joe McDonald Health and Fitness Center

Located South of the Main Campus just off Golf Course Rd. the Joe McDonald Health and Fitness Center houses a variety of activities for the students of SKC and the community. The center has an NCAA regulation basketball floor or two courts if used east and west. The floor is equipped with volleyball set up and can easily be changed over for volleyball. The Center has a walking track that is approximately 1/10 of a mile. The center seats approximately 2500 people. Inside the Center are the Sherri McDonald Hospitality Room and the Camas Kitchen. The Sherri McDonald Hospitality Room can seat up to 150 people and may be used for events and meetings. The Camas Kitchen is equipped with modern appliances for preparing food or for cooking

classes. The center has been open since December 2007 and hosts approximately 150 people per day. The center is open to all students for use. The SKC Fitness Center is attached to the Joe McDonald Health Center, and is equipped with up to date equipment. The Center offers a wide range of free weights, cardio, and other exercise machines. The center is here to provide students and staff a place to exercise and stay healthier.

Food Service

Food service is located in the Three Wolves Building near the center of campus. Food Service at SKC serves breakfast and lunch five days a week, Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. (SKC Food Service observes the college's holidays but remains open during quarter breaks). There are prepayment meal plans available for students each quarter. The meal plan may vary depending on the students needs. Students should inquire with the Food Service Manager for more details. The student union building is open for studying, socializing, and other student events; also it is the center for many social events and gatherings on campus.

Bookstore

The SKC Bookstore is owned and operated by Salish Kootenai College for the benefit of our academic community and surrounding areas. We are open Monday thru Friday from 8:15 a.m. – 4:15 p.m. The SKC Bookstore carries all required textbooks and supplies, a large selection of general interest books, Salish & Kootenai Language materials, art and office supplies, SKC memorabilia, imprinted clothing and gifts, greeting cards, snack foods, and other miscellaneous items. The Bookstore is also the UPS & Fed-Ex delivery site on campus.

Lifelong Learning Center

SKC's Lifelong Learning Center was established to meet the growing needs and demands of the Tribal Departments and the Indian community on the Flathead Reservation. The purpose of the Center is to provide personal professional development, community interest, and specific training courses or services to meet the particular needs of the departments and the Reservation. The Center also provides a suitable training location and necessary materials for career enhancement. Regular college-level credits are not awarded for learning activities, but certain activities may be evaluated by a system of uniform continuing education units (CEU).

Student Support Services

Student Support Services is a federally funded TRiO program that is designed to increase the college retention and graduation rates for eligible students, increase transfer rates from two-year to four-year institutions, and to foster and institutional climate supportive of the success of low-income and first-generation college students and individuals with disabilities. The program serves 230 college students each school year and provides services in tutoring, academic advising, personal counseling, access to labs, informational workshops, as well as Grant Aid.

TRiO Programs

TRiO programs were established by Congress to help low-income Americans enter college, graduate and move on to participate more fully in America's economic and social life. These Programs are funded under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and are referred to as the TRiO Programs (initially just three programs). While student financial aid programs help students overcome financial barriers to higher education, TRiO programs help students overcome

class, social and cultural barriers to higher education. TRiO programs that are found on the SKC campus include Student Support Services, EOC (Educational Opportunity Center), Talent Search, Upward Bound, and the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement.

Student Organizations and Clubs

Salish Kootenai College has other student organizations and clubs on campus. These include:

- American Indian Business Leaders (AIBL)
- American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES)
- Student Nursing Organization (SNO)
- Spirit of Many Colors, Gay-Straight Alliance of SKC
- Spirit of the Bison
- Forestry and Natural Resources Club
- Student Nurses Organization (SNO)

Student Senate

The Student Senate is made up of elected representatives from the College's student body, and optional college credit is available for participation. The purpose of the Student Senate is to:

- Provide development of leadership skills;
- Act as liaison between students, faculty and staff;
- Act as liaison between students and the SKC Board of Directors;
- Provide a forum for discussion and input for SKC students.

SKC Student Senate coordinates campus activities that reflect the needs, hopes and desires of the general student population. Activities include campus speakers, poetry readings, talent shows, theater visits, film presentations, Family Night Programs, holiday theme evenings and community-wide dinners.

Athletics

Salish Kootenai College athletics offers men's and women's basketball. We are the Bison, and our colors are Maroon and Gold. Our teams are composed of students who have an interest in playing competitive basketball past high school. The College has about 25 games scheduled against college varsity and junior varsity programs throughout Montana, Washington, North Dakota and Wyoming. Games are currently being scheduled for next season. At SKC, we draw on both education and athletics as a means of preparing our students for both work and life. Prospective student-athletes will find the classes motivating, the campus environment welcoming, and the surrounding area sociable.

College Campus Corps

The Montana Campus Corps program at Salish Kootenai College is part of the Montana Campus Compact, a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote volunteerism, public service and service-learning on Montana's college and university campuses. Campus Corps members at SKC are engaged in projects that directly affect the college community, the broader community of the Flathead Indian Reservation, as well as communities throughout western Montana. The Montana Campus Corps is an AmeriCorps program funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service in Washington, D.C. Students interested in participating in the Campus Corps program at SKC are encouraged to stop by the Career Center.