

The Evergreen State College
Master of Public Administration in Tribal Governance
The Power of Knowledge

Video

(Native American music playing at the beginning of the video.)

Joe Dela Cruz, 1937-2000, Past President Quinault Indian Nation – National Congress of American Indians: More people have got to look at this history. They've got to educate people. There's a path. There actually is a path to sovereignty but it takes a lot of work, it takes responsible people, it takes responsible caring governments.

(Music)

Randy Scott (Narrator): Northwest tribal leaders had a vision to build a professional training program that would prepare tribal members for the increasingly complex world of tribal government management and leadership.

David Whitener, Deputy Director Squaxin Island Tribe and Former Faculty at TESC Squaxin Island: The education process should be a mutually shared education authority. And that mutually shared education authority is between the Sioux, the institution and the community. I see it happening here and I'd like to see it go further.

Pearl Capoeman-Baller, President Quinault Indian Nation: If we're going to survive basically in both worlds you have to have a concept of how the state works and why we should work together. As wonderful as it is to live on the most beautiful reservation in the United States, we have to step outside those boundaries and we have to work with our neighbors. And if we don't have a working relationship, then we're not going to be progressive.

Charles Wilkinson, Author and Distinguished University Professor – University of Colorado: I'm not sure it's that people fully appreciate how distinctive governance issues are in Indian Country. Tribal sovereignty has a long and rich history and is really sacred to Indian people. And a person who is going to work in the field has to understand both the emotional content and also the intellectual.

Colleen F. Cawston, MPA, Colville Confederated Tribes, WA State Dept Social & Health Services, Director of Indian Policy & Support Services: As a formal tribal leader for one of the largest tribes in Washington State, we had heard conversations that the college was looking at developing this program in tribal governance. And it had always intrigued me because one of the biggest challenges faced by tribal people, especially tribal leadership, is educating non-Natives to our existence and our status as Native peoples. And I thought that this program would really enhance that capability.

(Music)

Laura Grabhorn (Narrator): The Evergreen State College, located in Olympia, Washington, has a long history of serving Native Americans. The college's Native American program covers a broad spectrum of

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public service and academic coursework. These programs enable the college to expand upon its history of meeting the needs of indigenous people.

Alan Parker, Faculty in MPA Tribal Governance and Director of NW Indian Applied Research Institute, Chippewa / Cree: We tried to design a model that is practitioner oriented, that has equipped students to deal with complex but you know very dynamic issues of public policy and in a very specialized way. And as far as I know we are still the only college or university in the United States with a professional study in tribal government or advanced studies in tribal governance.

Randy Scott (Narrator): The Master's program in Public Administration provides high quality professional education to students pursuing careers within government agencies, non profits, tribal government and research and advocacy programs.

Megan Beeby, MPA, WSDOT Environmental Services Tribal Liason, Snoqualmie: You can go to a lot of colleges across the nation and get a Master's degree in Native American studies or Native American history but this is about contemporary tribal government administration.

Linda Moon Stumpff, PhD, Faculty in MPA Tribal Governance and Environmental Studies Graduate Programs, Apache / Seminole: People who would be interested in enrolling in this program and who have applied to this program have been people who are very interested in bringing relevance and self governance to their tribal communities.

Aaron Bryan, MPA Candidate, Education, Employment and Training Manager, Quinalt: It's not the typical traditional college that you would expect when you enter into the world of academia basically because it's a community learning environment where not only do we learn from the instructors but we learn from each other.

(Music)

Laura Grabhorn (Narrator): The tribal government program admits students every other year. They experience the entire program together and graduate in two years. Earning a degree requires completion of 60 credits including 24 credits in core courses, 20 credits in the tribal concentration, 12 elective credits and a capstone project for 4 credits.

Jennifer Scott, MPA, Northwest Indian Applied Research Institute, Assistant Director, Quinalt: You spend so much time together as a unit that you really get to know each other on a real personal level which is good. But also you get to draw out from each one of those other students their knowledge, their experience which only adds to your own education.

Andrea Halstead, MPA Candidate, TANF Co-Manager, Quinalt: It gave me the concept of what team was. A lot of the work that we do in our studies is in team settings.

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Megan Beeby: Just the way that we got to collaborate on our own tribal experience and our work experience working for the state was amazing. So I got to say, this is what my tribe does on its, you know, HR policies. And they could say, “Well this is what my tribe does and this is what my tribe does.” And it was just great to compare and make those connections and network.

Colleen F. Cawston: Oftentimes you are like an island when you’re working in state government and working on behalf of tribes. And to be able to work and collaborate with other individuals that were working in similar environments, learn from their experiences and share your experiences really aided in being able to contribute to the program but also learn from the program.

Laura Grabhorn (Narrator): The faculty share a commitment to social justice and bring this into the classroom. The team is led by Alan Parker and Linda Moon Stumpff

Linda Moon Stumpff:... And it makes a huge difference what agency and what law you’re talking about.

Alan Parker: We have designed the MPA in Tribal Governance program every step of the way with tribal leaders themselves. It was based on surveys that we did of tribal government officials. We had focus group meetings with people who had real expertise. And so what we have in the program by way of you know both curriculum and how it’s delivered and our whole emphasis is all based on what the tribes have said you know should be in a program of this kind, a professional development program.

Laura Grabhorn (Narrator): Faculty members from the traditional MPA program rotate into these courses and visiting lecturers include tribal leaders and educators from around the country.

Philip S. Deloria, Director of American Indian Law Center, University of New Mexico, Lakota:...Time goes by to go back and say is this constitution that’s really meeting our needs or is this a form of government that’s really meeting our needs, is it a very appropriate thing to do? I think every tribe should do that.

Secretary Doug McDonald, Washington Department of Transportation: How is it that we take the things that divide us, that require tribal consultation and government to government relations, and then nip them together?

Randy Scott (Narrator): Students participate in regional and national conferences sharing what they’ve learned.

(Female student in class):...to accomplish what we need to accomplish rather than governmental intent.

Mel Tonasket, Past Chairman Colville Confederated Tribes, Pas Pres. National Congress of American Indians, Colville: But you need to have strong tribal leadership selected to really set the stage of what is going to happen in that consultation meeting.

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Randy Scott (Narrator): Courses are taught in an intensive format, meeting four sessions each quarter. Each session meets Friday afternoons and all day on Saturday and Sunday.

Jennifer Scott: You know the intensive format even though it sounds kind of intense actually works because you can plan for that. You know you know you're going to be at class on a particular weekend so you really prepared your family that you were going to be gone. They would have to be on their own. But you also on a personal level had to prepare and be ready for that.

Glen A. (Tuck) Wilson, MPA, WA State DIS Facility Services Manager: Well for me personally the intensive format was absolutely wonderful because that's my learning style. And it helped me in that I was totally immersed from noon on Friday 'til Sunday afternoon.

Linda Moon Stumpff: We knew we wanted to use the campus as a center, as a heartbeat for the program. So the easiest way to do this was the model for intensive format where people could live at home but they only had to travel once every three weeks. It's also very similar to a training format for people who worked for tribal state or federal government. And oftentimes they can get it funded or get leave as a training course because it only requires them to be away for a certain number of limited days. So that was our thinking in creating the intensive format. We also use online as enhancement. We have websites. Students do post papers and provide peer reviews and work together before class and between classes.

(Female student): I work full time. I'm a full time mother. So the format allowed me to continue to work and continue to, you know, be the mother I needed to be to my daughter and still go to college at the same time.

Laura Grabhorn (Narrator): The tribal governance MPA at Evergreen provides current and future tribal leaders with the knowledge and skills necessary to work successfully in Indian Country.

Megan Beeby: For my tribe which is really ramping up its administration, its administrative capacity, I really look forward to going home and applying what I've learned.

Alan Parker: Many of our students while they were still in the process of taking the program up you know achieved promotions you know were asked to assume even more responsible positions you know in their tribal government or in their state government office. And I think it was a reflection that their office or their, you know, supervisors recognized that this person was going through a period of accelerated you know development.

Linda Moon Stumpff: The Master's of Public Administration is in most tribal selection for jobs a key degree for director in executive level positions. And that is the gap we wanted to fill.

Don Bantz, TESC, Academic Vice President and Provost: Well this program is embedded within our larger MPA program. So it has all the benefit of the existing program in faculty and curriculum that it brings in this whole tribal emphasis and tribal faculty, tribal curriculum which we're developing, and a separate cohort of tribal students in different format, intensive based. And so it has the benefit of both

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being embedded in an existing strong MPA program yet having a very distinct tribal focus which allows students to take on work relevant to them in every class, relevant to their tribe, relevant to their work.

(Female student): I hope to continue to work for the Quinault Indian Nation and maybe other tribal governance to try to assist them in setting a standard on how they manage and run their programs.

Megan Beeby: My expectations were far exceeded in this program working with all the other students, the curriculum, the subjects that we got to talk about and how I've been able to apply that in my career and will be able to apply it in my future. I didn't even imagine all its applications.

Jennifer Scott: I never thought that I'd have a graduate degree let alone finish my undergraduate program. But once I got going I found that I actually, there was so much interest for me on a personal level that it really was fun.

Aaron Bryan: Not only do I have a Bachelor's degree but now I've just finished my first year of my Master's program and I feel that this is an accomplishment that's not only great for me and my family but I'm also becoming a role model for other tribal members.

Pearl Copoeman-Baller: I think the students ultimately first of all are going to have the power of knowledge and they're going to be able to take that knowledge and take it a step further, and they're going to say, yes, this is what I can do strategically. This is what I can incorporate. This is what I can help develop. I can be a part of that, part of the community and part of the planning process for the future.

(Music)

Billy Frank, Chairman, NW Indian Fisheries Commission, Nisqually: You've got to know how to take charge and express yourself because this college has creative thinkers and they have a thought process into the future and that's what we need.

(Music)

Credits

Executive Producers: Alan Parker, Jennifer Scott, Linda Moon Stumpff

Additional Footage: The Evergreen State College Media Center, Northwest Indian News – Mark Anderson, Jim Browder

Special thanks to: Megan Beeby, Aaron Bryan, Pearl Capoeman-Baller, Colleen F. Cawston, Phillip S. Deloria, Billy Frank, Laura Grabhorn (Narrator), Andrea Halstead, Doug McDonald, Alan Parker, Jennifer Scott, Randy Scott (Narrator) Linda Moon Stumpff, Mel Tonasket, David Whitener, Charles Wilkinson, Northwest Indian Applied Research Institute, TESC Longhouse Education and Cultural Center.

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Music: "From the Time of Our Ancestors" – Featuring the voice of Bruce Subiyay Miller and his group ShabuBesh. Music Exclusively produced by Paul D.G. Eubanks of Ten Wolves Audio/Video Productions.

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Visit these web pages for further helpful information:

Tribal Governance MPA Program: www.evergreen.edu/mpa/gtribehome.htm

Other Native Programs at TESC: www.evergreen.edu/nativeprograms

Forms

This DVD contains the following PDF files:

MPA Application Checklist PDF

Graduate Admission Application PDF

Note: These PDF files are only available for download if you are using a computer. You can access them by using the Windows Explore function and selecting TESC_DVD or simply opening the DVD directory.