

AN EVALUATION OF THE ACADEMIC PORTION
OF THE
MÉTIS HOUSING ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

Submitted to
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Submitted by
Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research, Inc.

July 1994

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 BACKGROUND	1
2.0 PROGRAM OBJECTIVES	2
3.0 PROGRAM DESIGN	3
4.0 RECRUITMENT PROCESS	5
5.0 THE STUDENTS	6
5.1 Age and Marital Status	6
5.2 Previous Education	7
5.3 Knowledge of Aboriginal Languages	8
6.0 PREPARATORY PHASE	9
6.1 Student Comments	9
7.0 ACADEMIC PHASE	11
7.1 Students' Academic Attendance	11
7.2 Business Communications Class	11
7.2.1 The Instructor's Ability - Lee Miller	11
7.2.2 What the Students Liked Best About the Class	12
7.2.3 Areas for Improvement	13
7.3 Business Report Writing Class	13
7.3.1 The Instructor's Ability - Jennifer Burgess	13
7.3.2 What the Students Liked Best About the Class	14
7.3.3 Areas for Improvement	14
7.4 Oral Presentations Class	15
7.4.1 The Instructor's Ability - Jennifer Burgess	15
7.4.2 What the Students Liked Best About the Class	15
7.4.3 Areas for Improvement	16
7.5 Accounting Class	16
7.5.1 The Instructor's Ability - Bob Lillie	16
7.5.2 What the Students Liked Best About the Class	17
7.5.3 Areas for Improvement	18
7.6 Counselling Skills Class	18
7.6.1 The Instructor's Ability - Lee Miller	18
7.6.2 What the Students Liked Best About the Class	19
7.6.3 Areas for Improvement	19
8.0 CONCLUDING REMARKS	20

1.0 BACKGROUND

On January 16, 1992 the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), Saskatchewan Department of Community Services - Housing Division (CSHD), and the Provincial Métis Housing Corporation (PMHC) agreed to work together on the development of a "Métis Housing Worker Training Program."

The Program was to be delivered by the Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research (GDI).

In order to facilitate and guide the development of this program, a Sub-Committee was established. Representation included:

- * Branch Manager, CMHC Saskatoon Office
- * Branch Manager, CMHC Regina Office
- * Rural Native Housing Coordinator, CMHC Regional Office
- * Rural Native Housing Program Officer, CMHC National Office
- * Project Coordinator, CMHC Regional Office
- * General Manager, Provincial Métis Housing Corporation
- * Director Northern Operations, Community services Housing Division
- * Director Intergovernmental Affairs and Northern Housing, Community Services Housing Division
- * Executive Director, Gabriel Dumont Institute

2.0 PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The following objectives were set-out by the Sub-committee:

- (1) To address the shortages of qualified Métis engaged in the delivery, administration and management of housing programs both in the public and private sectors;
- (2) To ensure a comprehensive and systematic approach to training of Métis in the field of housing by addressing the perceived shortcomings in the existing CADRE program; and
- (3) To assist Métis to effectively participate in the labour market.

In addition, the training will be designed to meet the actual employment opportunities among the sponsoring organizations and will be, therefore, designed to meet the knowledge and skill training needs of targeted positions.

3.0 PROGRAM DESIGN

At a meeting of the Sub-Committee on January 16, 1992 the following was agreed upon:

- the Program design should incorporate both an academic classroom component and practical job experience in each sponsoring organization;
- a key issue is the need to ensure the integration of knowledge and skills learned in the classroom with actual "on the job" experience in the respective organizations;
- maximum use should be made of existing "in-house" materials and courses from CMHC, CSHD, GDI and other able educational institutions and organizations to reduce the cost of curriculum development;
- the program design should provide for practical skills development; and
- knowledge of specific programs would only be dealt with at a "broad brush" level in the classroom component of the program. In-house training programs (including innovative approaches to training would need to be developed in each organization to provide the necessary level of program detail).

Importantly, the Métis Housing Administration Program would want to avoid the problems related to the design of the existing CADRE Program. These have been documented as follows:

(1) training which is inadequate to deal with "real" problems encountered "on the job," such as:

- ▶ counselling Social Assistance recipients;
- ▶ handling rental arrears;
- ▶ budget development;
- ▶ the planning process;
- ▶ financial analysis and management;
- ▶ roles of the various housing organizations;
- ▶ community resources available to assist tenants;
- ▶ market analysis;
- ▶ insured lending;
- ▶ on-reserve programs; and
- ▶ management skills;

(2) haphazard delivery of training - "often there was no one around to train the Cadre" and there were "No training objectives." Often the solution used was to give the trainee manuals to read;"

(3) need for a mentor system to help the trainee;

(4) need for skills to handle cultural differences;

(5) lack of interaction and too short a training period with the sponsoring organization;

(6) need for sponsoring organization to assume more responsibility for hiring trainees when the program ends; and

(7) high turnover at the sponsoring organizations due to lower salaries and benefits than could be obtained at the larger housing corporations.

4.0 RECRUITMENT PROCESS

The Gabriel Dumont Institute advertised for students throughout the Métis Nation in Saskatchewan. Advertisements describing the program along with application forms were sent to all Métis Nation of Saskatchewan Area Directors and all Local Aboriginal Management Board offices (Pathways). Local and Regional Canada Employment Centres received copies as well.

Seventy-eight people applied. Thirty-six candidates were screened and thirty came for interviews. Candidates underwent a lengthy interview process that included an extensive written component. Ten students were selected; one from each of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan regions. There were nine men and one woman. Nine students were given training allowances of \$1,150 per month and one student received a comparable amount of Unemployment Insurance.

In the future, the recruitment process should encourage more women to apply. The program may wish to consider promoting gender equity in the selection process.

5.0 THE STUDENTS

The following section provides a demographic description of the students in the program.

5.1 Age and Marital Status

NAME	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	HERITAGE	DEPEND-ENTS	SEX
Roger	27	married	Métis	two	Male
Phyllis	39		Métis		Female
Lloyd	44		Métis		Male
Greg	21		Métis		Male
Randy	19		Métis		Male
Byron			Métis		Male
Wayne	23	married	Métis	two	Male
Cliff	40s		Métis		Male
John	35	com. law	Métis	three	Male
Winston	50		Métis		Male

5.2 Previous Education

Name	Highest Grade	Post Secondary (c) = college	Time since last in school	Other Relevant Training	
Roger	Gr. 12 (academic)	SIAST Carpentry	5.5 years	Carpentry Apprentice	
Phyllis	Gr. 11 (academic)	Psych. 100 U. of S. Leadership Training U. of S. Job Readiness(c) Family Counselling (c) Life Skills (c)	19 years	Budget Training & Counselling (Consumer Affairs)	
Lloyd					
Greg	Gr. 12 (academic)	SIAST Carpentry	6 months	Carpentry Apprentice First Aid Certificate Power Actuated Tools Cert.	
Randy	Gr. 12 (academic)		6 months	Carpentry Apprentice	
Byron	Gr. 12 (correspond- ence)	SIAST Carpentry	15 years	Carpentry Apprentice & Journeyman Certificate	
Wayne	Gr. 12 (Academic)	2 years of SUNTEP, U. of S.	6 years	Firearm Safety Referee Clinic	

Cliff	Gr. 12 (ABE)	SIAST Carpentry SIAST Small Engine Repair	2 years		
John	Gr. 12 (academic)	Diploma in Bus. Admin. U. of R. Diploma in Journalism U.W.O.	1 year	Adult Basic Literacy Class Drywall & Painting Class Carpentry Class Welding Class	
Winston					

5.4 Knowledge of Aboriginal Languages

Name	Language	Understand	Speak	Read	Write
Phyllis	Cree	Fair	Basic	Basic	Basic
Lloyd	Cree	Fluent	Fluent	Nil	Nil
Greg	Nil				
Randy	Nil				
Byron	Nil				
Wayne	Cree	Fluent	Fluent	Nil	Nil
Cliff	Nil				
John R.	Cree	Basic			
Winston	Cree Chipewan	Fluent Basic	Fluent Basic		
Roger	Nil				

6.0 PREPARATORY PHASE

The Preparatory Phase began on February 15, 1993 and ran for eight weeks, with an average of 37.5 hours a week. Students were instructed in Grades 11 and 12 Adult Basic Education, as well as in Business Communication, Business Mathematics, Computers and Native Studies. Students were tested before the Preparatory Phase began (upon application to the Program) and again by SIAST at the completion of the preparatory phase.

6.1 Student Comments

The majority of the students considered the Preparatory Phase to be worthwhile. They felt that the time spent in this phase was appropriate. Only one student felt it could have been extended. The following statements from the students best describe how they viewed the Preparatory Phase:

- * "I think the two month Preparatory Phase was a good idea. It has got me back in the school mode. I am really looking forward to getting into the housing part of the program."
- * "The Preparatory Phase was appropriate and useful to me because it taught me to think again."
- * "Definitely the Preparatory Phase is a must. Especially for students out of school for more than three years. It was quite useful to me and I found the split to be appropriate."
- * "Preparatory phase was needed and should be done again in the next course."
- * "We had a preparatory component, basic communications, computer skills, accounting and oral presentations in the education component. Most of the courses were very basic and were tied into administration in some way but very basic."
- * "The Preparatory Phase was definitely not a waste of time. Even for me who graduated a year ago it was a great help. People tend to forget things when they do not use, skills that is. It would also be great if you were getting people who were out of school for years."

* "The Preparatory Phase of two months was a very useful tune-up; this phase as well [could] have been more closely aligned with CMHC procedures and applications, eg.: better writing, report writing and math. It activates the individual back into the learning mode. The two months allowed for this were very appropriate."

* "I think the Preparatory Phase was a very good idea to implement in this program. It served [to be] very useful for the people that were out of school for a long period of time. Two months of preparatory was definitely long enough for a tune up to get back into the school mode."

* "The Prep. Phase was a good tune-up for an introduction back into class. I feel this helped all of us who have been out of classrooms for any great length of time. The split of prep. and academic phases is reasonable in my opinion."

* "I found the initial section of the course to be very useful. It allowed us to brush up on our skills and to re-orient ourselves to the classroom. It provided us with an opportunity to upgrade ourselves and to remember exactly what is involved in classroom study. Personally, I would like to have seen this phase extended on throughout the balance of the course. As I mentioned previously, I would have appreciated if this form of remediation had carried on throughout the length of the course. It would have provided the opportunity to ensure that we did not fall behind or become too overwhelmed by various aspects of the course."

7.0 ACADEMIC PHASE

The student attendance averaged ninety-one percent during the academic phase.

7.1 Students' Academic Attendance

Month	# of Students	# of Training Days	Total # of Student Training Days	Total Number of Days Missed	Percentage of Days attended	Total Number of Late Counts	# of Stud's. with >2 Days Absent
Feb./93	10	0	100	0	100%	5	0
Mar./93	10	23	230	15.75	93.1 %	6	3
Apr./93	10	22	220	18.5	91.6 %	2	3
May/93	10	20	200	11	94.5 %	12	2
June/93	10	22	220	24	89.1%	18	4
July/93	10	20	200	19	90.5%	5	5
Aug./93	10	21	210	15.5	92.6%	16	2
Sept/93							
Oct/93							

7.2 Business Communications Class

7.2.1 The Instructor's Ability - Lee Miller

STATEMENT	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The course was well organized.	1	6	2	1
2. Course content was appropriate.	3	7		
3. Handout material was appropriate.	3	6	1	
4. Room comfortable and appropriate.	1	8		1

5. Course length appropriate.		1	4	5
6. Instructor Knowledgeable.	7	3		
7. Material presented clearly.	5	4	1	
8. Instructor responsive to students' needs, questions and comments.	6	4		
9. Instructor enthusiastic.	9	1		

7.2.2 What the Students Liked Best About the Class

The majority of the students liked the course because the instructor was good and brought humour to the classroom. Also, many felt that it was informative and interesting. Others enjoyed the independent environment of the class. The following are student statements regarding what they liked best about the course:

- * "The instructor. Very friendly and bubbly personality. A breath of fresh air to the class."
- * "It was informative and I was able to articulate my behaviour to myself."
- * "The information and the material."
- * "The independence."
- * "I really enjoyed the attitude of the instructor and the discussions."
- * "The fact we were allowed to work on our own."
- * "The instructor was a great help."
- * "I found out how to improve my communication skills."
- * "It was humorous and kept everybody interested."
- * "The information."

7.2.3 Areas for Improvement

More time should be dedicated to such an important class. If this is not possible, perhaps less information should be provided so students are not rushed. Some felt the pressures were stressful. One comment suggested organizing the modules to meet the needs of the students. The teaching methods, it was advised, should be more empathetic to the students. One student stated that some tasks contradicted each other.

7.3 Business Report Writing Class

7.3.1 The Instructor's Ability - Jennifer Burgess

STATEMENT	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The course was well organized.		4	2	3
2. Course content was appropriate.	1	6	2	
3. Handout material was appropriate.		8	1	
4. Room comfortable and appropriate.	1	8		
5. Course length appropriate.		4	3	2
6. Instructor Knowledgeable.	1	8		
7. Material presented clearly.		8	1	
8. Instructor responsive to students' needs, questions and comments.	2	7		

7.3.2 What the Students Liked Best About the Class

Generally, the students enjoyed the writing portion of the class work. For the most part they liked the teacher's style of instruction. The following student comments depict their feelings about what they liked best about the class:

- * "The information was very knowledgeable. Lots of it is new to me."
- * "The instruction by the teacher."
- * "Report writing."
- * "Very informative."
- * "Writing portion."
- * "Jennifer gave me some good points on my writing skills."

7.3.3 Areas for Improvement

As with Business Communications, students felt that more time should be allocated to the class. Although, many students enjoyed the writing aspect of the course they felt there could be more class time allotted to writing. The instructor should spend more time organizing course materials prior to classroom time. Some students were very unhappy about her disorganized class.

7.4 Oral Presentations Class

7.4.1 The Instructor's Ability - Jennifer Burgess

STATEMENT	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The course was well organized.	1	7	1	1
2. Course content was appropriate.	1	8	1	
3. Handout material was appropriate.	1	7	1	1
4. Room comfortable and appropriate.	1	8	1	
5. Course length appropriate.		8	1	1
6. Instructor Knowledgeable.	1	6	3	
7. Material presented clearly.		8	2	
8. Instructor responsive to students' needs, questions and comments.	1	8	1	
9. Instructor enthusiastic.	1	8	1	

7.4.2 What the Students Liked Best About the Class

The opportunity to learn and practise public speaking in front of their classmates seemed to be enjoyed by many of the students. The following statements demonstrate the students' feelings about what they like best about the class:

- * "The speeches."
- * "The chance to try oral presentations."
- * "Getting up and speaking in front of the class."
- * "The instructor."

- * "Oral presentations."
- * "Material we received."
- * "It has made me more comfortable speaking to people."

7.4.3 Areas for Improvement

The students felt that more time should be spent doing public speaking exercises. One student felt that there were too many reference books. One suggestion was to set up regular public speaking meetings similar to toastmasters and have them run continuously throughout the program. One other suggested that the course should have used specific housing examples for the public speaking subjects.

7.5 Accounting Class

7.5.1 The Instructor's Ability - Bob Lillie

STATEMENT	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The course was well organized.	4	6		
2. Course content was appropriate.	3	7		
3. Handout material was appropriate.	4	6		
4. Room comfortable and appropriate.	4	5		1
5. Course length appropriate.	4	4	1	1
6. Instructor knowledgeable.	9	1		
7. Material presented clearly.	9	1		

8. Instructor responsive to students' needs, questions and comments.	9	1		
9. Instructor enthusiastic.	8	2		

7.5.2 What Students Liked Best About the Class

The students enjoyed this class. They considered it well organized and informative. The proceeding comments demonstrate how the students felt about the accounting class:

- * "I learnt a lot of material and understand the accounting process and how to read financial statements. The instructor also made sure everyone understood the process of the accounting system."
- * "It was very interesting for me. Bob (instructor) made it more interesting. Bob is very knowledgeable in this subject and is a good instructor."
- * "Instructor was very good."
- * "It provided basic information of accounting which would be necessary for the future."
- * "Each chapter built upon itself and each chapter intensified and became more instructing."
- * "Hand written exams. Course well taught. Excellent instructor, well organized and to the point."
- * "[Liked] everything [about the course] because I like working with numbers. Bob is a very pleasant instructor and I enjoyed him while he was here."
- * "Accounting learned was very appropriate for the housing administration course."
- * "It made a person think and do a lot of studying in order to pass."

7.5.3 Areas for Improvement

One student suggested that learning how to use computer accounting software packages would be of benefit. Many felt that the time allotted was too short for the level of difficulty involved and the materials that needed to be covered. More time should have been made available for such an intensive class.

7.6 Counselling Skills Class

7.6.1 The Instructor's Ability - Lee Miller

STATEMENT	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The course was well organized.	2	8		
2. Course content was appropriate.	3	5	2	
3. Handout material was appropriate.	3	6	1	
4. Room comfortable and appropriate.	3	7		
5. Course length appropriate.	3	5	1	1
6. Instructor Knowledgeable.	6	4		
7. Material presented clearly.	6	4		
8. Instructor responsive to students' needs, questions and comments.	7	3		
9. Instructor enthusiastic.	7	3		

7.6.2 What the Students Liked Best About the Class

Students enjoyed the instructor immensely. They felt that the course was both interesting and useful. They had the following to say:

- * "The instructor Lee. She's great!"
- * "I learnt some important things about being a helper."
- * "Lee Miller is a fabulous teacher and treats everybody equally."
- * "Very interesting subject."
- * "I liked the self-awareness part of the course."
- * "Learnt an effective way for people to solve their own problems."
- * "[I liked] role playing."

7.6.3 Areas for Improvement

Some students felt shy in front of a video camera and with disclosing personal problems. Perhaps this class could be less personal. Some felt that the counselling class should emphasize situations the students will be in when on the job. Role modelling of work situations should be practiced. One student felt that personal problems of clients that require counselling should be left up to professionals, thereby inferring this class was not necessary. One student observed that the class was not culturally sensitive for Aboriginal people. The counselling class should be Métis and First Nations specific.

8.0 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Overall, the students found the Preparatory and Academic phases to be well taught and necessary. Class attendance was high. Instructors' were liked, some more than others. The biggest complaint was that there was too little time scheduled for most of the classes. The amount of time allocated to each class should be reviewed. The hours should either be increased or the intensity and amount taught be decreased.

The lack of culturally appropriate materials in the counselling class was a very big oversight on the part of the instructor. Although the students really liked her, it would be in her best interest to make her materials and class presentations more appropriate to the students she is teaching.

The lack of program specific examples in several of the classes was a major omission on the part of the instructors. When so little time is allotted to classes such as these, instructors should do as much program specific training as possible.

Each of the instructors should receive a copy of the results of their evaluations so that they can make changes to their teaching methods. It will also provide them with good feedback because most of what the students had to say was positive.

In light of the above problems, it is hoped that the solutions provided will be implemented. The Métis Housing Administration Program will benefit from these students' evaluation and ideas for improvement.

AN EVALUATION OF THE ACADEMIC PORTION
OF THE
MÉTIS HOUSING ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

Submitted to
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Submitted by
Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research, Inc.

July 1994