

Giving Voice to Our Lakota People

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Abstract

Researchers at two universities worked with project partners to develop indigenous interpretive curriculum that provided the tools for indigenous students to tell their own stories and market their own heritage to visitors seeking an authentic experience. Project partners sought to identify elements that exemplify a culturally grounded approach to indigenous interpretation. It is assumed that indigenous interpretation will provide opportunities for non-native visitors to have meaningful experiences of native culture. It is also assumed that indigenous interpretation will foster a deeper understanding of the sacredness of native homelands, the resiliency and vulnerability of natural and cultural systems, and the beauty of harmonious relations between the earth and its inhabitants. Finally, it is assumed that as native youth gain skills in indigenous interpretation, they will make better decisions about which cultural stories and practices to share with the public (and which to retain unto themselves) and how to best share those stories with diverse audiences. This led to the development of indigenous interpretation and tourism curriculum in a tribal college in South Dakota. The proposed new degree plan includes core courses in natural and cultural history, psychology, business, Lakota language, and English. Within the set of core courses there is an emphasis in oral and written communication, digital communication, and experiential and place-based education. The project team proposed a set of three new interpretation courses and one new hospitality and tourism course to comprise the new concentration. The proposed course content and teaching pedagogy reflects an understanding of indigenous learning preferences and native ways of knowing. Proposed course content and teaching pedagogy also reflects professional standards of practice. Through a robust partnership, and active engagement by all partners in the curriculum development process, it is believed that indigenous students will gain new knowledge, an expanded skill set, and an enhanced career pathway. It is also believed that this partnership will provide opportunities to strengthen indigenous interpretation nationwide. Along with the new proposed concentration, the project team worked in tandem with fellow academics at tribal college to design program learning outcomes, assessment matrices and individual course syllabi. The four new courses proposed for the concentration will rely on adjunct faculty for course delivery that may include both an online and face to face component. Potential subject matter experts (SMEs) could include NPS personnel, hospitality and tourism professionals and others who bridge the gap between academia and practice. The model for this approach is based on a "Cloud of Support" that includes not only the Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCU), accrediting agency, faculty, staff and students, but also the Tribal Council, Elders, National Park Service (NPS), local partners and academic partners at other institutions.

Project Team & Partners



People want to know our stories – they want to meet us and connect to the places of the Lakota people.



HISTORY

VISION



Lakota life, past and present, told through our eyes and our voice.

- OLC Degree Program
- Empowerment
- Cultural Preservation (Intergenerational meeting – elders/youth)
- Employment Opportunity

The opportunity to get a degree and know a job is a real possibility.



DESIRED OUTCOMES

Oglala Lakota College Desired Outcomes

- Degree Program
 - Develop, monitor, and assess educational program
 - Provide quality faculty to teach from the curriculum
 - Ensure placement of graduates
- Interpretation
 - Provide Lakota perspective knowledge for students
 - Encourage and utilize tribal members' input
 - Provide training in Lakota perspective presentation
- Tourism Industry
 - Create OLC alliance with Lakota tribes
 - Network with regional industry

Shared assets will get the Lakota Studies, Interpretation, and Tourism program implemented.



CURRENT ASSETS

Regional Tourism Assessment

- Database for possible internships
- Currently developing a tourism Asset Inventory for Pine Ridge
- Developing partnerships to create opportunities for tourism development



Job Outlook

- SFASU Hospitality team members conducted a job outlook in November 2015
- Implications for Employment
 - The 2013 Visitor Intercept Survey found that Rapid City, SD was the number one in-state destination for travelers in the in-target group 1 with Black Hills Badlands & Lakes Region as the second most popular destination. Other highly mentioned destinations in the intercept survey included Keystone/Mt. Rushmore, Sioux Falls and Custer. With Keystone/Mt. Rushmore and Custer being within the geographic focus of the Indigenous Interpretation and Tourism study.

Job Outlook

Top Tourist Attractions in South Dakota 2012
*respondents picked top 5 other results below 20% excluded.

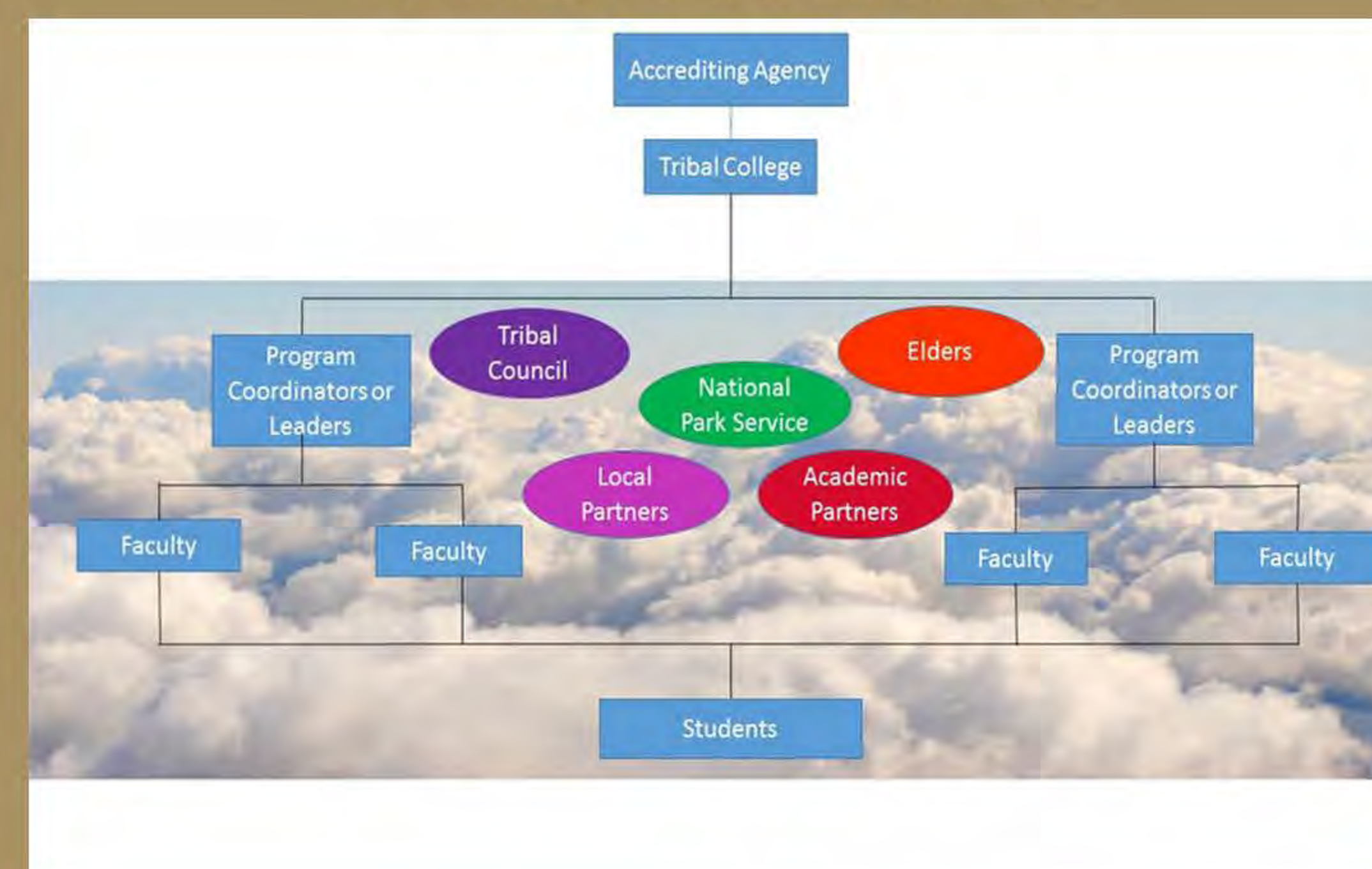
ATTRACTION	% of RESPONDENT INTERESTED
National/State Parks	69.95%
Scenic Drives	66.67%
Historic Places	57.71%
Cultural/Native American Places	30.85%
Museums	23.88%
Hunting/Fishing	20.40%

Purposeful steps and delivery timelines move vision into reality.



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Model



Updates

- As of March 2017, the Interpretation and Tourism curriculum was approved for second presentation to the curriculum committee at Oglala Lakota College.
- There are 7 prospective major students who are waiting for the approval of the curriculum.
- Target semester to start is Fall 2018.

Acknowledgement



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