
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2008OTP0096-000572
April 21, 2008

Office of the Premier
Ministry of Advanced Education

PREMIER ANNOUNCES FRASER VALLEY'S FIRST UNIVERSITY

ABBOTSFORD – The University College of the Fraser Valley will become a university, to be called the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV), Premier Gordon Campbell and Advanced Education Minister Murray Coell announced today.

“The new University of the Fraser Valley will build on its international reputation for criminology and criminal justice programs, for its aviation program carried out in cooperation with Coastal Pacific Aviation, for its specialization in Indo-Canadian Studies, and for its trade and technology programs where it will initiate a new alternative fuel vehicle maintenance and repair program to begin in the fall of 2009,” said Premier Campbell. “The University of the Fraser Valley will provide degree granting programs for thousands of students closer to where they live and for international students attracted to its exceptional teaching and community orientation.”

Pending amendments to B.C.’s University Act, the new University of the Fraser Valley will focus on the training needs of the region and build on its provincial, national and international reputation in its key areas of specialization and excellence which include its School of Criminology and Criminal Justice; Trades and Technology Centre – Advanced Vehicle Technology Program; Centre for Indo-Canadian Studies; and Aviation.

“The consultations conducted as part of the Campus 2020 process clearly identified that British Columbians want to access university degree programs in all regions of the province,” Coell said. “With a new university serving the Fraser Valley, students will be able to access degree programs closer to home.”

The institution began as Fraser Valley College in 1974. It was granted university college status and renamed the University College of the Fraser Valley in 1991. UCFV has campuses in Abbotsford, Chilliwack and Mission, and regional centres in Agassiz and Hope.

“Our new status will mean we can increase opportunities for our students while continuing to offer all of our current programs, including trades training,” said UCFV president Skip Bassford. “Having an accessible university means we can make the entire region more competitive, attracting more professionals and keeping grads closer to home.”

“In the next 20 years, the population of the Fraser Valley will double and we are seeing our 18- to 24-year-old population growing six times as fast as the provincial average,” said Abbotsford-Clayburn MLA John van Dongen.

“Having access to post-secondary institutions including the new UFV is part of our government’s commitment to making B.C. the best-educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent,” said Abbotsford-Mount Lehman MLA Mike de Jong.

“Establishing UFV as a university will be an incentive for young people to stay and learn in their own community,” said Randy Hawes, MLA for Maple Ridge-Mission.

“The Chilliwack Campus of UFV provides and opportunity for local residents to acquire the education they need, without having to leave town to get it,” said John Les, MLA for Chilliwack-Sumas.

“As a former student of UCFV myself, I know that students will often stay in the community they studied in after they graduate, and this makes campuses outside major centres vital to developing an educated workforce in less-populated areas,” said Barry Penner, MLA for Chilliwack-Kent.

Amendments to B.C.’s University Act will be required to allow for the designation of the new university.

UCFV has an enrolment of 14,049 students, including 568 international students. Since 2001, the Province has increased operating funding for the University College of the Fraser Valley by almost \$14 million and invested \$31 million in capital projects including the \$21.6-million Trades and Technology Centre in Chilliwack.

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