

# UArctic Report to the Senior Arctic Officials of the Arctic Council. Tromsø, Norway, April 12-13 2007.

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UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

## **UArctic Report to the Senior Arctic Officials of the Arctic Council Tromsø, Norway, April 12-13 2007**

The University of the Arctic, now in its sixth year of existence, is constantly growing, both in its membership and in its program development. The last few months have brought many exciting new developments.

### **The UArctic Rectors' Forum**

The inaugural meeting of the UArctic Rectors Forum was held during the Arctic Science Summit Week at Dartmouth College, Hanover, US, on March 14, 2007. The leaders from 15 UArctic member institutions who attended discussed the role of universities in the development of northern regions, as well as on the role of the governments, the science community and the International Polar Year in the current higher education and science collaboration. They were enthusiastic about the initiative of engaging university leadership more closely in the work of UArctic and agreed to work further on the operational guidelines for the collaboration. The Forum accepted the invitation from the University of Lapland to meet for the next time in Rovaniemi, Finland, in approximately one year.

In the dialogue between the Working Group of Higher Education and the University of the Arctic on March 18, 2007 the government representatives also hailed the establishment of the Rectors' Forum and expressed their interest in further opportunities for cooperation on Higher Education policy in the Circumpolar North between Arctic government higher education and research authorities and the Forum.

### **International Polar Year**

As an endorsed IPY project and the lead for the IPY Cluster on Education and Outreach in the Arctic, UArctic is coordinating Education and Outreach activities from its IPY Higher Education and Outreach Program Office at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, headed by Dr. Elena Sparrow. The UArctic IPY cluster is composed of 18 projects from various member institutions, ranging from scientific studies to curriculum development. Endorsed by the IPY Joint Committee, UArctic is responsible for the coordination and delivery of higher education and outreach during IPY. In addition to the 18 projects included in the cluster, UArctic also endorses various IPY projects and events which correlate with its vision and goals.

### **Thematic Networks**

List of education activities started at Thematic Networks during fall 2006-winter 07:

- Environmental Impact assessment with indigenous perspectives, Bachelor level (30 ECTS) UArctic Indigenous Thematic Network on Community-based Natural Resource Co-management (ITN) delivered at Sami University College in cooperation with RAIPON.
- Comparative social policy, Bachelor level (10 ECTS), TN on Social Work
- Management of Local and Regional Development, advanced emphasis course on Bachelor level (30 ECTS) TN on Local and Regional Development.
- TN on Global Change in Arctic sent a call for finding the writers for new global change curriculum and selected Academic Leads for each Master's course (under development for delivery on-line)

List of conferences and workshops organized by thematic networks:

- The 5th International Kastelli Symposium: Wellbeing and health in the northern focus, November 24-25, 2006, Oulu, Finland, organized by TN on Arctic Medicine



UArctic is endorsed by the  
International Polar Year (IPY)

- A joint working group meeting of Advanced emphasis on Climate Change and Thematic Network on Global Change in February 16-18, 2007, Kautokeino, Norway, organized by TN on Global Change in the Arctic
- Borealis Conference in March 5-7, 2007 on Building Capacity for Sustainable Places in the Circumpolar North, Alta, Norway, organized by TN on Local and Regional Development

List of new Thematic Networks proposed to be endorsed by UArctic council in Arkhangelsk:

- Thematic Network on Northern Governance (host: Greg Poelzer, University of Saskatchewan, Canada)
- Thematic Network Arctic on Marine and Coastal Management (host: Peter Weiss, the University Centre of West Fjords, Iceland)
- Thematic Network Group- Indigenous Arts and Crafts (host: Gunvor Guttorm, Sámi University College, Norway)
- Arctic Learning Environment, ALE (host: Leo Pekkala, University of Lapland, Finland)

### UArctic Online Course Catalogue

Launched in June 2006, the online course catalogue ([www.uarctic.studies.org](http://www.uarctic.studies.org)) has grown to become a highly efficient tool for students to access courses in and about the North and for member institutions to promote their course offerings. UArctic has recently obtained significant private funding to expand the online course catalogue further and will be announcing major developments in this area in the months to come.

### Circumpolar Studies

The Circumpolar Studies Program continues to grow. During the academic year 2006, 1045 students were enrolled in BCS courses, an increase of 43 % over the previous year and a number which is well beyond the objective of 600 students set by the UArctic Strategic Plan 2005-2010. The Circumpolar Studies had its first graduates—17 students with a Bachelor of Circumpolar Studies Program from the Bodø University College (20 more are expected this June). As well, a Canadian cohort has started the bachelors program in Northern Saskatchewan in September 2006. Curriculum development and offerings continues towards new Advanced Emphases in Arctic Climate Change, Local and Regional Development, Circumpolar Ecosystems and Resource Management, and Northern Tourism.

**Student Course Enrolments by Country  
(On-Line and On-Site)**

Country	Total
Canada	273
Finland	236
Norway	280
Denmark/Greenland	1
Russia	234
USA	9
Iceland	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>1045</b>

### north2north mobility program

The north2north mobility program, which provides exchange opportunities for northern students to study at other UArctic member institutions, has also considerably grown in 2006. During the last academic year, 131 students from nearly all Arctic countries participated in the program, which represents a 22% increase from the 2005 numbers. Given growing demand then number of students on exchange is now only limited by the availability of stipend funds. Sustainable core funding for the student mobility is a prerequisite for UArctic's growth in mobility the years to come.

## Funding

The operation of UArctic is mainly carried out by UArctic's member institutions using their own resources. This includes delivery of courses, hosting of exchange students, coordinating networks, as well as participation in UArctic governance and development. A network operation between more than 100 members is, however not possible without some central operational costs, including central leadership, information services, program management and development of new programs and courses. Like the Arctic Council, the University of the Arctic focuses on promoting Circumpolar cooperation – and this does not initiate itself without some assistance. Cooperation, when first established, has however shown to be possible to maintain with very low core funding. As an example the BCS student numbers are now almost twice the number planned in our initial budgets while the delivery is done for less than half the cost of what was initially expected. The main difference is the degree of free teaching of courses from our member institutions.

As for last year, the main cost of UArctic core operations and mobility are covered by Canada, Norway, and Finland (about ½ million Euro from each). US is funding the UArctic IPY office and Iceland covers the cost of the Northern Research Forum Secretariat. Mobility of students is supported by the governments of Finland, Sweden, Norway, Greenland and Canada. Canada has increased its mobility funding by 35% for 2007, while Finland and Norway are looking into new ways to organise funding for incoming Russian students. UArctic would in particular encourage Iceland, Russia, Denmark, and US to contribute to the mobility program from governmental sources

UArctic receives increasing amounts of its support from regional and private sources. Recently announced substantial provincial (200k CAD annually) and aboriginal organisation funding (100k CAD annually) will enable delivery of UArctic programs to students in the provincial north of Canada (Saskatchewan). The Nordic Council of Ministers continue to fund the development of courses with focus on adaptation to climate change (400k DKK in 2007), and the recent Thematic Network workshop on Building Capacity for Sustainable Places in the Circumpolar North in Alta was mainly funded by the Norwegian State Housing Bank and the Executive Committee for Northern Norway; the delivery of the Environmental Impact Assessment course for Indigenous Peoples in Kautokeino received a solid contribution from Statoil. Further a sizeable donation of about 10 million DKK over 4 years provided by the US - Danish private foundation Scandinavian Seminar group will make it possible to develop the course catalogue and promote northern Universities to students worldwide, securing a major goal for both UArctic and IPY: making issues of the north better known globally.

## UArctic as an Organization

UArctic's administrative functions are decentralized, with a small central administration consisting of the International Secretariat in Finland, President's office in Norway, and the International Academic Office and UArctic Press Office in Canada, and UArctic program offices in several countries:

1. **UArctic President's Office:** GRID-Arendal, Arendal, NORWAY
2. **UArctic International Secretariat:** University of Lapland, Rovaniemi, FINLAND
3. **UArctic north2north International Coordination Office:** Finnmark University College, Alta, NORWAY
4. **UArctic International Academic Office:** Northlands College, Saskatchewan, CANADA
5. **UArctic Field School Office:** University Centre on Svalbard (UNIS), Longyearbyen, NORWAY
6. **UArctic Undergraduate Office:** University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, CANADA
7. **Northern Research Forum (NRF) Secretariat:** University of Akureyri, Akureyri, ICELAND
8. **UArctic Thematic Networks Coordination Office:** University of Oulu, Oulu, FINLAND
9. **UArctic IPY Coordination Office:** University of Alaska, Fairbanks, Fairbanks, Alaska, USA
10. **UArctic Press Editorial Office:** University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, CANADA
11. **UArctic Russian Information Centre:** Sakha State University, Yakutsk, RUSSIA

## UArctic International Secretariat

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