



THE NEW UNIVERSITY COOPERATIVE
RECLAIMING HIGHER EDUCATION FOR ALL



**Inspiring Models for the
New University Cooperative**



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1. BACKGROUND

The New University Cooperative was founded in 2005, by a group of students, activists and faculty from across Canada, with the vision of developing a new university in Canada, which at its core incorporates an ethos of environmental sustainability, social justice, and accessibility to all. In 2007 the group incorporated federally as a Workers Cooperative, with the first Annual General Meeting and election of a Board of Directors held in November 2008 near Waterloo, Ontario. At the Annual General Meeting, a one, three and five year plan was developed, which seeks the development of a physical campus by 2012, offering accredited undergraduate and graduate degree programs. During the next year the New University Cooperative will provide its first pilot course offering, led by two resident professors.

There are many models of already existing higher education that serve as inspiration for the New University Cooperative. These include schools with a profound ecological focus, such as Schumacher College, programs with an emphasis on practical and hands-on learning, such as Northhouse Folk School, free schools which emphasize education and learning as profound rights, such as the Tatamagouche Free School, and technical programs such as the Peoples College of Law in California, which are founded in the pursuit of social justice.

The second part of this document is a list of the inspirational characteristics and qualities of these models that could serve as a guide for the development of the New University.

All who have meditated on the art of governing mankind have being convinced that the fate of the empire depends on the education of youth.

-Aristotle



2. INSPIRING MODELS

2.1 LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES

2.1.1 Antioch University

Location: New England, Mcgregor, Seattle, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Antioch College.

Campus: A large university with six different campuses in the United States, each with distinct programs.

Programs: BA, MA, PHD, MED, and a variety of other masters and undergrad programs.

Program innovations: Many are self-designed, with a focus on community engagement and experiential learning. Typically undergraduate students must select a concentration. There is a co-op program, which incorporates three semesters of work terms.

Critique: *Very mainstream looking compared too many of the smaller American liberal arts colleges, despite the emphasis on experiential learning and community service learning.*

2.1.2 Green Mountain College

Location: Poultney, Vermont

Founded: unknown

Campus: unknown

Size: 750 Students and 42 Faculty

Class size: 19 Average

Costs: Approx. \$32,000/year

Accreditation: New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC)

Programs: Ba, Bsc B of fine Arts, MBA sustainable business and Msc, 20 different majors and 24 different minors, online MBA and MS in environmental studies, and a progressive education program

Program innovations: experiential and service oriented (pairing up with a community organization)

Operating revenue: unknown

Financial aid: unknown

Other innovations: On-campus farm and CSA program



Critique: *An expensive liberal arts college, and quite large*

Inspirations: *Progressive education, service orientation as part of the class*



2.1.3 College of the Atlantic

Location: Bar Harbour, Maine

Founded: 1969

Campus: 35 waterfront acres, with two marine research stations, and an organic farm and forest

Size: 30 undergraduate students, 7 graduate

Class Size: average 12

Costs: \$38,000/year (Undergraduate)

Accreditation: Accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges

Programs: BA Human Ecology, MA Philosophy of Human Ecology

Program innovations: Students design own program, within 3 main areas: Arts and design, environmental Sciences and Human Studies. No graduated marking, simply a pass or fail. Balanced focus on crafts, arts, music and science.

Operating revenue: 12,7000,000 (77% student fees)

Financial aid: some financial aid available.

Other innovations: Food is purchased from Maine co-ops and organic and local sources, or grown at the farm. There are environmental and socially-responsible purchasing policies, and COA is powered by renewable energy.



Critique: *A unique and innovative liberal arts college, but very elitist, due to the cost, although scholarships are available to former United World College Students.*

Inspirations: *the balance of science, arts, crafts and music, pass and fail grading, the on-campus farm and ecoforest and the college's environmental policies. Only one degree program, but which allows independent student learning.*

2.1.4 Working Colleges Consortium

Location: A coalition of 9 liberal arts colleges in America, including Deep Springs College

Founded: unknown

Campus: various

Size: 23 students (Deep Springs) to 1500 students (Berea College)

Class size: unknown

Costs: unknown

Accreditation: yes

Programs: students are required to work as part of the university program, and are compensated from \$1800 to \$2800 per year. Jobs include working at farms, physical plant, hotels, cottage craft industries, dining halls, recycling programs. 10-15 hours per week.

Program innovations: provides income for students, and labour for university

Operating Revenue: unknown

Financial Aid: unknown

Other innovations: unknown



Critique: A unique and valuable model of students working on campus to the benefit of both students and the university. Unsure if the Working Colleges is still running, but the model is valuable, as students gain valuable experience creating craft products, as an example, or helping to run the school, and the cottage industries generate money for the university as well.

Inspirations: A great possible model for a co-operative run university that generates its own income.

1.1.5 Deep Springs College

Location: big pine, CA

Founded: 1917

Campus: working ranch with a music room, a piano room, pottery, library, smithy, an auto shop, woodshop, leatherworking, three classrooms

Size: 26 male students and 3 professors, 3 visiting scholars

Class size: 4

Costs: \$50,000 full scholarship for the two years

Accreditation: Yes, but unknown

Programs: 2 years, required composition and public speaking classes, otherwise self-directed, with a variety of classes to choose from as well as special projects. Classes include math, philosophy, writing and the environment. Studio classes and private musical study also available.

Program innovations: students also work 20 hours/week operating the cattle ranch and alfalfa farm and on committee tasks. The college includes self-governance, with several committees and communal tasks such as doing the dishes at the dorms (the boarding house). Students vote on ground rules every year.

Operating Revenue: unknown

Financial Aid: full scholarship

Other innovations: Faculty live on campus.



Critique: males only

Inspirations: self-governance, faculty on campus, on-campus farm, working on-campus as part of education.

2.2 NON-PROFIT EDUCATIONAL CENTERS

2.2.1 Ecovercity

Location: Santa Fe, New Mexico

Founded: 1999

Campus: 11 acres gardens, orchards, library, lecture hall, studio, summer kitchen, offices and outdoor classrooms, demonstrating sustainable technologies

Size: unknown

Class size: varies





Costs: varies per class, starting at \$25

Accreditation: No

Programs: A variety of practical classes on ecological things from PV panels, to bee keeping to composting

Program innovations: Did attempt a certificate program when first started, but it appears that it is no longer offered.

Operating revenue: unknown

Financial aid: unknown

Other innovations: campus demonstrating green building techniques and technologies

Critique: none

Inspirations: green-building and technologies on campus

2.2.2 Bija Vidyapeeth

Location: Uttranchal, north India.

Founded: Navdanya started as a program of the Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology (RFSTE) which was a participatory research initiative founded by the world-renowned scientist and environmentalist Dr. Vandana Shiva.

Campus: organic farm of 20 acres

Size: unknown

Class size: unknown

Costs: One week course: Rs 3,500, Two week course: Rs 7,000 (Indian),

One week course: € 300, Two week course: € 600 (International). Includes food and

Accommodation: Unknown

Accreditation: none

Programs: Short courses on a variety of subjects, similar to Schumacher College

Program innovations: Shared cooking and accommodations

Operating Revenue: Unknown

Financial Aid: Less fees for residents of India

Other innovations: Seed bank and working organic farm



Critique: A more affordable version of Schumacher College, a variety of interesting programs offered, and similarly to Schumacher College, linked to a non-profit foundation

Inspirations: Working farm

2.2.3 Centre For Alternative Technology (CAT)

Location: Machynlleth, Powys, SY20 9AZ, UK

Founded: 1975

Campus: an old quarry originally started as an alternative community. Accommodation is available, and meals are provided a whole food vegetarian restaurant.





Size: It is staffed by 90 permanent staff and volunteers all year round, and a further 60 people during the summer months. The centre receives 65,000 visitors a year.

Class size: unknown

Costs: Costs: sliding scales for waged, non-waged and high-waged (self-assessed), depending on length and type of course, ranging from \$40 to \$1600. For Masters programs: One Year Full time (Approx. \$17,000)

Accreditation: University of East London

Programs: *MSc in Architecture: Advanced Environmental and Energy Studies, MSc Renewable Energy and the Built Environment:* This programme offers a unique combination of design, evaluation and practical experience that will equip students with skills that are becoming increasingly sought after in all areas of professional practice.

Professional Diploma in Architecture with Advanced Environmental and Energy Studies: Mainly a residential programme at CAT but also includes a study tour usually in Europe and a residential Summer School usually held in London.

Two other masters programs have modules at the Centre for Alternative Technology, MSc Managing the Environment and MA Architecture of Rapid Change and Scarce Resources.

Short Courses: 30 courses on practical sustainable and appropriate technologies, such as building your own heat pump, to making your own biodiesel. CAT also offers day, to weekend, to week long courses.

Program innovations: Masters programs are a mix of already available short-courses, student research and work at the partnership university UEL, which results in a balance of hands-on learning, academic and research.

Operating Revenue: unknown

Financial Aid: Bursaries for people from undeveloped countries.

Other innovations: A visitor centre open seven days a week, which displays global issues such as energy generation and transport, and practical, everyday solutions for everyone. A free information service, and a consultancy service, and they arrange school trips to CAT. CAT also published books on various "green" topics, and has a green store with various products and books, as well as a mail-order service. There is also a small community living at the center.

Critique: *Expensive, but a good example of partnership with a university to achieve accreditation, and a good use of short-courses combined with self-directed study in order to create a Masters program.*

Inspirations: *Short-course structure, working with other university, built off already existing courses offered*



2.3 ECOLOGICAL UNIVERSITIES



2.3.1 Gaia University

Location: US, Germany and Brazil

Founded: Colorado, USA 2004

Campus: Beira Serra Permaculture Center near San Paolo, Brazil, The Farm Ecovillage Training Centre, Lebensgarten Ecovillage, Lost Valley Educational Centre

Size: unknown

Class Size: unknown

Costs: \$27,000 BSc and equally expensive for Masters and Graduate work

Accreditation: IMCA and Revans university

Programs: BSc in integrated ecosocial design and MSc and Graduate Diplomas

The program begins with an orientation and 1-3 week residential intensive at a learning center. Two distinctions to the program: The credit map consists of the required residential intensives, and 10 ecological design outputs. The career is where students work experience or learning conducted at home or abroad sources, including internships, volunteering etc.. (conventional or not (fees are not included in the cost of the program). And finally the Capstone Year, which is a supervised project.

Program innovations: Draws on internships/other sources of learning for the program. The program brings students together for residential intensives. Measured based on outputs, not inputs (what the student produces or learns), and a final project.

Operating Revenue: unknown

Financial Aid: unknown how much

Other Innovations: fee structure graduated based on 1st, 2nd and 3rd world

Critique: *Very expensive, despite graduated fee structure.*

Inspirations: *Structure might be a good model, with the career, drawing on other sources such as internships, volunteering, etc.. for learning, and residential intensives also might be a good model. The graduated fee structure is also a valuable model.*

1.3.2 Schumacher College

Location: Dartington (Devon), England

Founded: 1991

Campus: A series of old historical buildings located on the Dartington Hall Trust, which also has College of Arts; the International Music Summer School; Martin Crawford's agroforestry research project and the Regional Centre for Organic Horticulture.

Size: 13 masters students, 3 core faculty, visiting teachers, varies for weekly classes

Class Size: no more than 25/short course

Costs: \$1700 for 5 day course, \$22 250+ masters degree

Accreditation: yes

Programs: Short courses, week or weekend long on a variety of subjects, including specific areas such as a five-day course for business people on the theme of Business and Sustainability, or Five-day courses for educationalists: The Roots of Learning. A new 1 yr. Schumacher certificate in



Education and a community program called Open Evenings, where a visiting scholar shares their views with community. Also there is the 1 yr. MSc in holistic science which is divided up into 3 core modules. Students begin their dissertation research and attend two two-week residential courses. Schumacher College focuses its courses on a range of ecological themes:

- globalization, sustainability and alternative development models
- ecological perspectives on psychology, spirituality and philosophy
- holistic science : chaos, complexity and systems thinking
- ecological design and technology

Program innovations: Well-known teachers such as Vanadana Shiva and James Lovelock

Operating revenue: Unknown

Financial Aid: Available to people from third world countries

Other innovations: Shared tasks such as cooking and cleaning, local and organic foods wherever possible.

***Critique:** Very expensive, much more of an academic focus*

***Inspirations:** Shared tasks, local organic foods, visiting scholars/core faculty*

2.4 FOLK SCHOOLS/DESIGN

2.4.1 North House Folk School

Location: Grand Marais, Minnesota

Founded: 1997

Campus: Most lodging not at the school.

Size: unknown

Class size: varies

Costs: \$25 to \$650

Accreditation: none

Programs: 200+ courses (2007), special events and numerous public programs. The School offers craft-based learning, including Basketry, boat building, clothing, fiber arts, knitting, and music. Courses last from 2-10 days.

Program innovations: unknown

Operating Revenue: unknown

Financial Aid: unknown

Other innovations: Internships available



***Critique:** hands-on learning, based on very appropriate technologies*

***Inspirations:** excellent example of hands-on learning that could be incorporated into the New University*



2.4.2 Fleming College Sustainable Building Construction and Design Program (SBCD)

Location: Halliburton, Ontario

Founded: 2004?

Campus: Offered by Fleming College

Size: Approximately 20?

Class Size: Approximately 20?

Costs: \$3,420.50/semester

Accreditation: Students receive an Ontario College Certificate.

Programs: Intensive, compressed format for 20 weeks, equivalent to a three semester (45 week) program. The class has one, full-time lead instructor and one full time assistant instructor. Specialty instructors are brought in to teach about particular aspects of each build. The students go through the entire process of building a natural building, and each student is given the responsibility of leading the team in one phase of the construction.

Program Innovations: Buildings are constructed for local non-profit organizations etc... Students are engaged in the entire process of construction.

Operating Revenue: Unknown

Financial Aid: Unknown



Critique: a unique model where students learn through doing; building a sustainable building for a local non-profit organization.

Inspirations: Possible partnership for the development of the New University Campus?

2.5 FREE SCHOOLS

2.5.1 Anarchist U

Location: Toronto

Founded: Unknown (recently)

Campus: various locations throughout Toronto

Size: unknown

Class size: unknown

Costs: Anarchist U is a free school. No. Anarchist U is free of charge. In some classes students may have to cover for the price of books and photocopies. The total cost should be under \$30 per class.

Accreditation: No!

Programs: Most courses run for ten weeks, and meet once a week. The tradition of free schools is as follows: Free schools are schools that allow and facilitate students to pursue their goals in ways that work for them. Students are not forced to learn anything. Teachers are seen as resources of knowledge rather than as authoritarian figures. There has been a long tradition of free schools. Two examples are Summerhill and Stelton. Anarchist U has courses on a variety of subjects.

Program innovations: Anyone may teach a course

Operating Revenue: unknown

Financial Aid: none

**ANARCHIST
FREE
UNIVERSITY**



a riot for the mind.



Other innovations: The school is run based on principles including consensus, decentralized organizing, and a non-hierarchical structure in classes and meetings.

Critique: *a unique model where students are interchangeable with teachers, in a very affordable structure.*

Inspirations: *Affordable, consensus-decision making, possible model for a financially accessible university*

2.5.2 Tatamagouche Free School

Location: Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia

Founded: 2004

Campus: Waldergrave Farm

Size: 150-200 People

Costs: Workshops are free of cost, however a fee is charged for food for the three-day event.

Accreditation: No

Program Innovations: Anyone can take or teach a workshop session, and they are all free of cost. The free school lasts three days, usually sometime in August. Participants share cooking duties, and live communally for the duration of the free school.



Critique: *a minimal cost, very informative model for learning*

Inspirations: *No hierarchy between students and teachers*

2.6 OTHER

2.6.1 University for Peace

Location: Costa Rica

Founded: 1980, as a treaty organization of the UN General Assembly

Campus: 30 km South of San Jose, within a Nature Reserve

Size: unknown

Class size: unknown

Costs: About \$22,000 for a masters program

Accreditation: yes

Programs: Offers ten different MA Programmes in the field of peace and conflict studies, a semester Abroad Programme (SAP), and training and workshops.

Program innovations: Very international representation, and a strong emphasis on peace and understanding. Visiting and resident faculty.

Operating Revenue: unknown

Financial Aid: Full and partial aid available

Other innovations: Unknown





Critique: Very expensive, with a strong emphasis on peace.

Inspirations: International flavor. The University has a specific charter to the cause of education for peace.

2.6.2 People's College of Law

Location: Los Angeles

Founded: 1974

Campus: Los Angeles

Size: unknown

Class size: unknown

Costs: Annual tuition amounts to \$4000.00

Accreditation: The College is licensed

Programs: Peoples College of Law was founded in 1974 as a non-profit, community-run law school to bring legal resources to

under-represented communities and train legal advocates to secure progressive social change and justice in society. Peoples College of Law is a small, fully licensed, degree-granting law school located in downtown Los Angeles, California offering a four-year evening Juris Doctorate program to accommodate working students.

Program innovations: Student involvement is coordinated through an accountability system, in which each student works at least 80 hours per year. The program is also designed to accommodate working students, and thus targets marginalized or low-income communities. PCL is governed by a board of directors composed of students, faculty and community members. Members of the board are elected annually.

Operating Revenue: unknown

Financial Aid: none

Other innovations: Faculty also donate their time in order to keep the costs very low.

Critique: A very unique model of a college that targets low-income and marginalized individuals. PCL features unique student ownership in the decisions regarding the college, and community-service learning components.

Inspirations: Profound emphasis on social justice. PCL is very affordable (as compared to other law degree providing programs in the United States).



2.6.3 United World Colleges

Location: Twelve different colleges around the world

Founded: 1962

Campus: Twelve different locations

Size: Varies

Class size: Varies

Costs: Full Scholarship

Accreditation: The College is licensed

Programs: The program emphasizes high academic standards, an emphasis on community service and a wide range of cultural and outdoor activities. Eleven of the United World Colleges teach the



International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IB), which is a two-year course. Short Course Programs are also available to the public. Most colleges bring together students on full scholarship from countries around the world however some have started to give precedence to students who are able to pay for the program.

Program innovations: Community service learning, a variety of on-campus extracurricular activities, international representation.

Operating Revenue: unknown

Financial Aid: full scholarship

Critique: *A well known model that has a very international emphasis, with a focus on community service learning and learning outside the classroom.*

Inspirations: *International representation, campus settings are often very beautiful*



2. SUMMARY OF INSPIRATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF MODELS

These are a list of inspirational characteristics derived from the models for the New University Cooperative. The first table relates to the Educational Programs, and the second table relates to the Campus. Drawn from the list of inspirational models, these characteristics could provide a guiding framework for the development of the New University.

Table 1: Education Program Inspirations

Characteristic	Models
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • service oriented (various) 	Various
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • self-designed (various) 	Various
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pass or fail (no marks) 	College of the Atlantic, Goddard College
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • output based learning 	Gaia University
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • balanced education with the practical and academic: arts, crafts, music, research, community involvement 	College of the Atlantic, Deep Springs, various
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A degree program which draws from existing short courses 	Schumacher College and CAT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program draws on courses/programs offered at other facilities 	Gaia University
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Craft and appropriate technology based 	North House Folk School, Ecovercity, SBDC, CAT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective-based learning structure 	Anarchist U
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sliding scale 	Bija Vidyapeeth, CAT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University-based cottage industries and student work 	Working Colleges, Deep Springs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visiting scholars and core faculty 	Various

Table 2: Campus Inspirations

Characteristic	Models
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-campus farm or ecoforest providing learning experience, revenue and produce (Various) 	College of the Atlantic, Goddard College, Bija Vidyapeeth, others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-governance 	Deep Springs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration green-building design and technologies, local organic foods, zero carbon footprint 	Various
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared communal tasks 	Various
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty live on campus 	Deep Springs



3. QUALITIES OF INSPIRATIONAL MODELS

3.1 ACCREDITATION

Advantages:

- A degree is a requirement for most jobs
- Recognition of school's credibility
- Recognition of student's knowledge and ability

Disadvantages:

- Difficult to acquire, especially as a new school
- Pulls us into mainstream university institutional regulations
- Requires finding an innovative way of getting accredited (partnering with another university, using the GAIA university accreditation, creating or own accreditation?)

Example Schools: All Liberal Arts Colleges, Schumacher College - MSc in Holistic Science, Gaia University

3.2 ONLINE LEARNING

Advantages:

- Small or no physical campus required
- Students can study from anywhere, encourages rural individual studies
- Minimizes transportation and campus population density

Disadvantage:

- Removes students from the community of learning
- Limits teaching style to text and visual methods
- Little to no real-time interaction

Example Schools: Distance Programs within certain schools such as Antioch

3.3 NON-TRADITIONAL FACULTY

Advantages:

- Gives students access to teachers with otherwise under-appreciated, uncaptured, or disregarded knowledge (eg. organic farmers, natural builders, First Nations teachers, etc.)
- Non-hierarchical; equality

Disadvantages:

- Maybe not possible due to accreditation regulations

*Example Schools: College of the Atlantic - non-ranked, non-departmental, and non-tenured
All Free Schools, Peoples College of Law, Anarchist U, Schumacher College - high profile teachers visit campus to teach specific short courses*

3.4 ALTERNATIVE TUITION

Advantages:

- School is accessible to people with low income due to work-trade



- Gives students hands-on experience (building), organizational (administration) and life skills (cooking/cleaning)

- Minimizes paid staff positions

Disadvantages:

- Less tuition money is collected (but this is counterbalanced by less paid staff)

*Example Schools: Working Colleges- Work-trade or internship to cover some of the course cost
Deep Springs College - Students work at least 20 hours a week on the campus or farm*

3.5 INTERNATIONAL LEARNING PROGRAM

Advantages:

- Gives students larger perspective, sense of world-unity and cultural experience
- Potential to assist other countries in need
- Gain knowledge not available in Canada

Disadvantages:

- Costly
- Need to build relationships with international organizations and institutions

Example Schools: College of the Atlantic - internship and/or senior project done anywhere in the world, Gaia University, United World Colleges, University Peace

3.6 SUSTAINABILITY FOCUS

Advantages:

- More opportunity for fundraising support
- The Earth really needs this
- Attracts students who are desiring but not finding this in standard universities

Example Schools: Various

3.7 SMALL CLASS SIZE

Advantages:

- Higher interaction, intercommunication, and freedom to discuss and ask questions
- Diminishes teacher-on-a-pedestile syndrome
- Attention and freedom can be given to individual's focus and interests

Disadvantages:

- More expensive since ratio of tuition paying students to paid teachers is low.

Example Schools: College of the Atlantic - 1:10 teacher-student ratio, students create their own course of study. Average class size: 15, Deep Springs College - average class size: 4



3.8 SELF-GOVERNANCE / DIRECT DEMOCRACY

Advantages:

- Equality; consensus-based; democracy; eliminates hierarchy
- Teaches skills of governance, administration and organization
- Gives everyone voice and power over all aspects of school operation
- Less administrative staff required

Disadvantages:

- People governing are mostly in learning process causing learning curve rough patches
- Hierarchy can be beneficial so each individual doesn't have to make as many decisions

*Example Schools: Black Mountain - Old and young ran the campus together (school is R.I.P.)
Deep Springs College - the Student Body discusses and votes on the ground rules each year
Peoples College of Law – Joint governance of the institution, by students, faculty, alumni, and community members. Anarchist U.*

3.9 OUT-OF-CLASSROOM LEARNING

Advantages:

- Tactical learning for those who require or simply desire it
- Practical skills and learning taught through hands-on experience
- Less building operation cost (A/C, lighting, etc.)
- Taking advantage of the beautiful outdoors as a great learning environment

Example Schools: EcoVersity - 11-acre campus serves as a demonstration site and a community building center for the promotion of "hands-on" learning and sustainable living



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