

Canada is a bilingual, multicultural country with two major cultural traditions. As a consequence, two systems of higher education have developed. One, originally patterned on the French system before the secularization of higher education in France, with the majority of the institutions under the direction of Roman Catholic orders or groups, has in recent years been adapted more and more to North American higher-education traditions. The other system was originally designed according to English, Scottish and United States practices; instruction is given in English, and the institutions are controlled by a variety of groups — governments, religious denominations and private, non-denominational bodies.

Most of Canada's universities offer instruction in either the English or French language. A few institutions offer instruction in both official languages. The first such bilingual institution to be established, the present University of Ottawa, developed from a Roman Catholic College, opened in Ottawa in 1848. Laurentian University, established at Sudbury, Ontario in 1960, is also a bilingual university.

History

Until 1763, education in the colony of New France was provided solely by institutions under religious auspices. The first such institution in which studies were undertaken at college level seems to have been the Collège des Jésuites, founded in 1635 in Quebec City. At about the same time, the Séminaire de Québec was founded by diocesan priests. In 1852, the seminary was instrumental in the establishment of Laval University in Quebec City. A branch of Laval was opened in Montreal in 1878 and in 1920 it received a civil charter as the University of Montreal.

Three Kings' Colleges were among the first English-language institutions founded. One of these opened at Windsor, Nova Scotia in 1789, and was later re-established at Halifax, N.S. A second opened at Fredericton, New Brunswick in 1829 (though it traces its history back to the Academy of Arts and Sciences of 1785) and a third, though chartered in 1827 in Toronto as the state university of the Province of Upper Canada, did not offer instruction until 1843. These colleges were closely associated, at the time of their formation, with the Church of England. Early attempts to limit enrolment to Church of England adherents, coupled with the movement