

SFU

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
ENGAGING THE WORLD



Office for Aboriginal Peoples

ABORIGINAL STRATEGIC PLAN

2013-2018





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ABORIGINAL STRATEGIC PLAN SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY 2013-2018

STATEMENT FROM DR. JONATHAN DRIVER, VICE PRESIDENT-ACADEMIC AND PROVOST, SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY:

Aboriginal people in Canada have not been able to benefit from post secondary education as much as many other Canadians. The causes of this situation are complex, and universities alone cannot create a more equitable situation. However, we can play a part in making education more accessible to Aboriginal students, and in ensuring that students are appropriately supported while at Simon Fraser University. I endorse the actions outlined in this document, and I encourage everyone in the University to think about the needs of Aboriginal students and the potential to incorporate Aboriginal perspectives and examples into academic programs.

This Aboriginal Strategic Plan was initially developed a few years ago through a consultative process, and considerable progress has been made since then. In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released its Final Report on Canada's residential school system. Included in the Report were a series of "Calls to Action". When the time comes to revise SFU's current plan, we will consider the TRC's recommendations as part of a comprehensive process of self-evaluation and consultation. Until that time comes, I urge you to read the TRC Final Report and consider their recommendations in the context of your own work at SFU.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada — Calls to Action:

http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge the traditional territories of the Coast Salish Peoples, on whose lands the Simon Fraser University campuses reside...

As well, the page border found within this document was prepared, as derivative artwork by Mr. Jason Kieft, Graphic Design/Production Officer for the Squamish Nation. The center component of the image is the two-headed sea serpent, adapted from a carving by Mr. Art Harry from the Squamish Nation. The outer component is a wolf which is mirrored to both sides of the serpent and which is adapted from a carving by Mr. Eric Baker, also from the Squamish Nation. Information concerning the legend of the two-headed sea serpent, also known as *The Two-Headed Serpent and the Serpent Slayer*, is available from the Squamish Nation Education Department. The wolf image was added as an additional graphical element to balance the graphic. We wish to thank the Squamish Nation and the artists/designer for this graphic design contribution to this document.



TERMINOLOGY

The terms Aboriginal, Indigenous, First Nations, Non-Status, Métis, Inuit, et al. are used interchangeably throughout this document, according to context. In most cases, use of the term “Aboriginal” refers to the First Nations, Non-Status, Métis, and Inuit peoples of Canada, as recognized by Canada’s 1982 Constitution. Terms such as Native American and Indigenous will generally refer to the First Peoples (original inhabitants) of the United States and other International areas in general, respectively.

THOUGHTS ABOUT “INDIGENIZATION”

1. Decolonization is at the forefront of Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous People*. . .Smith does specifically use the term ‘Indigenizing’ in order to describe one of the ‘25 different projects currently being pursued by Indigenous communities’ towards decolonization. ‘Indigenizing,’ she writes, is a project with two dimensions. The first involves an intense awareness of Indigenous perspectives and interests, and an acknowledgment that such world views are not continuous with or subordinate to the world views of ‘settler society’ . . .Indigenizing is one of many ways toward decolonization and toward improving Indigenous lives. . .decolonization is the primary goal. Sharing knowledge at the site of the university may be part of decolonizing processes, and the university can be a space where both settlers and Indigenous peoples learn to respect and even offer support for common goals. (Elina Hill, University of Victoria <http://journals.uvic.ca/index.php/peninsula/article/view/11513/3212>)
2. Simon Fraser University can build new practices and institutions that incorporate traditional Aboriginal knowledge in new ways, while interacting with mainstream organizations in the modern world. A part of this process is understanding what the relationship should be between scientific-based Western knowledge/practices and traditional Aboriginal knowledge, not just at the level of alternative epistemologies but also in terms of how they can be useful in jointly informing practices such as business, education, health care, law, and social services, to name some. In a myriad of contexts, from health care, to capacity-building, to business and economic development, the university can take the initiative in showing respect for Aboriginal peoples’ cultures and traditions as this delicate but promising mixture/balance is encouraged and maintained. This is another facet of Indigenization. Simon Fraser University thus welcomes the challenges of bridging and engaging diverse epistemologies in order to find practical and pragmatic solutions to modern problems. (Dr. Mark Selman and William G. Lindsay, Simon Fraser University)



INTRODUCTION

An articulated vision is recognizably a critical first step towards establishing the future for Aboriginal peoples at Simon Fraser University. Equally important, however, is the roadmap for accomplishing that vision. What follows is a revised action plan for the next five years that will form the operational strategy of the Office for Aboriginal Peoples and which will be the basis upon which annual progress reports and the ultimate evaluation of the Aboriginal Strategic Plan's success will be measured. This revises and updates the original five year First Nations University-Wide Strategic Plan that was passed by Senate in 2007.

VISION/MISSION STATEMENT

Aboriginal learners learn in a variety of fashions and in a variety of contexts, both modern and traditional. Simon Fraser University works with the Aboriginal community to enhance and engage Aboriginal learners' participation in the historic, socio-economic, educational, and cultural lives of the traditional, local, provincial, national, and global communities.

Simon Fraser University is committed to being the leading "engaged" university in Canada, defined by its dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting edge research, and far-reaching community engagement. Therefore, the university is committed to:

- Engaging Aboriginal students by equipping them with the knowledge, research skills, and experiences to prepare them for life in an ever-changing and challenging world;
- Engaging research to become a world leader in knowledge mobilization in the service of Aboriginal peoples;
- Engaging Aboriginal communities in every way possible to contribute to their social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being.

SEVEN GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Simon Fraser University is committed to:

1. Recognizing the unique educational needs and identities of Aboriginal peoples.
 - *As First Nation, Non-Status, Métis, and Inuit peoples acquire increased control over governance, education, health care, and other social and economic dimensions of their communities, the educational contribution of the university to these peoples should support their efforts in this process.*
2. Full and equitable participation by Aboriginal people.
 - *Based on this principle, SFU will work to increase First Nations, Non-Status, Métis, and Inuit student enrolment to a proportion commensurate with that of the representation of Aboriginal people in the general population of British Columbia.*



3. Providing a supportive academic and community environment for Aboriginal people.
 - First Nations, Non-Status, Métis, and Inuit peoples enrolled at Simon Fraser University will have access to financial support programs, such as grants and fellowships, and non-financial support programs, such as mentorship and a supportive social context.
4. Acknowledging, respecting, and incorporating Aboriginal people's values and traditions in university programs.
 - *As an institution dedicated to discovering and transmitting knowledge, the university will make good use of the traditional knowledge developed over the years by First Nations, Non-Status, Métis, and Inuit peoples, and will support academic work that incorporates Aboriginal knowledge.*
5. Addressing the higher education needs and aspirations of Aboriginal communities.
 - *Simon Fraser University recognizes the range of educational needs of First Nations, Non-Status, Métis, and Inuit communities as they strive to protect their ancestral cultures and languages, and as they develop new forms of governance.*
6. Collaborating and forming partnerships to serve Aboriginal people's educational objectives.
 - *This principle guides Simon Fraser University to seek out alliances with First Nations, Non-Status, Métis, and Inuit peoples and with other institutions in the broader community to achieve educational objectives that benefit Aboriginal peoples.*
7. Affirming the ongoing institutional commitment to higher education among Aboriginal people's communities.
 - *This principle is implemented through the Aboriginal Steering Committee and the Aboriginal Strategic Plan for Simon Fraser University.*

THE TEN PILLARS OF THE ABORIGINAL STRATEGIC PLAN

1. Academic Program Development
2. Research Development
3. Student Recruitment, Retention, and Support
4. Liaison and Engagement with the Aboriginal Community
5. Aboriginal Knowledge Development
6. International Engagement
7. Infrastructure and Facilities Development
8. Aboriginal Integration and Leadership Development
9. Government and NGO Relationships
10. Communication Strategies



THE ABORIGINAL STRATEGIC PLAN: GOALS, ACTION ITEMS, TIMELINES, AND LEADS

1. Academic Program Development

Goal: Cooperate with Faculties, departments, and programmes to develop courses that contain significant content pertaining to Aboriginal people's perspectives and epistemologies.

Action items:

- Develop distributed learning and/or blended delivery courses and programs, as well as, distance education courseware, modules, and materials that can be used in Aboriginal communities and for other community-based delivery programs.
- Work with Lifelong Learning to support, strengthen, and expand the Aboriginal Pre-University Bridging Programs in various Faculties and program areas.
- Support the ongoing development and expansion of Aboriginal academic programming in traditionally strong subject areas i.e. in the Arts and Social Sciences, Business, Education, Environment, Health Sciences, and Lifelong Learning (Continuing Studies).
- Support the growth, development, and expansion of Aboriginal academic programming in non-traditional subject areas i.e. in Applied Sciences; Communication, Art & Technology; the Sciences; and Graduate Studies; and in non-academic areas such as university athletics.
- Consult with Aboriginal communities to identify the needs of said communities for Graduate Studies programming and work collaboratively to initiate and support the development of these programs. For example, ongoing development and/or support of Faculty of Education graduate diploma, masters, and doctoral programming in Indigenous issues; and the development of graduate level programming in First Nations Studies.
- Through academic units, strive to develop and maintain an Indigenous Visiting Scholar Series and explore the development of other such initiatives that promote Aboriginal awareness and engagement.
- Work to increase numbers of Aboriginal teachers and support to in-service teacher's needs, in order to better address the specific learning needs of Aboriginal learners.
- Increase the visibility and expertise of Aboriginal faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, and community members in the center of academia and educational contexts.
- Maintain lists of courses and programs with "recognized" Aboriginal content in them and have such available for public perusal.

Timeline:

- An ongoing process for all the above.

Leads:

- Deans, Associate Deans, and Chairs
- Director, University Curriculum and Institutional Liaison
- Office for Aboriginal Peoples
- Office of Indigenous Education, Faculty of Education



2. Research Development

Goal: Establish and maintain a comprehensive framework — the Indigenous Research Institute, the Faculties, individual researchers, and community — for the promotion, encouragement, and support of research topics that are of interest to Aboriginal peoples.

Action items:

- Expand and promote the new Indigenous Research Institute (est. 2012), which will create new connections among students, researchers, and Aboriginal communities and which will advance innovation in Indigenous research.
- Collaborate with Aboriginal communities to identify priority areas for Indigenous research.
- Collaborate with Aboriginal communities to promote “community-based” research opportunities.
- Develop and promote colloquia, symposia, research days, and conferences to expand knowledge and awareness of research conducted by, for, and with Indigenous communities.
- Develop partnerships with other research institutions in the promotion of Indigenous research.
- Promote the publication of Indigenous research at Simon Fraser University in refereed publications/ periodicals.
- Develop and promote new courses and programs which highlight Indigenous research epistemologies, methodologies, and theories.
- Work to develop and promote Indigenous research protocol templates.
- Identify and promote opportunities for the development of “experiential” research experiences for Aboriginal faculty and students.
- Identify funding opportunities for researchers working in Indigenous areas and provide support regarding the development of successful funding applications.
- Work with grant facilitators and University Advancement to identify research funding opportunities for Indigenous research.
- Initiate and support the development of research directed to the enhancement of Aboriginal academic programming and services, pedagogy, curriculum content, and academic experiences.

Timeline:

- An ongoing process for all the above.

Leads:

- Indigenous Research Institute
- Office of the Vice-President, Research
- The Faculties
- Individual researchers

3. Student Recruitment, Retention, and Support

Goals:

- Increased recruitment of Aboriginal students.
- Monitor Aboriginal student’s academic progress, retention, and success.
- Establish, maintain, and promote Aboriginal student support programming.
- Develop a new Indigenous Student Centre “Gathering Space”.



Action items:

- Champion diversity in enrolment management practices, creating and implementing effective processes to recruit and admit prospects from First Nations and other Aboriginal communities who demonstrate the potential for exceptional university achievement.
- Continue to review and enhance communication to external audiences for Aboriginal recruitment activities and initiatives.
- Identify well-qualified prospective Aboriginal/Native American students from across Canada and the United States and streamline the process from “applicant” to “registered” for these students.
- Develop metrics and baseline measures for on-going management of Aboriginal retention and completion rates.
- Develop and implement sustainable programming in collaboration with Student Services units, the First Nations Student Association, the Office for Aboriginal Peoples, and local First Nations and Métis communities and organizations.
- Determine a timeline for and implementation of the allocation of a new Indigenous Student Centre space in AQ 2002/03.

Timeline:

- Complete first metrics and baseline measures information (chart) during 2013 and update annually thereafter.
- Inhabit new “Gathering Space” space in 2013-14.
- An ongoing process for the rest of the above action items.

Leads:

- Associate Vice-President, Students
- Executive Director, Student Affairs
- Registrar
- Director, Indigenous Student Centre
- Coordinator, Indigenous Student Recruitment
- Director, Office of Institutional Research and Planning
- Associate Director, Strategic Assessment and Planning

4. Liaison and Engagement with the Aboriginal Community

Goal: Strengthen and increase partnerships, collaborations, and engagement with Aboriginal peoples, communities, and organizations.

Action items:

- Strengthen the Aboriginal Steering Committee and commit to continued off-campus Aboriginal community representation on said committee.
- Support and strengthen the Elders Program.
- Work to establish official partnerships between Simon Fraser University and Aboriginal organizations and educational institutions.
- Establish and promote a summer camp for Aboriginal youth at Simon Fraser University.
- Inform Aboriginal alumni of Simon Fraser University of news items of interest concerning their alma mater and work towards the formation of an Aboriginal alumni group.
- Collaborate with Aboriginal peoples and communities to identify priority areas for research and program development; and develop, engage, and share cultural resources.



Timeline:

- An ongoing process for all the above.

Leads:

- Office for Aboriginal Peoples
- Director, University Curriculum and Institutional Liaison
- Alumni Relations

5. Aboriginal Knowledge and Resource Development

Goal: Engage and promulgate an understanding and respect for Aboriginal communities, cultures, epistemologies, histories, languages, and traditions among non-Aboriginal members of the university and off-campus communities.

Action items:

- Advise and assist SFU cultural memory programs (Libraries, Art Galleries, Archives, Museums) as they develop collections promoting understanding of Aboriginal cultures.
- Work with the Teaching and Learning Centre to establish professional development workshops for staff, faculty, students, and community regarding Aboriginal cultural, educational, and historical sensitivities.
- Expand and promulgate the Honoring Feast for Aboriginal graduates.
- Establish and support Speaker Series dealing with Aboriginal issues.
- Utilize communication strategies to raise the profile of Aboriginal programming, research, and personnel across Simon Fraser University.
- Establish and support Aboriginal cultural institutions as tools of education within the university. For example, the promulgation of cultural workshops such as First Nations drumming and singing, sweat lodge ceremonies, and other tactile learning opportunities.
- Establish professional development workshops for staff, faculty, students, and community regarding Aboriginal cultural, educational, and historical sensitivities.
- Work with the Bill Reid Gallery and Bill Reid Centre to establish and promote Aboriginal-specific programming therein and to promote their rich collection of artistic and historical artifacts on the campus and in the community.

Timeline:

- An ongoing process for all the above.

Leads:

- SFU Library
- Teaching and Learning Centre
- Indigenous Student Centre
- Public Affairs and Media Relations
- Office for Aboriginal Peoples
- Bill Reid Gallery and Bill Reid Centre



6. International Engagement and Global Development

Goals:

- Expand opportunities for Aboriginal peoples to share their expertise and emerge as intellectual leaders on global issues in the international arena.
- Mobilize knowledge and respect for Aboriginal peoples, cultures, epistemologies, histories, languages, and traditions among the diverse communities associated with the university.

Action items:

- Assess opportunities for synergy between existing Simon Fraser University research initiatives and global issues being advanced by Aboriginal organizations worldwide.
- Explore with Aboriginal peoples and communities opportunities for international intersection i.e. student-staff-elder-faculty exchanges or field school opportunities to institutions in other countries.
- Develop an international Visiting Scholar Series utilizing the services of Indigenous scholars.
- Continue to expand teaching efforts on Aboriginal issues at Fraser International College.
- Develop a repository for research and creative production for perusal in the local and international communities, which is focused on Aboriginal people, and which is generated at Simon Fraser University.
- Cooperate with the Bill Reid Gallery and Bill Reid Centre to enhance public education programming and to promote their rich collection of artistic and historical artifacts in the local and international communities.

Timeline:

- An ongoing process for all the above.

Leads:

- Vice-President, External Relations
- SFU International
- Office for Aboriginal Peoples
- SFU Library
- Fraser International College
- Bill Reid Gallery and Bill Reid Centre

7. Infrastructure and Facilities Development

Goal: Ensure that Simon Fraser University attracts resources and support from the public and private sectors, from the Aboriginal community, from government, and from agencies and organizations in support of Aboriginal capital building projects.

Action items:

- Create a greater presence for Aboriginal peoples on campus through the development of a capital resource plan and feasibility study to build a First Peoples House at Simon Fraser University.
- Develop a fund-raising strategy for Aboriginal capital building initiatives — including the First Peoples House Project — in coordination with University Advancement.

Timeline:

- An ongoing process for all the above.



Leads:

- University Advancement
- Facilities Services
- Office for Aboriginal Peoples

8. Integration and Leadership Development**Goals:**

- Integrate Aboriginal issues and pursue Aboriginal initiatives throughout the university through the leadership of Aboriginal faculty and staff.
- Develop an understanding of Aboriginal issues at the senior levels of university leadership.
- Increase the number of Aboriginal faculty members.

Action items:

- Encourage Aboriginal faculty members, as leaders in their respective Faculties, to ensure the ongoing integration of Aboriginal Strategic Plan initiatives into academic areas.
- Encourage increased participation of Aboriginal faculty members to senior administrative positions across the university.
- Encourage search committees to ask candidates for senior positions about their knowledge of Aboriginal issues.
- Develop a comprehensive Aboriginal faculty recruitment and retention strategy.
- Encourage the provincial government to appoint Aboriginal members to the Board of Governors in order to broaden the representation of British Columbia communities.

Timeline:

- Have an Aboriginal member appointed to the university Board of Governors by 2018.
- An ongoing process for the rest of the above initiatives.

Leads:

- Individual faculty and staff members.
- Faculty Deans.
- Board of Governors.

9. Government and NGO Relationships

Goal: Cooperate with, give assistance to, and provide complementary services, initiatives, and programs in partnership with municipal, provincial, and federal governments and legally constituted not-for-profit NGO organizations which are independent of government(s).

Action items:

- Contribute to policy-making in government by providing information and input when requested.
- Bring potential government, NGO, and university partners together.
- Enhance socio-economic as well as educational and political awareness in the community as they concern government, NGOs, and Aboriginal peoples.



- Partner with government programs and apply for concomitant funding.
- Provide direction and assistance, as requested, to government departments and NGO organizations.

Timeline:

- An ongoing process for all the above.

Leads:

- Vice-President, External Relations
- Office for Aboriginal Peoples

10. Communication Strategies

Goal: Affect information sharing and create awareness about Aboriginal initiatives, events, people and other potential items of interest at Simon Fraser University with communities and media.

Action items:

- Target specific audiences:
 - The Simon Fraser University on-campus community.
 - Off-campus communities, including Aboriginal peoples and organizations.
 - Aboriginal alumni of Simon Fraser University.
 - Municipal, provincial, and federal governments.
 - Media outlets.
- Utilize available tools and resources:
 - Public Affairs and Media Relations (PAMR) news releases.
 - Simon Fraser University News, including the annual Aboriginal Peoples Supplement/Insert.
 - Office for Aboriginal Peoples website and Annual Reports.
 - List serves in the Indigenous Student Centre, Office for Aboriginal Peoples, First Nations Student Association, and First Nations Studies Department.
 - The Tuz e-mail newsletter (Indigenous Student Centre).
 - Official reports to government and post secondary education-related organizations when requested.

Timeline:

- An ongoing process for all the above.

Leads:

- Vice-President, External Relations
- Public Affairs and Media Relations
- Office for Aboriginal Peoples
- Indigenous Student Centre



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