



OCAD University Indigenous Education Council Terms of Reference

Background

OCAD University established an Aboriginal Education Council in 2008 as part of the Aboriginal Postsecondary Education Training Action Plan funded by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. The council exists “to ensure that Aboriginal people are consistently and regularly engaged in decision making within the institution.” (Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework, p. 40). This council is now referred to as the Indigenous Education Council.¹

The Indigenous Education Council (IEC) is comprised of a group of local, provincial, and national volunteer members representing the interests and concerns of the Indigenous community who support Indigenous driven and focused art and design education. The council meets no less than three times a year to provide guidance and support to meet the needs of the Indigenous community by identifying and articulating priorities for programs and services intended to enhance the successful recruitment, admission, retention, graduation, and employability of Indigenous learners.

The IEC also recognizes the need for guidance and support for Indigenous faculty and staff whom students depend upon, promoting Indigenous leadership and the development of Indigenous curriculum in order to preserve the culture and address outstanding gaps in representation.

Mandate

The IEC identifies and strengthens collaboration and partnerships with Indigenous communities, government bodies and other associations to promote and advance access, retention, and degree completion for Indigenous learners. The IEC will ensure OCAD University responds to and implements recommendations made by community, Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP), the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC).

The IEC is recognized as the principal advisory body, which has an effective role in decision making and oversight on the Indigenous Student Success Fund (ISSF), from the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU) and other issues with respect to Indigenous post-secondary education at OCAD University. Furthermore, the IEC provides knowledge and guidance with respect to programs, services, and supports, curriculum development, and areas of research,

¹ Following the Federal government’s move to change the name of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development to Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, the Council has also adopted the term Indigenous in its name, along with the recognition of its usage in key official documents such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.



scholarship and key institutional initiatives, which include the Academic and Strategic Plan, Strategic Research Plan, and the Strategic Mandate Agreement.

The IEC has a university-wide mandate to promote, guide and oversee the implementation of Indigenous priorities and support the work of the Executive Director, Indigenous Engagement, and the Indigenous Student Centre. The work taken on by the Executive Director, Indigenous Engagement includes supporting the objectives in the Academic and Strategic Plan 2022-2028, building on the previously established priority of *Indigenous Learning: Nothing About Us Without Us*, which was first adopted by OCAD U as a shared institutional principle in its former Academic Plan 2017-2022. This work also includes implementing the recommendations from the Provost's Taskforce on Indigenous Learning (2018). This was a taskforce established under the University's Academic Plan (2017-2022) with the goal to ultimately lead to the development of an Indigenous Strategic Plan that guides the adoption of best practices for providing support and ensuring cultural safety for Indigenous faculty, staff and students and recommendations towards the processes of decolonization and embedding Indigenous epistemologies at OCAD University.

In addition, and as addressed in Priority 1 of the University's former Academic Plan 2017-2022, in responding to the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, OCAD U remains committed to adopting the 13 Principles on Indigenous Education outlined by Universities Canada as a critical link to redress the intergenerational and ongoing legacy of colonialism and the residential school system, as well as to adhere to the recommendations in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), The Journey Forward: Ontario's Commitment to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples (Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation) and the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP). OCAD U and the Executive Director, Indigenous Engagement, will work in tandem with our Indigenous Education Council, our Indigenous Student Association and with all faculty and staff across the university to support the process to decolonize the institution and to recognize, acknowledge, implement, and vitalize Indigenous visual culture.

The IEC will work to adopt and realize Universities Canada's 13 Principles on Indigenous Education, including resources and supports for Indigenous students, Indigenousization of the curriculum and Indigenous education leadership:

1. Ensure institutional commitment at every level to develop opportunities for Indigenous students.
2. Be student-centered: focus on the learners, learning outcomes and learning abilities, and create opportunities that promote student success.
3. Recognize the importance of indigenization of curricula through responsive academic programming, support programs, orientations, and pedagogies.
4. Recognize the importance of Indigenous education leadership through representation at the governance level and within faculty, professional and administrative staff.



5. Continue to build welcoming and respectful learning environments on campuses through the implementation of academic programs, services, support mechanisms, and spaces dedicated to Indigenous students.
6. Continue to develop resources, spaces and approaches that promote dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.
7. Continue to develop accessible learning environments off-campus.
8. Recognize the value of promoting partnerships among educational and local Indigenous communities and continue to maintain a collaborative and consultative process on the specific needs of Indigenous students.
9. Build on successful experiences and initiatives already in place at universities across the country to share and learn from promising practices, while recognizing the differences in jurisdictional and institutional mission.
10. Recognize the importance of sharing information within the institution, and beyond, to inform current and prospective Indigenous students of the array of services, programs and supports available to them on campus.
11. Recognize the importance of providing greater exposure and knowledge for non-Indigenous students on the realities, histories, cultures, and beliefs of Indigenous people in Canada.
12. Recognize the importance of fostering intercultural engagement among Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, faculty, and staff.
13. Recognize the role of institutions in creating and enabling a supportive environment for a successful and high-quality K-12 experience for Indigenous youth.

Membership

The Indigenous Education Council members will include First Nations, Métis and Inuit representatives from Indigenous organizations, Indigenous communities, Elders, Indigenous students, and institutional representatives.

The membership is aimed to be representative of the OCAD U Indigenous student body including nationally, as presented in the Appendix A of these terms of reference.

Indigenous members (including members of the Indigenous faculty, staff, and students of the university) will constitute more than half of the council.

In the event of vacancies, IEC members are invited to submit suggestions for external member selection, which are then reviewed by a planning committee consisting of the IEC Chair, IEC Secretary, Vice-President, Academic and Provost, Executive Director, Indigenous Engagement



and 1-2 Indigenous staff and/or faculty members. A short list is compiled based on the needs and initiatives of the Council and circulated to the IEC members for feedback and consensus before appointments are made.

Similarly for internal membership vacancies, a call for expressions of interest is sent out to the OCAD U community. If there is more interest than seats allotted, an election process is convened with the IEC membership.

Voting members:

Indigenous community members:

- One (1) Chair, either an internal or external member
- One (1) Elder/Knowledge Keeper; not subject to fixed term agreements
- Up to sixteen (16) members selected with a focus on representation from:
 - First Nations whose traditional land we work and live on and other Nations from Turtle Island
 - Local Indigenous communities in Toronto
 - Ontario Indigenous communities
 - Community members at large which the council believes will add to the expertise and knowledge of the council.
 - National/out of province members

OCAD University Indigenous members:

- One (1) Undergraduate Indigenous Student
- One (1) Graduate Indigenous Student
- One (1) Indigenous Student Association Co-President
(Any additional Indigenous students who attend will be considered a voting member)
- Two (2) Indigenous staff members
- Two (2) Indigenous Tenured/Tenure-track or Teaching Stream faculty members
- Manager, Indigenous Student Centre
- Chair, Indigenous Visual Culture Program
- Special Advisor to the Provost, Indigenous Knowledge, Practices and Production
- Executive Director, Indigenous Engagement

Non-voting members:

OCAD University community members:

- President
- Vice-President, Academic & Provost
- Vice-Provost, Students and International
- Chair of Senate
- All Deans
- Board Secretary & Director, Strategic Planning
- Indigenous members of the Board of Governors
- All other Indigenous Faculty/Staff



Leadership

The IEC will have one Chair that can be internal to the university or a community member; the Chair shall be elected by members of the IEC and shall identify as Indigenous. The Chair shall serve two-year terms as a minimum commitment, which can be renewable upon interest and request.

Model

The IEC works with the Vice-President, Academic and Provost and the President and is supported by the Executive Director, Indigenous Engagement. As a decision-making body, the Council reserves the right of oversight and to review, comment on and express approval or disapproval on all aspects concerning Indigeneity within the university. Any OCAD U staff, faculty or student who requires and/or seeks out the consultation or participation of the council will do so by first consulting with Executive Director, Indigenous Engagement and then will be put on an invite list for future agendas. The recommendations of the IEC will be taken forward by the Chair of the IEC and senior decision-makers through their direct involvement with the council and by reporting into the University's Senate and Board of Governors.

Terms of Office

All Indigenous community members, including the Chair, will serve for a two-year term. Members will be asked to submit a letter of re-commitment when the two-year term has ended if they wish to continue. If there are more members that wish to continue or join than there are seats available, there will be a vote by the OCAD University Indigenous members. Terms will begin on July 1 and end on June 30.

Meetings

The IEC will meet at OCAD University no less than (3) times per academic year. All remote members will be invited and reimbursed to attend one meeting in person per academic year. Meetings of the IEC will be closed to voting and non-voting members only. Guests will be invited upon request and will participate in the discussion relevant to the materials being presented. Subcommittees or working groups may be established, as needed, at the discretion of the Chair and can be drawn broadly from the community and from within the institution and will not be limited to IEC members. Every meeting will include one in-camera session for voting members and on request, one in-camera session for voting and non-voting members.

Attendance

All members are expected to attend meetings and participate regularly.

Quorum

A quorum is one-half the total membership plus one (1).

Decision-Making

Decisions are made by consensus of the voting members in attendance. In the event that the council cannot arrive at a consensus, the Chair can table a decision, or the decision can be made by a two-thirds majority vote of the entire membership.



Amendments to Terms of Reference

Amendments to the Terms of Reference will be reviewed every 2 years and amended by a consensus of the voting membership in consultation with the Vice-President, Academic and Provost and President and Vice-Chancellor of the University. Suggestions for edits or changes will be collected during the two-year period and will be discussed for inclusion.



APPENDIX A

The membership of the IEC is aimed to be representative of the OCAD U Indigenous student body including nationally:

Kwanlin Dün First Nation (YT), Namgis First Nation (BC), Office of Gitanmaax – Gitanmaax Band Council (BC), Sweetgrass First Nation (SK), Little Pine First Nation (SK), Peguis Post Secondary – Peguis First Nation (MB), Cross Lake Education Authority – Cross Lake First Nation (MB) and provincially: Akwesasne Mohawk Board of Education, Brunswick House First Nation, Curve Lake First Nation Education, Grand River Post Secondary Education Office, Lac La Croix First Nation, M’Chigeeng First Nation Education Department, Missanabie Cree First Nation, Mississauga of the Credit First Nation, Mushkegowuk Council, Nipissing First Nation, Northwest Angle #33 First Nation, Northern Nishnawbe Education Council, Ojibways of Onigaming First Nation, Peepeekisis Cree Nation No. 81, Shawanaga First Nation Education Department, Southern First Nations Secretariat, Walpole Island Education, Whitefish River First Nation, and Wikwemikong Board of Education.