

Indigenization Round Table Discussions
Monday, December 4, 2017

Fed Hall, Westmount Room

9:00-11:00am: 17 participants

1:00pm-3:00pm: 19 participants

Opportunities for Indigenization on campus

- Distinct visual change on campus (buildings, signage, etc.)
 - For example, giving the Indigenous name of Laurel Creek and having a sign placed there for students to see. In some Indigenous communities, water is sacred and to rename the creek to its original Indigenous name would further the Indigenization process on campus
 - Smudging spaces
 - Longhouse and Tipi
- Land acknowledgement
 - Syllabi, email signatures, at events (internal and external)
 - Education on why we do this
- Plan to attract more Indigenous scholars/tenured professors
- Training for professors on Indigenous knowledge and teaching practices
- AFIW is main campus as well – having greater awareness of this
- Awareness of daily macroaggressions
 - Unintentional bias that “slips through” in conversation
 - Asking students not to smudge (because touring students/parents might think it’s ‘something else’) vs. asking students to teach guests about smudging
- Outreach with Six Nations Polytechnic in Brantford – very few come here. What is being done to build relationships with them per academic agreements made there?
- Explanation with students about what “self-identifying” means
- Healing centres for counselling services/mental wellness
- Divestment from corporations with a history of human rights violations re: Indigenous peoples (e.g. Enbridge, Suncor)
- Have a co-op stream for Indigenous opportunities
 - building partnerships with Indigenous companies or on reserve
- Think about organizations that have Indigenous employees who are willing to be mentors for students
- Have more connections via UW – so students can be made aware of what opportunities they have available to them
- Funding for students doing outreach
- Collection of statistics

Challenges that we may face as we move towards the strategy recommendations and then after the report into action

- What does *Indigenization* look like?
 - Possible answer: Cooperatively normalizing the Indigenous presence of the University without discrimination.
 - Art, labels on directional signage
- How do we accommodate for Indigenous peoples instead of insisting they accommodate?
- Do Indigenous students know Lori? Do they know how to access her?
 - Lori Campbell, Director, Waterloo Aboriginal Education Centre
- Is this the best way to engage Indigenous community?
- If this doesn't provide any change, what will? Research has been done before at UW without any implementation
- Increased spaces: question arises of where are these spaces located?
 - UW only has one main space for Indigenous students on campus
 - Most universities have a senior Indigenous advisor
 - This needs to be for students for advising and connecting purposes
- Indigenous students should be represented at the SLC on campus and not just specific to St. Paul's, like many other universities have
- Students may be resistant to learning Indigenous content
- Question of using Indigenous texts and then partaking in scholarly criticism them as non-Indigenous professors – problem of power dynamics and how to solve/deal with this
- Can't separate Indigenous thought and Western thought into a binary – needs to be all-encompassing
- Because this is a political checkbox right now, it could fall-off
- Language barriers and language recognition
- How to make this fit with UW's strength
- Consult the UN declaration for Indigenous rights
- Re-create the solution with Indigenous knowledge
- Both male and female Indigenous leaders

Suggestions for further engagement – how best to engage the campus community and how best to prepare them for this work

- “Ally Bill of Responsibilities” – how to be an Indigenous Ally
http://www.lynngehl.com/uploads/5/0/0/4/5004954/ally_bill_of_responsibilities_poster.pdf
 - Should feel uncomfortable at first
- Identify relationships we already have in place first
- Can begin to engage with faculty members first
- Question of how to engage with main campus - Where do we begin?
 - Can connect with faculties via content (how does this intersect with Indigenous knowledge - via courses? Or one-day topics within different courses? Can this be worked in somehow?)
 - Option of just getting to know each other through meet and greets or having lunch

- Have information sent out via email to members at the UW community
- Implement some form of information in the classes
 - Students come to campus to attend class – and this option can be useful
 - Small changes in the class content is something to consider
 - E.g. incorporating Indigenous knowledge or content in legal studies program at UW
 - E.g. biology: know proper conduct working with Indigenous peoples
 - E.g. in business law, we should be including Indigenous law and issues concerning business. For example, AFM 231 included class discussion about an issue of intellectual property law involving the copyright infringement of Inuit garments by a European clothing designer.
 - E.g. in engineering we should be including, even if just briefly, discourse concerning the issues faced when working on projects that infringe upon native treaty land, or that affect indigenous territories or communities. The North Dakota Access Pipeline is a perfect example of a contemporary issue; this should be taught to our engineering students. Actually, ethics like this should be taught to all of our students, I believe. But, this would be a modest and effective start.
- We should not place all the responsibility on teachers, but rather bring in elders and other influential community members to assist teachers/curriculum directors in implementing curriculum properly
 - Development of a toolkit for professors to incorporate Indigenization into their classrooms (e.g. understanding relationship with Indigenous students, etc.)
 - Mandatory module required to teach (for professors)
 - Branch of Indigenization for Centre for Teaching Excellence
 - professors need to know how to respond to them constructively while also helping Indigenous students feel safe – conversation will allow for racism to be countered
- Indigenous student association (Feds club) isn't active this year as they were last year – the association have connected more with Feds than they did last year
 - Indigenous students looking to connect more – require more space
- Good relationships come from community-based research
- More awareness of resources is needed (e.g. where staff and students can go to know how to learn more about how their topics in the classroom relate to Indigenous communities)
- We need to make it normal, as if you're out of the loop if you don't understand Indigenous issues and pedagogy
- We need both a bottom-up (students) and top-down (deans) approach
- Heads of departments/deans/others in positions of power need to constantly be involved in Indigenous community events (e.g. powwows, etc.) and really listen to show that they're committed and to build relationships
- We need to recognize our prejudices, as this is an emotional process
- Our university needs to have a mentoring relationship with younger (high school) Indigenous youth in order to make university more accessible for them
- We should communicate with northern universities who spend more time with Indigenous knowledge and ask what they do to implement it
- Website as resource
- Inform people of opportunities on campus

- Social media
- Clear, inclusive communication and outreach
- Programming, daycare, elders on campus, events that celebrate Indigenous people
 - Indigenous games
 - History of lacrosse
 - Indigenous research
- Recruitment of Indigenous students, particularly in math and engineering
- Velocity and innovation working with Indigenous communities
- Support for Indigenous youth transitioning from child welfare systems
 - How can the university support and help close the gap
 - Professional development for Indigenous methodology

Work that participants might be aware of at other universities (this might assist with the environmental scans for each working group)

- Western U: statement of intent for all residences to have a designated smudging space
 - Western University Indigenous programming and services: http://indigenous.uwo.ca/about%20is/is_programs_services.html
- Trent’s school for Indigenous Studies: <https://www.trentu.ca/indigenoustudies/>
- Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business: <https://www.ccab.com/>
- Lakehead University: Online campus campaign called “Invalidate the Hate”
 - 14 students built an online awareness campaign to address hate speech that attacks Indigenous communities both online and on campus
 - This was an extra-curricular project for a class
 - Adam had reached out to this group to see if they can expand this to other universities – but group isn’t sure what long term goals are with this project
- BC Indigenous House
- McMaster has a new space and research facility
- Six Nations Polytechnic in Brantford

Open feedback

- This entire strategy needs to be done in a more inclusive way
- We can look to other strategies we have used to deal with diversity issues (e.g. women in engineering) and see what strengths we can pull from them
- Strategy needs to be community-based with relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, profs, and the community
- Feels very disconnected/not a campus-wide plan
 - Siloed work inhibits a comprehensive plan
- Land acknowledgements in emails and at events
 - Who said this was a good idea?
 - How does this lead to action?
- Formant is still trying to fit Indigenization into existing structure
- Is this serious or “just for looks?” A business strategy or something the University is taking seriously?
- Is this the right time? Has there been enough prep work?
 - Has the Indigenous community indicated their need for this?

- Can't just send a call-out – a lot more engaging and talking with Indigenous peoples as opposed to putting something on a website
 - Should come from Indigenous peoples themselves, not from the institution
 - Should have been an opportunity for community members to apply as well, not just UW-affiliated
- Is VP of Equity going to Indigenous Centre? Is each individual administration member doing enough to support?
- Wanting more Indigenous presence on working groups – not wanting to impose non-Indigenous ideas on Indigenous peoples
 - Why presence so low? A lot of Indigenous peoples see the University campus as a safe place for them
 - Feeling their ideas aren't valued
 - Not wanting to be tokenized – not having ideas taken seriously or feeling like a “study” – feeling of being studied instead of building relationships
- Indigenous students, staff, and faculties must be strong in their identities and feel comfortable expressing their identities
- UW could do better in their social values, moral values, resources that are missing such as collaborative environment, ground themselves, not just only wealthy students, competitiveness is a problem – we can gain strength by opening the doors to our community (six nations) to build these relationships
- There must be a commitment from those in positions of power