Student Experience Working Group Draft Recommendations

Mandate
University of Waterloo and all its’ partners will seek to build a holistic student experience – academic and non-academic – that honours, respects and values the diversity of students within the campus community. By providing a student experience where all students feel welcomed, nurtured and can thrive, we work to create an equitable environment where each student has the opportunity for success. Essential to this experience is fostering a campus community where students feel they belong, respected for whom they are and what they contribute. Creating a sense of place for all students is foremost.

Within the specific context of Indigenous students’ experience, University of Waterloo will need to create a campus-wide collegial academic and non-academic environment of respect for traditional and wisdom, where students can explore their identity; culture; language and spirituality through research; teaching and learning; and ceremony from Indigenous faculty, staff and elders. Non-Indigenous students will have the opportunity to encounter Indigenous culture, language, systems of governance, frameworks of intellectual thought and spiritual practices as we work together to build bridges of understanding, accountability, and trust.

Recommendations

A. Student Wellbeing:

1. Spirituality and Ceremony
Acknowledging that for many Indigenous peoples wholeness involves the integration of spirit through one’s mental, emotional, spiritual and physical development. They are one and deeply interconnected. Student wellbeing is nurtured through interactions with land and connecting to Mother Earth. The importance of land in Indigenous tradition is fundamental to bringing people together building community, and relationships. There is an opportunity at the University of Waterloo to create a community garden focused on Indigenous practices and encourage wellbeing for Indigenous students and non-Indigenous students. In this way, Indigenous culture can be introduced to non-Indigenous students, and Indigenous students have the opportunity to express and remember their culture. Dedicated space devoted to Indigenous culture grounded in Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee philosophy such as a three sisters garden would be in harmony with the new Ceremonial Fire Grounds and create space for students to be part of the planting, growing, and harvesting. This would provide students the opportunity to connect with the land, nurture wellbeing, and build community.

Space for Ceremony and Spiritual Formation
Rationale:
It is a common practice to have a physical space for ceremony and spiritual formation. Common to these spaces are artifacts, artistry, and architecture reflective of their culture that help students obtain a sense of grounding. This recommendation is also rooted in the Truth and Reconciliation document #60 #61
Recommendation 1: Create dedicated space for local spiritual life in accordance with dish with one spoon that is located centrally on the University campus and welcomes Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, faculty and staff.

Recommendation 2: Opportunities to receive In-depth education, plan, and practice of spiritual life such as smudging, healing circles, and other ceremonies without barriers that reflect the lives of Indigenous peoples. An important component involves the education of what may be shared with non-Indigenous people and what is for the Indigenous community.

Knowledge Keepers

Rationale: Knowledge Keepers hold the gateway to the spirituality embedded in Indigenous culture. Knowledge Keepers are able to help mentor and educate both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. Knowledge Keepers are integral to the spiritual development of Indigenous students. A Knowledge Keeper in Residence Program would provide leadership in ceremony and events to support the Indigenous students’ wellbeing on campus. Knowledge Keepers that are present and able to provide predictable access for Indigenous students and non-Indigenous students.

Recommendation 3: Provide funding and resources to support a Knowledge Keeper in Residence Program that brings Knowledge Keepers to campus on a regular and predictable basis.

Calendar of Cultural Practice

Rationale: Spiritual elements within Indigenous life include cycles built into the seasons of the year. Respecting their moments of importance also helps in the integration of these moments in the shared moments of all cultures within the student body.

Recommendation 4: Accommodate and celebrate the many cycles of life shared by Indigenous peoples by creating a calendar and then incorporating this calendar into the university calendar.

2. Mental Wellness

The University of Waterloo should be a place where people feel a part of community that fosters connection, care, and compassion. Building a network of relationships through a holistic mental wellness process, Indigenous and non-Indigenous students can create a culture of care on campus. With the recent mental health climate on campus, there is a great need for students, staff, and faculty to be able to express their concerns and be heard.

The PAC-SMH Report and Recommendations on mental health and wellness identifies that Indigenous peoples may experience additional stress from not being fully supported and the need for culturally sensitive mental health
services. Additionally, with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s recommendation of *improving education attainment levels and success rates* (10 ii) the University of Waterloo should ensure that proper mental health services are available for Indigenous students.

On campus, Indigenous students want to normalize Indigenous content with Indigenous and non-Indigenous peers, and isolation is a major factor to combat for mental wellness. Our recommendations for Indigenous student Mental Wellness at University of Waterloo are based on the notion that mental wellness is along a continuum of need – from day-to-day balance and positive mental health to crisis management and remedial care.

There are services on campus that address mental wellness and offer peer support, such as Counselling Services, MATES, or Move Your Mind. However, there is an opportunity to recommend a peer support mental wellness initiative that is rooted in Indigenous knowledge and tradition. The Circle process is a holistic way to build relationships, work through struggles, and find support. Currently, Circle is used on campus to address isolation and express feelings around mental health with the Circles of Care. Additionally, reflections about a recent Circle with marginalized students on campus found, “the process was effective because marginalized students are often silenced, so giving them an opportunity to speak in a safe environment that equalizes participants through the Circle and the talking piece is countercultural. We could have never fostered the sense of community and ongoing support that resulted from the Circle. Participants left the Circle feeling that they were supported and motivated by their responsibility to support others.”

**Council of Care**

**Rationale:**
Creating spaces, such as circles, to address different needs such as students experiencing racism on campus, feelings of homesickness, isolation, or general updates into participants’ mental wellness. In particular, there could be spaces facilitated by an Indigenous Knowledge Keeper for Indigenous students in order for their voices to be heard and to build relationships with each other. Additional spaces could be used to support non-Indigenous students while introducing Indigenous content and practice could be used. Circles could be called for times of crisis on campus when there is a need for students to come together to speak and be heard. Circles are an adaptive and powerful tool to create a community on campus that grows together and collectively supports mental wellness. This wholistic approach recognizes the need for the entire campus to be a place of community that celebrates Indigenous ways of life and supports mental wellness.

As part of creating a community of believers and supporters, circles provide both Indigenous and non-Indigenous persons with the opportunity to come together to discover, create and learn/share from one another. Rituals help build relationship through a deep sense of community by creating
commonality of meaning through shared experiences. Ritual can help heal and unite Indigenous and non-Indigenous students share their spirituality and a common sense of deeper meaning in life. This recommendation also takes into account the Truth and Reconciliation item #80

**Recommendation 5:** Create a Council of Care, which has trained Indigenous Knowledge Keepers as facilitators (possibly 2-3) available for students. Conduct Circles within the University for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students to create an environment of support for student wellbeing that is preventative; providing a foundation for mental wellness for the University of Waterloo that is able to support and react to student mental health. The Council of Care can conduct Circles on an ongoing basis for students to create community across disciplines and identities.

**Peer Mentoring**

**Rationale:**

A peer-mentoring program between incoming and upper-year Indigenous students. They could meet in pairs and as a larger group to build relationships that help incoming students transition to university life with spiritual, mental, and emotional support, while encouraging upper year students to understand the impact they make on other peoples lives. A successful program would promote balance and enhance the university experience of both parties.

**Recommendation 6:** That the University of Waterloo, in collaboration with the Waterloo Indigenous Education Centre (Shatitsirótha’), create an Indigenous Peer Mentor program for incoming, self-identifying Indigenous students.

**B. Residence and Student Life:**

1. **Student Transitions**

The University of Waterloo should provide increased orientation support for Indigenous students when they arrive at university. Some of the barriers students face when arriving on campus for the first time are malaise, isolation, and difficulty navigating the community. Some students found the transition from a smaller community, where they know practically everyone, to a larger city particularly difficult. Other barriers include; lack of understanding around the library borrowing system and a lack of confidence because of previous experiences of racism in other colonial structured environments.

**Indigenous Student Transition Handbook**

**Rationale:**

An Indigenous Student Transition Handbook would provide students and families necessary information to navigate the University. The link provides an example of a Student Transition Handbook [University of Victoria – Aboriginal Student Transition Handbook](#). The goal of the handbook is to improve the
education attainment levels and success rates of students by enabling parents to participate fully in the education of their children. This recommendation is also rooted in the Truth and Reconciliation document #10.

**Recommendation 7:** Create an Indigenous Student Transition Handbook or online guide to help Indigenous students, and their families, with transition to the University of Waterloo.

**Territorial Acknowledgement**

**Rationale:**
The Territorial Acknowledgement aligns with themes identified in a review of existing Canadian and international approaches to reconciliation. These acknowledgements honour Indigenous peoples and cultures through commemorative and symbolic gestures and create opportunities for intercultural dialogue. The University of Waterloo has several land acknowledgement statements that are used; many provide an inconsistent and confusing message. Territorial acknowledgements should provide more context than simply “an ownership of geography” statement. A thoughtful territorial acknowledgement statement that is integrated into University life would help to create a more welcoming environment for Indigenous students.

**Recommendation 8:** Integrate territorial acknowledgement, cultural learning opportunities, and Indigenous ceremony into existing transition programs (i.e. Orientation, Faculty 101 Days).

**Recommendation 9:** Develop a clear territorial acknowledgement statement in consultation with the local Indigenous community.

**Ally Training**

**Rationale:**
It is important to acknowledge the land, but it is not enough. As residents of the Kitchener-Waterloo region, we are all treaty people, and by virtue of that responsible and accountable for the violence that Indigenous people face. To be an ally is to engage in a continuous process of encounter and a commitment to standing in solidarity with Indigenous people; it is not a title. It requires ongoing self-reflection and a genuine openness to learning, acting in a de-colonial manner, and sustaining relationships with Indigenous people. It is important to learn about oppression and privilege, and about the history of colonization; it is equally important to understand and respect Indigenous people and culture, and the land you live on. To stand in solidarity one must build relationships with Indigenous people and act in a manner that demonstrates your support for what Indigenous people and communities are saying is important, aligning oneself with their struggle, and speaking up when something problematic is said.

**Recommendation 10:** Provide ally training and resources to Orientation Leaders, Staff and Faculty to understand how to be an ally to Indigenous Peoples at the University of Waterloo.
Orientation Programming

Rationale:
Targeted orientation programs and events for Indigenous students can help students feel welcome, introduce the support services offered, connect Indigenous students with other students and allies, and ease the transition to the new community.

Recommendation 11: Offer specific programming for Indigenous students as part of the Orientation programming (i.e. Orientation day for Indigenous students) in partnership with the Waterloo Indigenous Student Centre and Community Advisors.

Recommendation 12: Investigate existing Orientation programming and activities and decolonize existing activities that are not inclusive to all. Add structures and programs that recognize the value of Indigenous approach to building community and a sense of place.

Convocation Programming

Rationale:
Mount Royal University in Calgary has an Indigenous Graduation Ceremony. Elders from Treaty 7 and Metis Nation are honorary speakers and presenters and students are formally recognized and culturally honored to help celebrate their academic achievements. The University of Waterloo can find ways to incorporate Indigenous ceremony and traditions into our graduation ceremony. For example, Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre (FDASC), on behalf of Queen’s University, the Aboriginal Council of Queen's University (ACQU) and the Vice-Provost and Dean of Student Affairs present graduating Aboriginal students with a special gift during their convocation ceremony.

Recommendation 13: FNMI students are allowed/encouraged to wear their regalia during their convocation/carry eagle feathers.

Recommendation 14: FNMI students are allowed to be “hooded,” however they choose. (i.e. Inuk student who was denied being hooded by the one she had brought, which was handmade traditional Inuit style).

Recommendation 15: Territory Acknowledgement not followed immediately by the singing of Oh Canada.

Recommendation 16: Opening words such as Ohen:ton Karihwahtekwen or Anishnabe prayer in addition to Territory Acknowledgement (to be learned in the original language).

Recommendation 17: Sponsorship (funding) of the UW Indigenous Celebration (HAAAC) by UW, not just WISC. (I know this is not relevant to UW’s convocation, however it would be most helpful to the local Indigenous graduation held annually).
2. Residence and Student Life
Residence and student life are a significant aspect of a students’ journey through post-secondary. It is important that we create on campus an environment that supports student well-being and academic success.

Celebrate Indigenous Culture
Rationale:
Create a warm, welcoming and respectful learning environment and sense of place for Indigenous students. Support development of a community that is accepting of diversity, and inclusive of Indigenous ways of knowing and being by providing opportunities for students to learn about the history of Indigenous peoples and the enduring impacts of colonization on individuals, families, and communities to create opportunities for intercultural dialogue. The University should ensure that training is required for all non-Indigenous residence support staff and students that includes:
1. How to perform a proper land acknowledgement;
2. How to be a proper Indigenous ally;
3. How to avoid cultural appropriation;
4. How to discuss Indigenous practices (e.g. smudging) with non-Indigenous students; and
5. Holistic disciplinary practices in residence (i.e. circles, restorative justice).

Recommendation 18: Establish Indigenous Awareness Week to celebrate Indigenous peoples and their accomplishments and contributions to our campus and community.
Recommendation 19: University of Waterloo and its affiliated institutions accommodate Indigenous practices such as smudging in residence rooms.
Recommendation 20: University of Waterloo and its affiliated institutions require all incoming students and employees, as well as Residence Life Dons and student leaders, to take cultural awareness training specifically for Indigenous students, to facilitate an awareness of Indigenous practices, resources, and contacts.
Recommendation 21: Incorporate Pow Wow into the University of Waterloo life.

Access to Traditional Food
Rationale:
Supporting student success and well-being means investing in good food. For Indigenous students it is a visible demonstration that their culture and practices are recognized and valued, and serves as a reminder of the connection of food systems to the land. Providing Indigenous and non-Indigenous students’ access traditional food on campus on a regular basis creates an opportunity for cultural dialogue and awareness between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.
Recommendation 22: University of Waterloo Food Services, in consultation with the Indigenous Student Association and community, add traditional Indigenous foods to its residence food services menus and campus food outlets.

C. Student Support:
   1. Financial Support
      Funding is commonly a major barrier to accessing post-secondary education for Indigenous students.

      Scholarships and Bursaries
      Rationale: There are a number of agencies (e.g., Indspire, Metis Nation of Ontario) who provide access to scholarship and bursary funding for Indigenous students. For many Indigenous students funding is a significant barrier to post-secondary education. In the province of British Columbia, Vancouver Island University successfully lobbied the government to cover the cost of University for eligible students who were in foster care.

      Recommendation 23: University of Waterloo establish scholarships that cover the cost of any undergraduate or graduate tuition program at the university for admitted Indigenous students.

      Recommendation 24: University of Waterloo should advertise and promote these scholarships within Indigenous communities and among Indigenous students living in urban centres.

      Recommendation 25: University of Waterloo should create an emergency fund for Indigenous students in financial crisis and at risk of dropping out. This emergency fund would be a grant and not a loan and the approval and funding for this would be available within 24-48 hours of the applications’ submission.

2. Student Success
   It is not enough to provide support to access post-secondary education for Indigenous students. It is essential that as an institution we create an environment with the necessary support in place that provides them an equitable opportunity for success.

   Access to student support
   Rationale:
   Indigenous students are commonly the first people in their family to attend University. For some, they are leaving a close-knit community for the first time and attending an institution where they do not have community supports. It is important that the university offer wrap around services (readiness, childcare, life skills, and mental wellness programming).
**Recommendation 26:** The University of Waterloo provide access to wrap around support for Indigenous students including university readiness programming, childcare, life skills and mental health.

**Recommendation 27:** Develop a user-friendly process for students to self-declare as Indigenous to access support on campus any time during their program.

**Recommendation 28:** University of Waterloo hire a full time, Indigenous Student Success Coordinator to support Indigenous students.

**Recommendation 29:** The University of Waterloo hire Indigenous Tenure Track Faculty in each academic department by 2025.

3. **CO-OP Success and Experiential Learning**

Co-op education and experiential learning are the flagship of the University of Waterloo and forms a significant part of the pedagogical practice of extending learning beyond the classroom. It is important that our Indigenous students be able to access Co-op and experiential learning opportunities.

**Inclusivity Research**

**Rationale:**
Conducting preliminary research is the first step to improving the co-op experience for students at Waterloo. We want to create culturally competent citizens and set up students for success in the workplace.

**Recommendation 30:** Waterloo Centre for the Advancement of Co-operative Education (WatCACE) work with Indigenous students to conduct research on inclusivity in the workplace for Indigenous students. This should include questions that:

1. Address messaging in job postings;
2. Inclusivity in the interview process; and
3. Workplace environment inclusivity and support.

**Career Advisors**

**Rationale:**
The University of Waterloo and Centre for Career Action already has several career advisors who meet one-on-one with students. It would be beneficial to have an advisor dedicated to helping students connect with Indigenous employers. The University of Victoria has an Indigenous Coordinator position held by a French Canadian Metis woman. She helps Indigenous students discover their future goals and career plans by connecting them with Indigenous organizations.

**Recommendation 31:** Centre for Career Action (CCA) hire an Indigenous Career Advisor to help students:

1. find relevant work in their field of study;
2. connect with Indigenous organizations and First Nations communities who hire students;
3. explore culturally relevant co-op opportunities—projects or services that impact or partner with Indigenous communities;
4. find career resources;
5. guide students in further education plans; and
6. discover jobs and online resources designed to connect First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students and recent grads to rewarding careers.

Cultural Awareness Workshop
Rationale:
Organizational & Human Development (OHD) has Inclusivity workshops that acknowledge, communicate, and promote an understanding of the complexity and uniqueness of the University of Waterloo’s campus community, presenting the ideals by which campus members should engage one another—with respect, sensitivity, and fairness. These workshops include;

1. Principles of Inclusivity (OHD502)
2. Understanding Inclusivity (OHD503)
3. Inclusive Communication (OHD504)
4. Generational Inclusivity (OHD505)
5. Sexual Orientation & Gender ID (OHD506)
6. Accessible Communities (OHD507)
7. Inclusivity Capstone (OHD508)

The University campus would benefit from adding a workshop related to indigenization.

Recommendation 32: Organizational & Human Development (OHD) add an Indigenous inclusivity workshop to the Inclusivity Series certificate program so that staff and faculty can become better aware and prepared to improve inclusivity and equality on campus.

Student Career and Employment Program
Rationale:
University of Victoria has Indigenous interview clinics, which bring Indigenous employers to campus. This helps students connect, interview and network with potential Indigenous employers. The LYNX Aboriginal Student Career and Employment Program through the University of Calgary provides an opportunity for Indigenous students and recent graduates from various universities in Western Canada to connect directly with potential employers. Employers seeking to hire Indigenous students use the program to post available employment positions, view student profiles and share information about their organizations. Through the program website, you can upload résumés and learn about opportunities for internships, co-ops, summer and full-time employment.
**Recommendation 33:** Co-operative Education & Career Action (CECA) hire an Experiential and Community Learning Indigenous Coordinator who works to:

1. connect with Indigenous organizations and First Nations communities who hire students;
2. increase the connections with Indigenous employers and the University of Waterloo; and
3. increase Indigenous job and experiential learning opportunities on Waterloo Works

4. **Graduate Student Experience**
   Graduate students and graduate education are important part of the research success at the University of Waterloo.

**Graduate Student Support**

**Rationale:**
The University should look for ways to support graduate students financially as well as through their graduate program. Indigenous students bring a distinct knowledge and understanding to their programs that should be recognized and valued. We aim to value this knowledge by offering courses in this area, hiring more Indigenous scholars, offering more scholarships and supports for Indigenous students, specialized more in-depth training for supervisors and graduate coordinators. This training should focus on mental health training, mentorship training, and Indigenous training.

**Recommendation 34:** Develop a research grant fund that is available to Indigenous Masters/PhD students who are seeking to pursue graduate degrees at the University of Waterloo.

**Recommendation 35:** Establish a mechanism for graduate students to be able to review and provide feedback on their support from their supervisor.

**Recommendation 36:** Provide access to mentors for Indigenous students in the specific faculties.

**Accessing Indigenous Knowledge**

**Rationale:** The collaborative water program does a good job of providing open courses to students from a wide variety of disciplines. However, while the courses integrate Indigenous speakers and knowledge, they do not specifically focus on this aspect. It would enhance the ability to students to access this knowledge if professors were more directly involved in the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge, it could be an effective mechanism of creating a more open dialogue.

**Recommendation 37:** Increase the number of faculty who are Indigenous and ask non-Indigenous faculty to consider Indigenous topics in their research.
Recommendation 38: Build an elective program as an option for student who wish to learn more about Indigenous topics.
Recommendation 39: Introduce a course that specifically focus on indigenous speakers and knowledge, especially for STEM fields of study.
Recommendation 40: Improve collaboration between departments on events involving Indigenous speakers.
Recommendation 41: Increase the number of joint events between the GSA and the Indigenous Student Centre.
Recommendation 42: Include Indigenous perspectives in conferences and workshops.
Recommendation 43: develop protocol and policy for respecting Indigenous knowledge as a legitimate form of knowing and revising all ethics protocols to respond to the multiple and growing research on Indigenous methodologies.

D. Student Recruitment
   1. Program Recognition
      There are currently a number of programs offered by the University of Waterloo through different faculties to connect with Indigenous students. The University should look to developing additional programs and partnership to enhance their recruitment opportunities.

Partner with Indigenous Post-Secondary Institutions
Rationale
The University of Waterloo provide all students the opportunity to explore Indigenous culture, language and ways of knowing, and acknowledge the importance of this experience. By recognizing the expertise in Indigenous post-secondary institutions we not only honour and value the people and their knowledge, we offer our validation of these programs.

Recommendation 44: University of Waterloo recognize programs from Indigenous post-secondary institutions for transfer credit toward any University of Waterloo program recognized as a minor within a program or as a certificate offered in partnership with the Indigenous post-secondary institution for all students who have completed the program at an Indigenous post-secondary institution.

Communication Strategy
Rationale: Applying to university can be intimidating and complicated. Improving the recruitment program could help prospective students visualize their UWaterloo experience and broaden the University of Waterloo’s recruitment demographics.
Recommendations 45: Incorporate information regarding Indigenous demographics, supports, opportunities and programs into the University of Waterloo recruitment viewbook.

Recommendation 46: The University of Waterloo should divest from any financial arrangement, financial investment, co-operative education or corporate partnership with any corporation that refuses to respect Indigenous sovereignty or refuses to engage in a process of informed and prior consent with Indigenous communities as stipulated in the TRC Call to Action 92 (i)

Secondary School Liaison Recruitment Program
Rationale: During the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Information Program, students have the opportunity to meet with Indigenous liaisons who can answer questions about applying to university, choosing a program, admission requirements, applying for financial aid / funding, arranging living accommodations and campus life. The University of Waterloo could benefit from providing more funding to improve Indigenous recruitment.

Recommendation 47: University of Waterloo place a representative at the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Information Program (APSIP) room at the Ontario Universities’ Fair (OUF).
Recommendation 48: Hire a full-time, permanent Indigenous student Recruiter/Liaison.

Elementary/High School Outreach
Rationale: Successful outreach programs build relationships with students before they start applying to post-secondary institutions. This relationship building with Indigenous students could encourage them to consider STEM disciplines. Queen's University Engineering Outreach engages youth year-round through school workshops, camps, clubs, and events in Kingston and its surrounding communities. They offer programming for youth in grades K – 12 through three recognized programs: Aboriginal Access to Engineering, Connections, and Science Quest. Queen's University Engineering Outreach offers a variety of customized programs for Indigenous youth, girls, and youth facing socio-economic challenges. Waterloo could incorporate this model into the summer camps, competitions and workshops offered on campus (i.e. Engineering Science Quest).

Recommendation 49: Hire a full time Indigenous Outreach Specialist to help coordinate and incorporate Indigenous outreach and programming into events at Waterloo (i.e. Engineering Science Quest).
Recommendation 50: Invest in developing long-term partnerships with educational programs in Indigenous communities and other urban centres with high percentages of Indigenous peoples.
2. Indigenous Gathering Space:
The Benedict Gathering Place in the First Peoples House of Learning at Trent University named for respected Mohawk Elders Ernest and Florence Benedict is the center of Indigenous student life on campus. Students study and take part in an array of activities including ceremonies, socials and workshops. This hub of activity is a bright and comfortable space, where all are welcome. The space is designed to host ceremonies and to nurture Indigenous oral tradition, language and knowledge. The space enhances the educational experience through a holistic approach to academic, personal, and cultural support. The community honours each other’s life experiences and invites everyone to come together to share laughter, warm bannock, and visits.

Gathering Space
Rationale:
The gathering space should cultivate a respectful and welcoming environment that encourages student empowerment, identity, community connection and Indigenous ways of learning. The gathering space provides a central place for all students on campus, faculty, staff, and community to gather, and find a sense of place in the larger university environment. Permanent Indigenous staff and a seminar room that supports Indigenous ways of learning should be part of the gathering space. This space should serve as the centre for the development of outreach programs through connection to Indigenous leads in secondary schools, pathway programs and to local communities. The space should be designed to host ceremonies and nurture Indigenous oral tradition, language and knowledge, and support programming that enhances the educational experience through a holistic approach to academic, personal, and cultural support.

Recommendation 51: University of Waterloo build an Indigenous Gathering Space on the main campus that is visible and a place of priority for undergraduate and graduate students. The Gathering Space should have strong connections to the local Haudenosaunee and Anishnawbe communities, and provide students with access to ceremonies, Indigenous oral tradition, language and knowledge, and programming that enhances their educational experience through a holistic approach to academic, personal, and cultural support.

Recommendation 52: Establish a University Lecture Series that focuses on building understanding related to Indigenous issues

Recommendation 53: Connect the College pathways team to discuss possibilities for building programs to support Indigenous students’ transition to the University of Waterloo.

Rationale:
Within the Gathering Space, create an open and positive space for Graduate Students where Indigenous knowledge is encouraged and discussed. Offer and communicate events that involve graduate students access to Indigenous speakers and issues, particularly in the STEM faculties and departments.
Recommendation 54: Create the opportunity for graduate students to form their own Indigenous group.
Recommendation 55: Increased communication between the graduate coordinator and the Indigenous centre; ideally, the graduate coordinator would be sending out news about Indigenous events on campus.