

## **Indigenous Advisory Committee Meeting**

Minutes of the Meeting – April 4, 2025

**Present:** Jean Becker, Melissa Ireland, Eileen Antone, Brad Regehr, Jen Smerdon, John Lewis, Logan MacDonald, Dale Ashley Bellaire, Amanda St. Marie, Emma Rain Smith, Ryan MacTavish, Savannah Sloat

**Regrets:** Tracy Primeau

### **Opening Ceremony and Acknowledgements**

Eileen opened the meeting with a traditional thanksgiving address and the importance of the eagle feather. Jean acknowledged the territories that the University is situated on. Jean also informed the committee of Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation request to be included in the University's Territorial Acknowledgement.

### **Approval of Agenda and Minutes**

- Jean asks for any conflicts of interest regarding the agenda items.
- Motion to approve Agenda, moved by Amanda, seconded by Dale.
- Motion to approve Minutes from January 10, 2025, moved by Savannah, seconded by John.

### **Update to Terms of Reference**

- Committee reviewed two changes to the Terms of Reference, the first is the inclusion of Grand River Post Secondary Education Office and Mississaugas of the Credit Education Office representatives of non-voting ex officio members. The second edit was the number of committee members from 12 to 10.

### **Update on University Matters**

- Jean stated the approval of two positions: an Indigenous Relations Coordinator and a Recruitment Specialist.
- Jean also reiterated Waterloo at 100, emphasized the university's commitment to indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation.
- Jean continues her efforts to have the Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC) recognized as a decision-making body within the university.

### **Campus Plan and Indigenous Futures Network**

- John provided an update on the campus plan. OIR has been working with University Relations to have the Main Path renamed to Two Row Path as well as potential changes to its physical appearance.
- John discussed the Indigenous Futures Network, a network aimed at leveraging indigenous knowledge to solve global issues, and the application to the fund. Outlines the importance of the potential project to be unique and impactful.

## **Updates from Director, Indigenous Relations**

- Melissa provided an update on the new residence building, the inclusion of indigenous iconography, and the planning for indigenous programming.
- The university has implemented an indigenous house deposit waiver for all residents, removing a barrier to access campus housing for Indigenous students.
- Melissa updated the group in the decolonizing payment project, which aims to establish clear and concise guidelines for making payments to indigenous community members. The decolonizing payment working group met with the University of Toronto and the creation of a process map and Concur interface for various types of payments.
- Updates are being made to the Indigenous membership citizenship guidelines; updates being phased in for faculty and staff hires.

## **WISC Director's Report**

- Emma provides an update on the WISC director's report, mentioning the successful drum workshop series, drum circle, and birthing ceremony.
- Emma shared new winter annual fire ceremony for student wellbeing.
- Upcoming activities include the third annual sweat lodge, the end of term feast and WISC closing event.

## **Indigenous Faculty Report**

- John discusses the indigenous curriculum changes, including the potential for a new minor and the need for a framework to support smaller courses.
- The group discusses the potential for a micro credential or certificate for indigenous studies, which could attract a larger pool of students and professionals. If the program could be offered online or in a hybrid format to accommodate different learning needs.
- The decentralized nature of the campus is highlighted as a challenge in creating a cohesive Indigenous Studies minor.

## **Feedback on IAC meeting format and other business**

- Jean asked for feedback on the timing and format of IAC meetings, with no changes suggested. Eileen mentioned the importance of starting each meeting with a smudge.
- Melissa shared the creation of a national Indigenous History Month landing page and invited contributions.
- Jean discussed the need for suggestions for Indigenous potential honorary doctorates.

## **Closing Remarks and Adjournment**

- Motion to end the meeting moved by Dale, seconded by Brad.
- Next meeting scheduled for June 6, 2025