General Faculties Council

Indigenous Institutional Strategic Plan (IISP)

Office of the Vice-Provost, Indigenous Programming & Research
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Where are we now?

- The Indigenous Institutional Strategic Plan (IISP) has had a wide consultation path (internal and external) and final BOG approval scheduled for June 2022
Recently, through the extensive consultations around the UofA’s new brand, Indigenous Initiatives (Indigenous Ways of Knowing) emerged as one of the key pillars of “Leading with Purpose”

Indigenous Initiatives are also a key focus of University for Tomorrow
CTAs and community expectation

- As recent events have unfolded this year, there has been a renewed expectation from Indigenous and non-Indigenous stakeholders alike, that the University of Alberta take up its role in Indigenous-focused work and realize its commitment to the full scope of the TRC Calls to Action.
Consultations to date

• The VPIPR and President Flanagan have met with Indigenous organizations: the Assembly of First Nations, leadership of Treaty 6, 7 and 8, the Métis Nation of Alberta and the Metis Settlements General Council

• The IISP has been presented for feedback at BOG, BLRSEC, BRPAC, CLE, COSA, GFC, PC and PEC

• We have also met with College Deans and Vice-presidential portfolios
What has repeatedly emerged from the IISP consultations is that this work touches on nearly every academic and operational aspect of the university—from administrative processes for honoraria to infrastructure to support student success to new Quality Assurance processes to tackle curricular gaps and ethical frameworks to guide Indigenous-engaged research, among others …
• Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive and we have incorporated the comments and suggestions we have received.

• Two broad themes emerged in the early consultations: accountabilities and budget.
• In response to comments about accessibility, the new draft IISP has been formatted to make it more navigable with special focus on accountabilities.

• In response to the comments about budget, we are working within institutional structures to discuss budget principles and strategies as we begin to explore a new budget model and implement a new U of A administrative structure (e.g. the college structure and the SET transformation)
• To acknowledge the progress made and the path ahead, the VPIPRO wishes to create an institutional affirmation
• This affirmation would highlight the deep individual and collective institutional commitment to embedding indigenization into the academic and administrative structures that have the power to make these changes
With Gratitude
• I was also recently reminded that this work is an increasingly critical operational requirement
  o Indigenous peoples make up more than 260,000 people in Alberta—a total of 6.5% of the province’s population and **that population is growing**
  o there are 76,000 FNMI people in Edmonton alone
• According to Universities Canada, more than 80 per cent of universities have developed a plan to advance reconciliation and 70 per cent have incorporated Indigenous knowledge and methods into teaching and research

• We are especially excited about the way this work has come together in the draft plan, with respondents looking for specificity in how their units or areas might contribute to the plan and its outcomes
The opportunities

• The university has made progress in alignment with these commitments but there is more to be done to meet new and emerging requirements for better practices in Indigenous-focused research, curriculum and community engagement
• Via this work, the UofA can capitalize on current Tri-Council (and other) funding agencies’ priorities related to Indigenous community engagement and Indigenous-focused research

• II-EDI budget allocations are a core part of university business in the current era, tackling social justice and access responsibilities while also offering reputational and operational gains when the work is done well
• Educational access, and Indigenous student attainment specifically, offer opportunities to support students in alignment with provincial Performance Based Indicators

• Novel partnerships and corporate or other funders are interested in Indigenous-focused initiatives and offer significant future funding opportunities (as in other universities that have taken up II)
Professional associations and accreditation bodies have asked that universities make sure that graduates of their programs are aware that their studies and possible professions are situated on Indigenous lands and impact Indigenous peoples.

Government funders and research agencies have asked us to consider the ways in which OCAP and CARE principles have unfolded in ethics, research data management strategy and through accreditation bodies.
• **This convergence represents a significant opportunity** for the university to continue this leadership to benefit from the financial and other opportunities this work presents