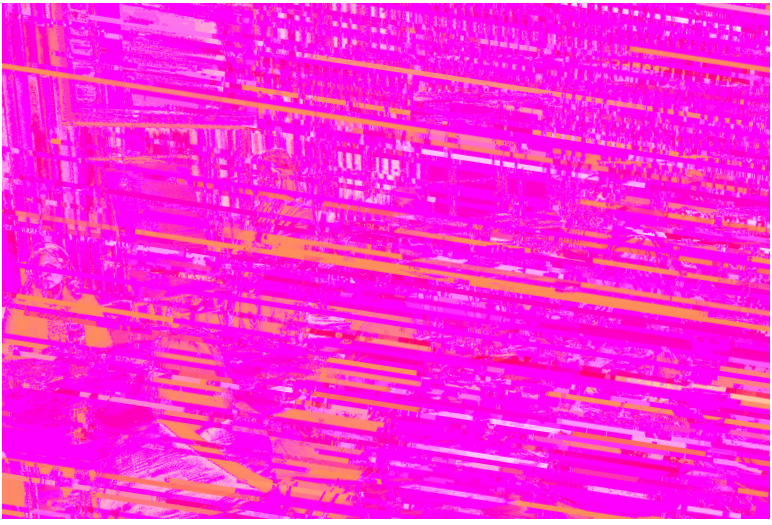
LAURENTIAN UNIVERSITY NATIVE EDUCATION COUNCIL (LUNEC)

Laurentian University
Université Laurentienne

Acknowledgements



The final report of the Laurentian University Truth and Reconciliation

A note about terminology

In Canada, the legal term Aboriginal has been used to refer to three unique groups of Indigenous people: Indian, Inuit and Métis. Each of these groups have their own unique culture, history and languages.

Though the schools were in existence for well over 100 years, and many successive generations of children from the same communities and families attended them, this profoundly harmful experience was hidden for most of Canada's history.

It was not until survivors of the system began to bring their experiences to light in several thousand court cases, that the truth of the Indian Residential School (IRS) experience began to emerge.

These court cases precipitated the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) which was an agreement between the Government of Canada and approximately 86,000 residential school survivors. The IRSSA sought to recognize the damage inflicted by residential schools on those who were enrolled in these schools during the period 1879 and 1996. A Common Experience Payment (CEP) for former IRS students formed part

Four meetings were scheduled over the course of a 9-month time period to engage in dialogue and discussion and determine priorities for action.

Friday September 28, 2018

At this initial meeting, Taskforce members engaged in activities to establish rapport and to learn about the work and activities already in place at Laurentian and affiliated universities in support of Indigenous education, research, student success and community engagement.

Friday November 23, 2018

At the second meeting, participants outlined current activities; as well as those that were identified in current or future operational and strategic plans. Based on this review, they proposed new ideas and activities for consideration in alignment with TRC Calls to Action.

Friday March 8th, 2019

At this meeting, groups developed suggested models or frameworks to approach the work needed to address reconciliation and prioritized from amongst 32 proposed new activities those that should be recommended immediately by the TRTF.

Based on the work of the Taskforce in the initial two meetings, a total of 32 recommendations were proposed for consideration in the Reconciliation plan.

In this third meeting, a process to prioritize from amongst these 32 recommendations was undertaken. Members were asked to highlight their choices for:

- for immediate action as a recommendation in the Reconciliation plan
- a medium to longer term consideration as a Reconciliation recommendation
- though important, less of a priority in the context of Reconciliation

Based on these criteria, members were able to narrow the list of recommendations to ten recommendations which they feel are achievable and appropriate in the Reconciliation plan.

Friday May 24, 2019

A final meeting was held to review the prioritized recommendations and add further clarifications and refinements as well as select a proposed model.

Appendix B

The Two Row Wampum articulates a way forward for peace and friendship. Depicted in the two-row wampum are two vessels on the water, each with their own path and pace. There is a need to bring back this peace making and bridge building as well as a need to begin taking care of and tending to the water, as water and its health is an indicator

Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce recommendations

In this section of the report, ten recommendations are described which emerge from the following areas of focus:

- Honouring the people and land
- Anishnaabemowin acknowledgement
- Land and spaces for teaching and research
- Indigenous content that is authentic and appropriately taught
- Cultural competency – Indigenous Knowledge Sharing & Lifelong Learning
- Support for the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce

The following sections describe each of the recommendations more fully.

Moving beyond land acknowledgement to honouring the people and the land

A Land Acknowledgement is a formal statement that recognizes the unique and enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories.

Its purpose is to recognize that settlers and people who are not part of First Nations or Indigenous groups, are here on Indigenous peoples' land. Acknowledging relationships to space and place is an ancient Indigenous practice and a tradition that has dated back centuries for Indigenous people. Indeed, as early explorers traversed the expanse of Canada and its waterways, recognizing the territory or lands of the people was a respectful protocol observed solemnly by all.

In modern times, for non-Indigenous people acknowledging the people, their history, relationships and land upon which meetings are taking place or in which institutions are operating is a relatively recent concept and practice.

The practice of land acknowledgement serves as a reminder of accountability to treaty and other relationships and, in this case, that the post-secondary education systems are accountable to the Indigenous communities on whose territory they are operating. A land acknowledgement also serves as a signal of intent to continue the learning journey concerning these historical relationships and the current contemporary realities of the people who are being acknowledged. Honouring and acknowledging the Indigenous homelands upon which the University operates is therefore critical. For many Indigenous people this represents a small but essential step toward reconciliation.

>> Recommendation #1.1

Formal acknowledgement of the land at entrance to the University

Land acknowledgements at formal meetings and in tangible signage at key locations are a helpful starting point for signaling the importance of the respectful relationship with Indigenous communities.

It must also be recognized that, however, more recently there is a strong sentiment emerging that land acknowledgements have become merely hollow without accompanying action.

The Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce wishes to see this recommendation reframed and enhanced to honour the people and their relationship to the land along with their history, stories and teachings.

Moreover, the emphasis should be on strengthening relationships with the communities and peoples of this land and reclaiming space through visual representations of their stories, history and identity.

This can be done, through art and imagery. For example, a digital display projecting words, stories, art and historical photos on campus buildings and walls in high traffic areas would better amplify this effort. The display should be visual, appealing, dynamic and continually refreshed with new information.

This effort should also be integrated and aligned with overall institution-wide cultural competency. To effectively acknowledge land and community, those who are sharing land acknowledgements should also spend time on the land and in the local communities about whom they are speaking.

This is integral to their cultural competency and serves also as a means of

>> Recommendation #1.2

Anishnaabemowin acknowledgement

The rights of Indigenous peoples are recognized and affirmed in section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 including rights related to Indigenous languages. Recently in February 2019, the Government of Canada introduced Bill C-91, the Indigenous Languages Act, to reclaim, revitalize, strengthen and maintain Indigenous languages in Canada. The intent of the bill is to support the meaningful implementation of Calls to Action 13, 14 and 15 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, as well as elements of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (8). The relevant article expressed in UNDRIP is outlined as follows:

Article 13

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.

Indigenous languages are an integral part of the culture and identity not only of Indigenous Peoples' but a rich and vibrant component of Canadian society. Currently, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has identified that 75% of the 90 different living Indigenous languages in Canada are endangered (9).

Action must be taken to begin to address this concerning trend.

Recent efforts at Laurentian University which aim to recognize and support local Indigenous languages include tri-lingual signage on campus inclusive of Anishnaabemowin as a signal of support for the reclamation, revitalization, strengthening and maintenance of the local Indigenous languages.

In fact, Outcome 8 of , Laurentian University's strategy plan (2) 2023 expresses a key outcome as follows:

> Laurentian students will become more familiar with and principles of through various aspects of campus culture;

>> Recommendation #4

Provide physical space for the Maamwizing Indigenous Research Institute

The Anishinaabe word maamwizing describes the concept of "people collaborating together" and is part of the name Maamwizing Indigenous Research Institute to reflect the aim of Maamwizing which is to:

> to bring together researchers to pursue research that embraces Indigenous worldviews, provides a decolonial critique, privileges the voices of Indigenous communities, benefits Indigenous peoples and develops Indigenous peoples as researchers.[10]

An appropriate physical space is a key avenue to support this. The TRTF recommends that space be provided as an integral part of the University of Sudbury where a hub for research and the necessary administrative activities of Maamwizing can be established. At a conceptual level, the space envisioned would support Maamwizing as both a "living lab" to cultivate the Indigenous research ecosystem and as an "incubator" to open dialogue with partners who support translation of Indigenous knowledge into action.

Indigenous content that is authentic and appropriately taught

The TRC calls on institutions of higher learning to provide programs and curriculum that integrate Indigenous knowledge for Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners (4). These recommendations align with Article 15 of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (8), which states that, "Indigenous peoples have the right to dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information" (p.7).

Teaching and learning define the mission and identity of Laurentian University as outlined in the

Faculty development and capacity-building in the form of training and support for cultural competency are therefore a cornerstone for the Indigenization of curriculum. Critical self-reflection is also required to recognize how Indigenous knowledge and pedagogy can be appropriately used in the classroom. Including local elders and knowledge holders in the teaching of such curriculum is central to this effort.

Consideration must be given to ensuring the provision of professional development opportunities for faculty, encouraging ongoing learning, and ensuring the consistent delivery of high quality curriculum to Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners.

>> Recommendation #5

Ensure those who teach Indigenous content have the necessary qualifications or receive specialized training before teaching such content; and

Hand in hand with Recommendation 5 is a companion recommendation related to the content and quality of the curriculum itself.

Given that Laurentian is situated on the traditional territory of the Atikameksheng Anishnawbek, it is important to first privilege these local stories, teachings and values before then considering those of the wider Anishnaabe territory and First Nations beyond.

This move away from "pan-Indigenous" content is critically important. In recognition of the history and identity of the Anishinaabek people in this territory, whose presence on this land predates colonial contact, the focus of recommendations related to Indigenous course content as well as cultural competency training should prioritize and reflect the Anishinaabek people of this territory as a starting point.

This entails the co-creation of content alongside local knowledge carriers and Elders with acknowledged expertise and lived experience. A process or way to engage with such knowledge holders, perhaps via a council of Elders, is envisioned as key to this development work.

All of these considerations compel the TRTF to recommend that Laurentian University:

>> Recommendation #6

Ensure that the teachings or knowledge comes from the local Anishnaabe people and that such content is developed in collaboration with the people with whom it's associated

Cultural competency - Indigenous Knowledge Sharing & Lifelong Learning

Over the past several years, Laurentian University's staff and faculty have embarked on a journey towards cultural competency. The expression of this commitment is outlined in Outcome 21 of Laurentian's Ensemble. Together. Maamwi. 2018-2023 Strategic plan.

> We support the [illegible] Commission Calls to Action and will respond by creating a task force to identify priority actions, beginning by offering [illegible] training and opportunities to learn the [illegible] to faculty, staff, and students;"

Cultural competency is about understanding how ingrained beliefs, attitudes and biases may affect relationships with Indigenous people, families, communities, and nations. This knowledge and reflection is critical to personal growth and societal change and influences how one respectfully engages with Indigenous peoples. Cultural competency is therefore a lifelong process. A number of self-studyoAWu 985a3ef6>y10 0 9 36 37(

>> Recommendation #7

Ensure that cultural competency training grounded in the knowledge and culture of the local Anishinaabek people is provided for Laurentian University's senior leadership, faculty, staff and students and that proof of completion of competency training is part of all onboarding (organizational orientation) processes.

This training should be directly linked to an understanding of the goals which have been expressed by the Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce.

Implementation of Recommendations of the Truth & Reconciliation Taskforce

The Taskforce's recommendations are meant to engender meaningful, systemic and sustained institutional change over time. Systemic changes that are required for reconciliation will take time as institutions disrupt and unlearn colonial ideologies and begin to make space for more equitable systems and approaches.

Resources to support the Taskforce Recommendations

In addition to this longer-term vision and mindset, a commitment of ample resources will be required. Meaningful engagement with Indigenous community partners and consultative processes to support the development of Indigenous content and curriculum will require substantial human and financial resources.

In particular, Recommendation 7 which outlines cultural competency in the form of Indigenous knowledge sharing and a lifelong learning process

With this in mind, the Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce advocates strongly

Members of the Truth & Reconciliation Taskforce

Academic and Indigenous Programs

Facilitator/Consultant

Faculty of Arts

Faculty of Health

Faculty of Science, Engineering and Architecture

Maamwizing Research Institute

School of Indigenous Relations

University of Sudbury - Indigenous Studies

Indigenous Social Work Council

Laurentian University Teaching Fellow (Indigenous Focus)

NOSM

Canada Research Chair (Indigenous Health)

Indigenous Student Affairs

Traditional Knowledge Keeper

Laurentian University Students

Dean of Faculty of Arts

Dean of Faculty of Education

Dean of Faculty of Health

Dean of Faculty of Management

Dean of Faculty of Science, Engineering and Architecture

Dean of Faculty of Graduate Studies

Library/Archives

Chief of Staff

Registrar

Laurentian University

LUNEC TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION TASK FORCE (TRTF)

Friday, September 28, 2018 • 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. • Fielding Park, Lively ON

Objective:

10:00 a.m.

LUNEC TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION TASK FORCE (TRTF)

Friday November 23, 2018 • 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Indigenous Sharing and Learning Centre (ISLC) Round Room, Parker Building

Objective:

10:00 a.m.	Opening Prayer (ISA Knowledge Keeper)
10:10 a.m.	Reviewing of Agenda and TRTF Group Processes (AVPAI)
10:15 a.m.	Introduction Activity for the Group (Facilitator: Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
10:30 a.m.	Recap of the 1st Meeting on September 28 (Facilitator: Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
11:15 a.m.	BREAK
11:30 a.m.	Individual to Pair/Triad to Small Group – See T-Chart Called "Current, Proposed & Proposing". The "Current" refers to your present activities that you do for the Indigenous community here at Laurentian and at the federated partners/universities. The "Proposed" refers to activities that are part of your strategic plan, action plan or revised workplan. The "Proposing" refers to new activities that are not part of the current or proposed ideas of anyone. (Facilitator – Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
12:30 p.m.	LUNCH
1:15 p.m.	Small Group Sharing from 11.30 a.m. - Fill in the gaps as small groups present – "As you are listening, you may have something to add to their presentation that was missed." (Facilitator: Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
2:15 p.m.	Interactive Sharing of Key Take-Aways from Today (Facilitator: Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
2:45 p.m.	Review the Terms of Reference for the TRTF – responsibilities and next meeting – these notes from today will be placed under categories from the TRC Calls to Action Headings (Facilitator: Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
3:00 p.m.	Closing Prayer (ISA Knowledge Keeper)

LUNEC TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION TASK FORCE (TRTF)

Friday, February 22, 2018 • 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Indigenous Sharing and Learning Centre (ISLC) Round Room, Parker Building

Objective:

10:00 a.m.	Opening Prayer (ISA Knowledge Keeper)
10:10 a.m.	Reviewing of Agenda and TRTF Group Processes (AVPAI)
10:15 a.m.	Introduction Activity for the Group (Facilitator: Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
10:30 a.m.	Recap of the 2nd Meeting on November 23rd – Presentation of the Draft TRTF Document (TRTF Report Template) with the Recommendations under appropriate areas/themes. (Facilitator: Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
11:00 a.m.	Formation of Small Groups for Review of Draft Recommendations – This is based on the areas/themes in the Draft TRTF Document (TRTF Report Template). Participants will select an area/theme that they are interested in and sit at that Small Group (ex. health, education, justice, media and so on). This is the starting point for their contributions. (Facilitato: Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
11:15 a.m.	BREAK
11:30 a.m.	Small Groups for Review of Draft Recommendations – Each Small Group will now review the draft recommendations in the TRTF Document (TRTF Report Template) coming from the November 23rd meeting. They will edit these as they see relevant (add, enhance, delete). (Facilitator: Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
12:30 p.m.	LUNCH
1:15 p.m.	Laurentian University Strategic Plan for 2018-2023 and the 7 Indigenous Outcomes – The AVPAI will review the 7 Indigenous Outcomes that emerge from the LU Strat Plan. The AVPAI will provide one example of how to do the next task in the Small Groups – Taking a TRTF recommendation and linking the Indigenous Outcomes that are relevant to it. (AVPAI)
1:30 p.m.	Small Groups for Review of Draft Recommendations – Each Small Group will now do a final review of the TRTF recommendations and identify the Indigenous Outcomes from LU's strat plan that lign with those outcomes. (Facilitator – Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
2:30 p.m.	Interactive Sharing of Key Take-Aways from Today (Facilitator – Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
2:50 p.m.	Review the Terms of Reference for the TRTF – responsibilities and next meeting – these notes from today will be placed under categories from the TRC Calls to Action Headings (Facilitator – Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
3:00 p.m.	Closing Prayer (ISA Knowledge Keeper)

10:00 a.m.	Opening prayer
10:10 a.m.	Welcoming & introductory remarks – Sheila Cote Meek
10:15 a.m.	Review process and outcomes of meetings held to date
10:30 a.m.	Presentpan/esentpan/kdl6date