

PARTNERING TO SUPPORT INDIGENIZATION AT ONTARIO'S UNIVERSITIES



Indigenization on university campuses enables the development of knowledge and skills that will follow individuals beyond university walls – playing a critical role in building and strengthening the relationship between Indigenous people and non-Indigenous people and advancing the process of reconciliation.

Ontario's universities recognize the significant contribution and leadership of members of the Indigenous community, including faculty members, who have made many of the current Indigenization initiatives and activities possible. Below are just some of the ways that universities and Indigenous community members are working together to bring culturally appropriate supports for students, as well as Indigenous histories, culture, knowledge and ways of knowing on campuses.

● Engaging faculty across disciplines

- As part of a commitment to decolonize undergraduate and graduate program curriculum, policies and initiatives, **OCAD University** has hired five new tenured and tenure-track faculty members, and is in the process of hiring another five within the Faculty of Design, who self-identify as Indigenous Peoples of North America or Peoples of Turtle Island. They will help create a more inclusive learning environment for Indigenous students and support the process to recognize, acknowledge, implement and vitalize Indigenous visual culture. The university is currently inviting applications for four tenure-track positions at any rank within all disciplines of the Faculty of Design.
- It is critical that decisions related to Indigenous education and scholarship are informed and guided by Indigenous communities. The Indigenous Education Advisory Circle at **Ontario Tech University** has a curriculum consultation subcommittee that works with faculty members to ensure new courses or programs include Indigenous content. The subcommittee also provides guidance on appropriate ways to integrate Indigenous topics, perspectives and knowledge.
- Integrating Indigenous pedagogy across all courses is critical for deepening relationships and advancing reconciliation. To support this process, **Trent University** created an Education Developer, Indigenous Pedagogy position within the Centre for Teaching

and Learning to give faculty access to knowledge and expertise for their courses.

- Indigenization on campus requires the efforts of non-Indigenous faculty as well in raising awareness and supporting Indigenous students, colleagues and community members. The Faculty Association of the **University of Waterloo's** Indigenization working group aims to help faculty members better understand and take action on Indigenization and reconciliation efforts.
- Ensuring representation at the highest levels related to institution-wide Indigenization is taking place, **Wilfrid Laurier University** is in the search process for the new role of Associate Vice President: Indigenous Initiatives who will lead the coming Indigenous Strategic planning process to be embedded in all aspects of the university. Laurier is undergoing a significant and committed approach to Indigenous faculty hiring, including a recent commitment to a minimum of six Indigenous faculty hires within three years.
- In response to the under-representation of Indigenous Peoples in leadership roles on campus, the **University of Windsor** established the President's Indigenous Peoples Scholars Program. The university allocated five tenure-track faculty positions for the appointment of Indigenous scholars and sought applications from scholars in all disciplines who self-identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit.

● Conducting ground-breaking research

- Research focused on decolonization and reconnecting Indigenous people to their ancestral homelands is critical to advancing reconciliation. An **Algoma University** researcher is creating a database of hundreds of archaeological sites, as well as oral histories, rock art and petroglyphs. The resulting data will be mapped across time to create a holistic view of Indigenous people on the lands of the Western Hemisphere from more than 200,000 years ago to 9,000 years ago.
- In order to better align Indigenous research initiatives with the needs of Indigenous communities, the Maamwizing Indigenous Research Institute at **Laurentian University** promotes collaboration among researchers and community partners. The formation of Maamwizing in 2016 followed the hire of a critical mass of Indigenous researchers.
- Creating space for dialogue between Western research approaches and Indigenous research collaborations supports both Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers. In an effort to integrate traditional ways of knowing, **McMaster University** established the McMaster Indigenous Research Institute. The institute builds on and enhances the university's existing relationships with community networks.

● Revitalizing Indigenous language and education can be empowering for Indigenous children, building self-esteem and improving graduation outcomes. The Faculty of Education at **Queen's University** is partnering with Indigenous communities on an immersion program that helps track the academic, linguistic and personal development of children being educated in their Indigenous language.

● Developing new curriculums

● With a commitment to incorporating Indigeneity into curriculum and the campus environment, a review was done at the **University of Guelph** to identify gaps in existing curriculums. This work was furthered with a university-wide survey where the findings were compiled into a comprehensive report on Indigenizing curriculum and pedagogies and the creation of a student-led research project called Picturing Decolonization Within the Academy.

● To support the Indigenization of curriculum across the **University of Ottawa**, the Faculty of Social Science has hired two Indigenous Curriculum Specialists to work with their faculty members on infusing Indigenous contents, pedagogies and philosophies throughout their curriculums.

● The need to develop and promote culturally responsible and respectful curriculum that integrates Indigenous pedagogies and ways of knowing is important in postsecondary education. At **Ryerson University**, a full-time EDI/Aboriginal curriculum development consultant position has been funded to develop Indigenous curriculum resources and content for faculties across campus.

● By developing a remote version of a course that underscores the importance of the land to Indigenous Peoples – typically via a weeklong stay on a farm north of Toronto – one **University of Toronto** professor has reimagined a ground-breaking land-based course amid COVID-19. The online course includes revamped land-based activities, such as a 30-minute nature walk and the close observation of a tree, ensuring students can still interact with the land.

● In an effort to increase Indigenous curriculum supports and professional training efforts to educate university members about Indigenous Peoples, **Western University** has hired their first Indigenous Curriculum and Pedagogy Advisor (Indigenous Initiatives). Available to support faculty and staff in Indigenizing and decolonizing their curriculum, the role also develops and facilitates Indigenous learning opportunities with campus and community partners.

● A special cohort of students at **York University** will complete the Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree with a focus on Indigenous worldviews. The Waaban Indigenous Teacher Education program will educate a new generation of teachers, prepared to address the needs of First Nation, Métis and Inuit students, families and communities. Waaban will be grounded in Indigenous Knowledge and Pedagogy and include teachings from Elders, educators and community leaders.



● Building relationships with surrounding communities

● Colonialism and its ripple effects are still present and experienced today. With an aspiration to foster a culture that includes inclusivity, accessibility, reconciliation and decolonization, the Decolonization Committee at **Brock University** seeks to challenge and reframe narratives of Indigenous communities and is open to all members.

● More than 600 Indigenous and non-Indigenous people from the **Carleton University** community and the broader Indigenous community participated in more than 40 consultations to re-energize relationships with Indigenous communities in Algonquin territory and across the country. This process yielded extensive qualitative data, which formed the basis of Kinàmàgawin, Carleton's revitalized Indigenous strategy.

● Indigenous knowledge systems can offer alternative approaches to contemporary issues and support the re-imagining of our global future. **Lakehead University's** Global Indigenous Speakers Series highlights the theory, research and practice of international Indigenous scholars, offering students and faculty across disciplines inspiration, creativity and paths forward during uncertain times.

● Biidaaban Community Service-Learning (CSL) is a form of experiential learning that supports Indigenous communities and organizations locally. **Nipissing University** faculty members are incorporating CSL opportunities in their courses for students to support community organizations in many ways. This interactive, reciprocal and community-engaged approach to education is followed by meaningful reflection to help consolidate notions learned in class and in community. Additionally, CSL offers co-curricular volunteer opportunities and student employment in support of Indigenous youth in local schools.