



# OUR JOURNEY TOGETHER: LAND, LIFE, LEARNING

INDIGENIZATION PLAN 2019 - 2024

way' ki'su'k kyukyit weyt-kp tawnshi hello

## Indigenous Nations

Selkirk College acknowledges the traditional territories of the First Nations of the West Kootenay and Boundary regions: the Sinixt (Lakes), the Syilx (Okanagan), the Ktunaxa, and the Secwépemc (Shuswap) peoples. The mountains, rivers, lakes, and lands of these territories have sustained life and human communities since time immemorial. Learning and education have been part of this land for millennia. Selkirk College is grateful to the keepers of these territories where we live and learn, and the wisdom and beauty that surrounds us.

Selkirk College is honoured to work with an engaged and proud Métis community who make the West Kootenay and Boundary region their home.

We honour and celebrate the values, cultures, and ways-of-knowing that all Indigenous learners bring to Selkirk College.

**Title cover: The Grandmother Drum in the Gathering Place was made by the late Wayne George (Anishinaabe) including the painting on the drum skin.**

# Supporting Truth, Reconciliation, Indigenization, & Decolonization at Selkirk College

Truth helps us understand the deep impacts of colonization, while Indigenization helps us remember the gifts, connections and teachings that the ancestors cherished for millennia. Decolonization is what happens when we collectively challenge euro-centric worldviews and commit to creating welcoming spaces for the teachings that the dominant society has tried to make us forget. Decolonization challenges us to try new/old ways in order to be more inclusive of diverse perspectives and alternative approaches to problem solving. Reconciliation is a healing process in the wake of deep trauma that has impacted us all.

## Governance and policy

With consistent and sincere efforts, leadership at Selkirk College will support and guide all levels of the institution in the efforts towards systemic change.

- a. An Institutional statement of principle will be included in the new Strategic Plan and will describe Selkirk College's position on Reconciliation;
- b. The college will re-activate the Indigenous Advisory Committee and develop a new Terms of Reference;
- c. The college will conduct regularly agreed upon reviews of Nation to Nation MOUs and continue to strengthen partner Nation relationships through the President's Nation Advisory;
- d. Governance models and strategies will be researched, reviewed and discussed for Board of Governors and Education Council and may include the promotion of member development activities;
- e. A framework and strategy to conduct a policy audit to ensure Indigeneity is developed, inclusivity is promoted and best practices are embedded with regard to traditional protocols and ways of being in policies that impact students, staffing and human resources, as well as College operations.

*"Indigenization is a personal journey that begins with looking inward and seeking opportunities to learn. And, like most Indigenous journeys, it involves sacrifice and ceremony."*

– PULLING TOGETHER: A GUIDE FOR LEADERS AND ADMINISTRATORS (2018). IN: BC CAMPUS INDIGENIZATION GUIDES



**Photo: Austin Eagle, Selkirk College alumnus graduated from the Contemporary Music program in 2017.**



## Curricula and programs

Through reciprocal partnerships with our Nation Partners and institutional partners, the incorporation of Indigenous perspectives, first-voice, scholarship and land-based learning will deepen all students' learning experiences.

- a. The INDG 100 course will be sustained and offered annually;
- b. Renewed offerings of CE Introductory language courses, cultural fluency, Reconciliation will be examined and a plan developed; partnerships with language schools such as the En'owkin Centre or the Salish School of Spokane will be strengthened;
- c. An Indigenous Studies diploma or Flexible Pre-Major option in Indigenous Studies with existing and new curricula will be explored; and opportunities for developing Indigenous specialties for specific existing certificates and diplomas will be explored (for example CYC);
- d. Develop articulation agreements or credential partnerships for in particular students wishing to complete their studies at institutions on other sides of the Canada/US border but within their traditional territory;
- e. Institutional partnership agreements with En'owkin Centre and NVIT will be renewed to develop joint and mutually significant programming in Restorative Justice, the Arts, Traditional Ecological Knowledge, Land and Resource Guardians, Language;
- f. Develop pilot community based transition to work programs for example a Career Internship initiative;
- g. The Reconciliation Speakers series, partnered activities with organizations will be continued;
- h. Develop a framework and strategy to conduct an audit of the existing/current Indigenization content, practices, and paradigms across programs;
- i. Develop and implement further tools for Education Council to support Curriculum Committee in currency in curriculum development;
- j. Explore the development and incorporation of land-based learning into a variety of disciplines.

Reconciliation... *"is an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships... It is important that all Canadians understand how traditional First Nations, Inuit, and Métis approaches to resolving conflict, repairing harm, and restoring relationships can inform the reconciliation process."*

– TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION OF CANADA (2015). WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED: PRINCIPLES OF TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION.

## Supports and services for students

Providing quality, relevant and accessible services to our Indigenous students is key to the success of our efforts to indigenize programs and services at Selkirk College. The following goals compliment the Student Services Plan, with hopes of providing the necessary tools and resources for our college community as a whole.

- a. Specific targets for Strategic Enrolment Management of Indigenous learners will be developed;
- b. Sustainable levels of staffing and resources for Indigenous Services will continue to be sought and an appropriate organizational structure developed;
- c. The Elders program will be supported and further developed;
- d. Leadership development opportunities for students, for example an Indigenous student leadership circle, will be explored;
- e. Sustained levels of service will be sought in: Cultural Expressions, events and activities, annual observances and commemorations;
- f. Cultural fluency promotion and programming for all Selkirk College students and the wider community will be explored and developed;
- g. Employment and career/workplace internship (and WIL) partnerships and programming will be explored;
- h. Continue to explore and implement best practices in supporting Indigenous students in their academic programs, eg. Cultural intervention, staff training, peer mentorship.





Photo: Cultural Expressions programming happens throughout the year at the Gathering Place and at most campuses and learning centres. It is an opportunity for students and staff to gain experience at hand work with the guidance of Elders and a time for relationship building.



Photo: Students, alumni, and employees participate and contribute expertise to conferences and workshops to build awareness and best practices in indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation.



*“Working through unlearning and relearning the collective histories of Canada is an emotional journey. Non-Indigenous teachers and instructors often feel anger, guilt, and shame for not having known about the atrocities levelled against a population in this country. As well, teachers exploring ways to include Indigenous content have to explore and identify their own perceptions of Indigenous identity, along with their personal biases and prejudices.”*

– PULLING TOGETHER: A GUIDE FOR TEACHERS AND INSTRUCTORS (2018). IN: BC CAMPUS INDIGENIZATION GUIDES.

## Employee development and tools

Providing a safe place for employees to recognize the potential gaps in their own educational experiences and understanding of Indigenous worldviews will support their change process and confidence to navigate systemic change in culturally safe and appropriate ways.

- a. Inclusivity based recruitment and hiring policies and processes will be researched, developed implemented and regularly reviewed;
- b. Key positions requiring the priority for Indigenous candidates will be developed in conjunction with the development and needs of the organization as a whole;
- c. Increased curriculum development expertise will be developed in the Teaching and Learning Institute with respect to indigenization and decolonization;
- d. Employee orientation and ongoing training regarding Indigenization/cultural fluency will be further developed, for example: cultural competency modules, facilitated study groups using the BC Campus Foundations in Indigenization Co-learning Circle; professional development offerings through BC Campus and other pertinent resources for faculty and staff;
- e. Expand tools to help employees in various aspects of Indigenization, such as collaboration and communication protocols;
- f. Ongoing professional development and additional resources for faculty and staff (internal as well as external training opportunities) will be supported to the furthest extent possible.



## Facilities and infrastructure

The inclusion and honouring of Indigenous learning spaces built in partnership with our Nation Partners will augment the prominence of languages, art, place-names and dedicated ceremonial spaces.

- a. Gathering Place and/or culturally safe and welcoming spaces at each campus and site will be included in facilities planning;
- b. A plan and process for inclusion of language reflected in signage at campuses and sites will be developed and implementation started;
- c. An integral part of the indigenization of Selkirk College spaces includes maintenance resources and supports; and
- d. Indigenous culture is represented and visible in public art and installation will be explored and developed.

# Appendices



In gratitude, honour, and memory of the late **Tom Louie**, Sinixt/Lakes Elder - Colville Confederated Tribes who opened the Gathering Place, May 2012

## A. DEFINITIONS

**Reconciliation.** Reconciliation is the intentional process of establishing and maintaining respectful and right relationships with Indigenous governments, organizations, families, and learners. Selkirk College believes that a critical part of this process involves repairing damaged trust in education systems through respect and reciprocity. We are committed to the indigenization and decolonization of education. Supporting traditional First Nations, Inuit, and Métis approaches to learning, resolving conflict, repairing harm, and restoring relationships will inform the reconciliation process in our governance, curriculum and project development, human resource development, and program and service delivery. We support the principles of the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and continue to incorporate the relevant Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action into our planning and operations. Selkirk College is a proud signatory of the College and Institutes Canada Indigenous Education Protocol, 2015.

**Indigenization.** Indigenization is a relational and collaborative process that involves various levels of transformation, from inclusion and integration to infusion of Indigenous perspectives and approaches in education (BC Campus).

**Decolonization** describes ongoing theoretical and political processes used to contest and reframe narratives about indigenous community histories and the effects of colonial expansion, genocide, and cultural assimilation (Smith 1999).

## B. GUIDING DOCUMENTS/POLICIES

### a. United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

- Includes the principle of free, prior and informed consent;
- Indigenous peoples' rights to practice and revitalize their traditions;
- Rights to protect and control traditional knowledge as intellectual property; and
- Rights to protect own histories and revitalize language.

### b. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action

- Acknowledges and affirms indigenous rights including language rights;
- Calls for the development of culturally appropriate curricula;
- Makes note of specific indigenous curricula and cultural competency development for post-secondary programs especially in: health, social work/human services, early childhood education, language, Indigenous studies credentials
- Calls for new curriculum content for teaching: history of Aboriginal Peoples, history and legacy of residential schools, Aboriginal rights and treaty rights under section 35 of the Canadian Constitution, principles of Indigenous law and systems of justice, Aboriginal-Crown relations.
- Specific competency development for programs in law, journalism, education, medical, nursing and other professional education; specifically skills based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

### c. Province of BC 10 Principles of Reconciliation for working with Indigenous Peoples

- Right to self-determination and self-government;
- Reconciliation is a fundamental purpose of Section 35;
- Uphold the "Honour of the Crown": the public service acts with honour, integrity, good faith, fairness;
- Self-government is part of cooperative federalism;
- Agreements between Indigenous peoples and the Crown are intended to be acts of reconciliation based on mutual recognition and respect;
- Free, prior and informed consent a requirement when decisions effect land, territories and resources;
- Infringements on section 35 must meet a high threshold of justification, respect indigenous rights and meet the Crown's fiduciary duty;
- Reconciliation and self-government require new fiscal relationships and collaboration;
- Reconciliation is an ongoing and long term commitment;
- The recognition that different Nations have unique interests, priorities and circumstances; collaboration and respectful relationships must recognize these distinctions.

## C. SPECIFIC GOALS FOR SELKIRK COLLEGE IN SIGNED AGREEMENTS:

### a. Colleges and Institutes Canada Indigenous Education Protocol

- Commitment to making Indigenous education a priority
- Governance structures recognize and respect Indigenous peoples
- Implement intellectual and cultural traditions through curriculum and learning approaches relevant to learners and communities
- Support students and employees to increase understanding and reciprocity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples
- Commitment to increasing Indigenous employees including senior administrators
- Establish holistic services and learning environments for learner success
- Build relationships and be accountable to Indigenous communities in support of self-determination through education, training, applied research.

### b. Memoranda of Understanding with regional First Nations and Metis Nation BC

- Meaningful consultation, collaboration, communication with Indigenous learners and communities when developing programs and services; improving access and success;
- Inclusion of Indigenous ways of knowing and the interests and needs of Indigenous learners and their communities when developing and delivering programs and services;
- Development of a process for the defining the parameters for use of traditional and cultural knowledge;
- Collaborate on joint projects and initiatives;
- Commitment to evaluate the success of the MOU.



Through her work with the Okanagan Training and Development Council as a Career Practitioner, the late Rhonda Terbasket impacted so many people's lives at Selkirk College. Rhonda's commitment and dedication to Indigenous students throughout their educational pursuits at Selkirk College provided more than just career pathways and opportunities; she also gave them guidance, strength and connection. For Rhonda, reconciliation meant a safe place for Indigenous students to achieve their goals, for students to be heard, for understanding of students' challenges, and for creating pathways when established processes did not align with Indigenous ways of being.

In memory of Rhonda, the feather pictured was created by Syilx artist Clint George and now hangs in the Gathering Place.

