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# University of Manitoba Indigenous Senior Leadership

*Report and Recommendations to the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)*

*August 31, 2019*

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## ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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- Catherine Cook (Chair), Vice Dean, Indigenous, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences
- Marcia Anderson, Executive Director, Indigenous Academic Affairs, Ongomiizwin Indigenous Institute of Health and Healing
- Laara Fitznor, Associate Professor, Educational, Administration, Foundations and Psychology
- Susan Gottheil, Vice-Provost (Students)
- Margaret Lavalley, Elder, Ongomiizwin Indigenous Institute of Health and Healing
- David Mandzuk, Dean, Faculty of Education
- Cary Miller, Head, Department of Native Studies
- Jordan Gelowitz, Student Representative (medicine) Bannatyne campus
- Jessica Stefano, Student Representative (undergraduate) Fort Garry campus
- Laura Forsythe, Student Representative (graduate) Fort Garry campus
- Christine Cyr (resource member), Director, Indigenous Student Centre
- Ruth Shead (resource member), Coordinator, Indigenous Achievement

*Support for the Committee:*

*Val Parker, Indigenous Engagement; Maire McDermott, Change Management and Project Services*

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

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Early in 2019, Dr. Janice Ristock, Provost and Vice President (Academic) asked that I lead a process to review the role and mandate for Indigenous senior leadership at the University of Manitoba. Background material to inform the process included the Manitoba Collaborative Indigenous Education Blueprint for Universities, Colleges and Public School Boards: Making Excellence in Indigenous Education a Priority (the Blueprint), the Winnipeg Indigenous Accord, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) 94 Calls to Action, the 231 recommendations of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Final Report, the University of Manitoba's Strategic Plan and other key documents that clearly identify the need for focused efforts in meeting the university's priority for Indigenous Engagement and Achievement.

Our Advisory Committee engaged in intense efforts of consultation with key stakeholder groups to guide the work and earlier this summer (2019) we reported "What We Heard." As we indicated in that report, feedback reflected the need to establish a distributed leadership structure across faculties and units as well as in central administration to support the development of an equitable, culturally safe work and learning environment for Indigenous students, staff and faculty with real accountability and supportive funding as well as to foster outreach and research relationships with Indigenous communities.

We are pleased to submit a document consistent with our analysis of the background material and the feedback from our stakeholders received from the consultation sessions, town halls, the web questionnaire and email feedback. The recommendations focus on the key themes of Leadership, Executive and Program teams, Faculty, Campus Community and Administrative Infrastructure at the University of Manitoba. The themes reflected in the document 'What We Heard', have been cross-referenced with these concepts for clarity and continuity.

The Blueprint and Winnipeg Indigenous Accord commitments support the Strategic Plan for the University of Manitoba and commit to ongoing actions that will 'Make Excellence in Indigenous Education a Priority'. The TRC Calls to Action identify both the need to actively review those colonial structures within systems that may impact Indigenous equity, and the need for actions focused on reconciliation of past inequities. The Calls to Action clearly identify this process as a Canadian commitment to change, not an Indigenous problem to be resolved by the Indigenous community alone.

The background documents outline and highlight the sequences of events that have resulted in the systems, attitudes and behaviours that marginalize Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Recognizing that these colonial structures established through legislation and policy, have resulted in the systems we have today commits us to addressing the root causes or issues that currently influence inequity in access for Indigenous Peoples in the university community.

Our recommendations are focused on opportunities to strengthen and expand upon current approaches through ongoing policy review and action and through the development of an Indigenous leadership and workforce structure that will support the university's goals for Indigenous Engagement and Achievement.

Thank you to the Advisory Committee for their dedicated efforts in the development of this report.

Dr. Catherine Cook  
Chair, Indigenous Senior Leadership Advisory Committee  
Vice-Dean, Indigenous and the Head of Ongomiizwin - Indigenous Institute of Health and Healing  
Rady Faculty of Health Sciences

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Provost's Indigenous Senior Leadership Advisory Committee established a process of consultation and feedback to support the development of recommendations to enhance the mandate for Indigenous Senior Leadership and support Indigenous engagement and achievement at the University of Manitoba. A review of relevant background materials (See Appendix 1 Terms of Reference and Background Materials) identified consistent themes concerning the need for Indigenous self-determination and recognition of Indigenous principles for engagement and achievement. These documents all identify key paths to move the University of Manitoba forward and include reference to the need for improved access, increased opportunities for equity, respect for, and inclusion of, Indigenous cultural heritage including Indigenous languages and Indigenous knowledge(s), enhanced integration and collaboration of programming across schools and colleges as well as across Manitoba's institutions and supports for Indigenous faculty, staff and students.

Feedback from the consultation process indicated that Indigenous Senior Leadership (ISL) should lead the university in achieving equity for Indigenous people in the institution and in society at large. Based on previous reflections, there is clearly a need to create an environment in which the efforts of ISL are not consumed with justifying why equity for Indigenous Peoples is necessary. While exploring the need for an anti-Indigenous racism strategy was not a part of our initial mandate, statements concerning this issue arose so consistently in our listening sessions that we felt obligated to assertively state the need for a formal approach to address anti-Indigenous racism.

The general consensus is that non-Indigenous leadership should boldly support ISL by acknowledging and dismantling structures, policies and procedures that have been identified as barriers for Indigenous faculty, staff and students. When reviewing the of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action and recognizing the statements specific to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), it is certain that the university should adopt education and training through Indigenous content requirements for its students and meaningful training for faculty and staff that raises awareness of the historical context for and legal context of the contemporary realities that Indigenous Peoples in Canada experience. In particular, the need exists for a specific orientation on historical issues for all Senior Leadership as they are accountable for actions to mitigate the inequities Indigenous people still experience as a result of this history. Additionally, we must recognize the successful work former ISL and the Indigenous campus community have achieved and build on those best practices to achieve our goals for Indigenous engagement and achievement.

Our recommendations are based on the following priorities – the need to focus on decolonization both of curriculum and of campus policies and procedures, the need to respond to the TRC Calls to Action and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Calls for Justice, to comply with provincial and community agreements to which we are signatory partners and the expectation that the university will develop a strategy to address anti-Indigenous Racism.

The recommendations identified through this process are based on five content areas, cross-referenced with the themes from the document ‘What We Heard’. Each themed recommendation has multiple recommendations for action. The recommendations are summarized here and are available in full text in the body of the report.

### **Recommendation 1: Executive and Senior Leadership – Enhance capacity with a critical mass of Indigenous leadership**

A critical mass of Indigenous leadership with strong professional connections will support the role of the Vice-President (Indigenous) to provide university-wide leadership to advance the systemic and structural changes required for the achievement of equitable outcomes for First Nations, Métis and Inuit people within and external to the institution.

- Establish the position of a Vice-President (Indigenous).
- Establish a support team of portfolio leads for the Vice-President (Indigenous).
- Encourage Vice-Presidents to identify or hire an Associate Vice-President/Vice-Provost or Indigenous lead in each of the current Vice-Presidents’ portfolios.
- Establish Indigenous Senior Administrative Leads (Associate Deans, Directors, etc.) within each faculty (or collective grouping of smaller faculties).
- Establish an Elder in Residence to support the Office of the Vice-President (Indigenous).

## Recommendation 2: Executive and Programmatic Leadership – Develop the required plans, relationships, resources and Indigenous Leaders

Building on the existing mandates within the Strategic Plan, develop a multilevel Reconciliation Action Plan that the university is transparently accountable to; and develop the relationships, resources and Indigenous leaders necessary to implement the plan according to the Principles of Reconciliation. Under the leadership of the Office of the Vice-President (Indigenous), the Executive and Senior Leadership will support the following recommendations:

- In collaboration with the Vice-President (Indigenous), the support team of AVPs/directors will identify a Framework to Establish Community-Faculty partnerships for research and development.
- Support the creation of a university-wide Reconciliation Action Plan.
- Establish a pool of Knowledge Keepers and Elders within the University of Manitoba community.
- Lead the response to and support faculty and administrative units' response to the TRC's Call to Action #57.
- Lead the development of a community engagement action plan that supports research, academic programs and students through the development of policies and procedures supporting Indigenous faculty and staff success.
- Pursue a mandate to participate in collective bargaining to include language supporting Indigenous faculty and staff success in union collective agreements.
- Support the establishment of networking supports for Indigenous scholars and staff across faculties and administrative units through such means as mentorship programs and research collaboration programs.
- Develop and implement professional development programs for Indigenous faculty and staff.
- Establish a website with links to resources to support faculty incorporation of Indigenous content, pedagogies, and Indigenous knowledge into their curriculum, as well as campus approved Indigenous protocols as a support for non-Indigenous allies<sup>1</sup> in fostering Indigenous engagement.

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<sup>1</sup> See definition of allyship: <https://theantioppressionnetwork.com/allyship/>



### Recommendation 3: Clarify Expectations and Responsibilities at the Faculty and Administrative Unit Levels

Achieving equitable outcomes for Indigenous peoples in response to the Calls to Action of the TRC, the provincial and community and the university's location on Indigenous homelands all require the action and support of every faculty and administrative unit. These actions should be based within an Indigenous rights framework, in particular, with Indigenous participation in key decision-making committees within faculties and units.

- Each faculty and unit will create a Reconciliation Action Plan and, based on the themes identified, each faculty should include:
  - An annual report on faculty or unit progress toward implementation of relevant TRC calls to action, Indigenous pillar of University of Manitoba Strategic Plan, and Faculty Indigenous strategic plan, the “Blueprint” and the Winnipeg Indigenous Accord; to be delivered to Provost, Vice-President (Indigenous) and joint Senate/BOG committee on Indigenous Initiatives.
  - Status reports on and recommendations for ongoing faculty and staff engagement in core Indigenous history, Indigenous legal status, and cultural safety training as well as additional campus Indigenous training/events.
- Each faculty or cluster of faculties to establish an Elder in Residence.
- All relevant deans / faculty committees to have Indigenous representation (i.e., Admissions, Curriculum Review, etc.) or representation from an ally who has successfully completed advanced Indigenous training as relevant for key areas related to Indigenous student, faculty and staff success.
- Each Dean should meet regularly with faculty Indigenous Lead/Associate Dean and at least once per year with Indigenous faculty and staff in their faculty/school.
- Conduct faculty-specific Indigenous training to build on general campus training identified above in (2.3) and require faculty and staff to engage in 3-5 hours of subsequent Indigenous training and/or community event attendance each year to be reported on annual progress reports.

## Recommendation 4: Building a Campus Community

The pervasive and systemic anti-Indigenous racism in society and in the institution must be aggressively interrupted and addressed so that the campus community is physically and psychologically safe for Indigenous peoples, and that First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples have the equitable opportunity to thrive personally and professionally. Under the leadership of the Vice President (Indigenous) and action by relevant Vice Presidents, we recommend the university implement the following:

- Create an Education and Training Plan in response to the TRC's Call to Action #57: All UM employees must be educated on "the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the UNDRIP, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations".
- When promoting Indigenous achievement at the University of Manitoba, recognize the contributions of Indigenous students, staff, faculty, alumni and community, and provide compensation in some form when the request is beyond the normal expectations of service.
- Establish an Indigenous Rights Officer within the Office of Human Rights and Conflict Management to support the creation and implementation of an anti-Indigenous racism strategy
- External Relations to identify Indigenous external relations officer within External Relations whose focus is to coordinate various aspects of fundraising for Indigenous spaces, bursaries, scholarships, new programs and other needs as they arise.
- Increase efforts to advertise all employment opportunities in the Indigenous community to increase Indigenous presence throughout all units of the university.

## Recommendation 5: Weave Us All Together- Governance and Administrative Infrastructure

In order to respond to the rights-based framework and imperatives behind the Strategic Plan and the recommended university-wide Reconciliation Action Plan, Indigenous self-determination and leadership must be embedded within the governance structures of the university. This will further support the leadership of the Vice-President (Indigenous) and the achievement of equitable outcomes for First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples. We recommend that the University:

- Establish a permanent Indigenous Advisory Circle at the U of M, comprised of members of the Indigenous community at U of M, as well as the Indigenous communities external to U of M. The committee will serve in a consultative role to the President and other key university administrators.
- Establish a joint Board of Governors (BOG) / Senate Standing Committee on Indigenous Initiatives and Achievement. This could be chaired by the Vice-President (Indigenous) who would create a proposal, including composition of the Standing Committee, to present to Senate and BOG.
- Redevelop/restructure the annual reporting on Indigenous initiatives, including Faculty reports (see Section 3.1 in full text), progress on TRC Calls to Action and MMIWG Calls for Justice, the Blueprint, the Winnipeg Indigenous Accord, and University Strategic plan as well as share these reports with the university community and public in a spirit of transparency, and the Indigenous values of truth and honesty.
- Engage in consultation with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) to establish alignment with the Vice-President (Indigenous) portfolio within the University of Manitoba.
- Ensure all relevant Senate and BOG Committees have Indigenous representation or representation from an ally who has successfully completed advanced Indigenous training.

We recommend that these actions are implemented to assure the development and implementation of an innovative system that integrates key components for decolonization, self-determination, and Indigenous success.

## INTRODUCTION

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### Historical Context

*'Indigenous Peoples in Canada include First Nations, Métis and Inuit. Each have their own way of organizing themselves politically and socially. Communities are present in urban, rural and remote areas and... universities)... may serve a wide diversity of communities. It is imperative that Senior Leadership, faculty and students of .... (universities) .... are aware of the communities they serve, including nationhood, languages spoken and already established mechanisms for engagement or relationship building.'* (AFMC Joint Commitment to Action on Indigenous Health, May 23, 2019. Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada.)

The history of relationships in Canada between Indigenous Peoples and Settlers is one that is grounded in Settler deception and a focus on the “progress” of settler societies through the colonization of the Indigenous Peoples and their resources. Early engagement and relationships between Indigenous communities and European powers took place as a dialogue between sovereign nations and it was in this context that Indigenous leaders and representatives of settler states developed treaty relationships and ratified treaty agreements. The two-row wampum belt is an excellent example of this. An agreement between the Iroquois and the English that they would travel side by side in their canoes without interfering with one another’s navigation served as a metaphor for the recognition of self-determination between allies. Following a series of legislation and policy directives focused on redefining the role of Indigenous Peoples in Canada, the federal government incorporated these various policies into one over-riding piece of legislation made law in 1876 as the *Indian Act*. The *Indian Act* remains the only ‘race based’ legislation in the world. The government very clearly established this set of legal restrictions to remove all potential authority, autonomy and, traditional and cultural actions that defined the Indigenous People at that time. The *Indian Act* forced confinement of Indigenous Peoples to reserve lands requiring a government issued ‘pass’ to leave for any reason, forced children in to residential schools, prohibited access to legal advice or representation or formal resistance to the enforcement of federal policies, prohibited independent economic development, prohibited traditional and cultural practice and; in the 1960s and 1970s, as the residential schools increasingly came under criticism, began to instead “scoop” our children from their families to adopt out to white families in Canada and the United states as another method to achieve assimilation. These policies essentially limited and inhibited Indigenous Peoples’ growth and development as a people or a nation in every way possible.

The most damaging historical impact of the *Indian Act* is the pervasive message to Canadian society that Indigenous Peoples are not entitled to the same respect, recognition, freedom of movement and basic human rights experienced by other Canadians.

This message has been reinforced throughout the last centuries with the development of systems – education, health, justice, child welfare, for example – that marginalize and discriminate against Indigenous Peoples, leading to the current state of affairs in which 90% of children in care in Manitoba are Indigenous youth.<sup>2</sup>

Currently, there are minimal (if any) consequences for racist attitudes and discriminatory behaviours against Indigenous Peoples in our public and private systems and the need to address anti-Indigenous racism and to achieve equity at all levels remains a priority.

Recent events provide momentum for actions that will eliminate the inequities experienced by Indigenous Peoples in Canada, and in academia, we have the opportunity to lead this change in a meaningful and significant way. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) through its 'Calls to Action' clearly indicated that this is a Canadian responsibility, not an Indigenous 'problem'. UNDRIP provides guiding principle for actions to achieve equity for Indigenous Peoples and should be used as a template for reconciliation. The report on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) highlights the extreme and devastating outcomes for a subset of Canadian society when the rights to dignity, respect, equity and self-determination of an entire population are ignored.

The TRC 94 Calls to Action and MMIWG 231 Calls for Justice recognize that organizations must support efforts that address the foundation of the inequity of Indigenous Peoples that derived from a legacy of past colonization. This 'past' continues to be perpetuated through continued colonial relationships that have become so normalized that they are invisible to many Canadians. These calls further identify approaches that Canadians can collectively work toward to achieve equity through reconciliation, implementing multiple actions at multiple levels in organizations. A key recommendation – TRC Call to Action # 57 - identifies the need for the training of public servants on the history, cultures, treaties and legal status of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Academia should lead the charge on this call to action through the development or adoption of education and training for university faculty and staff, the development of educational curricula to supplement all degree programs, and the development and or revision of academic policies and structures that support educational access to and equity for Indigenous Peoples throughout all areas of the university. Additional recommendations for reconciliation focus on accountability for curricula, and research funding that will advance knowledge of reconciliation.

The University of Manitoba has a formal relationship with the NCTR and this partnership relationship can provide a template and guidance for academia in achieving the goals of reconciliation at the university.

Winnipeg lies at the centre of North America and according to Statistics Canada has the largest Indigenous population of any city in Canada. We should be a national leader in achieving reconciliation.

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<sup>2</sup> Statistics Canada Focus on Geography Series, Province of Manitoba Aboriginal Peoples:  
<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/as-sa/fogs-spg/Facts-PR-Eng.cfm?TOPIC=9&LANG=Eng&GK=PR&GC=46>

While the city's public and grassroots communities have made important strides since Maclean's Magazine crowned our city the most racist place in Canada in 2015, there is still a long road ahead; but the potential rewards are equally great. In a province whose contemporary demographics will see Indigenous people comprising 20% of Manitoba's population in the next few years, we fail all of our students if we don't lead on reconciliation. This population represents not only potential students to serve over the next two decades given that 45% of Manitoba's Indigenous population is under the age of 25, but also represents a significant proportion of the future customers, clients, patients, employees, and employers all of our students will interact with over the course of their careers.

### University of Manitoba Context

The University of Manitoba has experienced a steady increase in Indigenous learners, staff, faculty and leadership over the last few decades, and with that, an increasingly assertive voice and expectations for Indigenous achievement, equity and engagement. From the early days of hearing Indigenous voices through student associations and organized committees raising the need for change, we have language programs in Cree and Ojibwe focused on revitalizing our languages and returning them to our youth.

We are now home to Migizii Agamik at the Fort Garry Campus, the Inner City Social Work program at the William Norrie Centre and Ongomiizwin, the Indigenous Institute of Health and Healing in the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences at the Bannatyne Campus. We have Elders in Residence and we have Knowledge Keepers to support us in our studies and to help guide our work. Much of these efforts have resulted from the leadership of our Indigenous students, staff and faculty. Often met with initial resistance, we have had success in establishing safe spaces and supports for our Indigenous academic community over time. In addition, we have had support from allies and leadership throughout the university to make these efforts happen.

What has been missing is an integrated approach to Indigenous engagement and achievement, supported by non-Indigenous and Indigenous leadership at every level of the university. We are hopeful that these recommendations will be accepted and that we will move forward on these critically important common goals.

### Advisory Committee Mandate

The resignation of the Vice Provost Indigenous Engagement (VPIE) in December 2018 afforded the university an opportunity to review and clarify the role and mandate of this challenging position. In response, the Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) struck an advisory committee to:

- Review background material and consider the current mandate of the Vice-Provost (Indigenous Engagement) and the structure of the Indigenous Engagement and Achievement offices.

- Through a consultative process (including deans/directors, administrators, Indigenous faculty/staff, Indigenous student groups and other relevant stakeholders) assess the strengths and weaknesses of our current approach and consider the needs and supports going forward.
- Provide recommendations on the role/mandate for the next Vice-Provost (Indigenous Engagement), the appropriate reporting structure/units, and the supports necessary to fulfill this mandate.

### Community Consultation

To fulfill the mandate and to inform their recommendations, the Advisory Committee convened multiple focused consultations sessions and provided the community with other opportunities to provide feedback. The consultation process included:

- A dedicated webpage where university community members could view consultation opportunities and provide anonymous feedback.
- An email account to send feedback: [Indigenous.engagement@umanitoba.ca](mailto:Indigenous.engagement@umanitoba.ca).
- Three town halls (Fort Garry Campus, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences and the William Norrie Centre) open to all university community members as well as Indigenous organizations external to the University of Manitoba.
- Feedback from the advisory committee members.
- Thirteen focus groups including:
  - Elders
  - Indigenous Students (Fort Garry and Rady Faculty Health Sciences (RFHS))
  - Indigenous Staff (Fort Garry and RFHS)
  - Indigenous Faculty members (Fort Garry and RFHS)
  - The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation
  - Deans' and Directors' Council
  - Vice-President (Academic) Advisory Committee (VPAC)
  - Gaa wii ji'l diyaang<sup>3</sup>
  - External Relations
  - President's Executive Team

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<sup>3</sup> Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples walking together and helping each other to create a just UM community through relationship building, education, advocacy and action in support of Indigenous Achievement.

At each consultation session and on the project website, the committee asked participants to respond to four questions:

1. What are the roles and responsibilities (mandate) of Indigenous senior leadership?
2. What are some of the challenges, barriers and opportunities facing Indigenous senior leadership?
3. What strategies, supports and resources are required to help make Indigenous senior leadership at the University of Manitoba successful? What does success look like?
4. Although developing a response to anti-Indigenous racism is beyond the scope of terms of this advisory committee, how should Indigenous senior leadership approach/support/guide an anti-Indigenous racism strategy?

\*\* Although the consultations were broad and numerous, the advisory committee did not consult specifically with the Board of Governors. The Board of Governors could be considered in the list of stakeholders for future projects that seek to gather feedback through community consultation.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

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### Acknowledging the Context and Developing the Structure

As the committee analyzed the feedback we received, we recognized that efforts to revise or enhance current activities in the areas of *organizational structure*, *governance*, *accountability* and *community* were not only necessary to support Indigenous engagement and achievement; but that all components were essential to successful outcomes in Indigenous engagement and achievement. (Figure 1).

It is with this recognition that we have structured our recommendations for Indigenous Senior Leadership development at the University of Manitoba.

We have identified five key areas for recommendations, with potential actions to support those recommendations. The recommendations are based on the need for organizational development at the levels of: Indigenous Senior Leadership; the Executive and Programmatic teams that support them; the Indigenous leadership needs at the Faculty level; and in our overall Campus community. The recommendations also review the need for additions and revisions to campus Administrative Infrastructure to support this development.

We must stress that we recognize that there are many efforts, initiatives and projects underway that touch on these recommendations. It is not our intent to undermine those efforts but rather, to recommend other units replicate what has worked well. We believe that this approach will better integrate existing efforts and promote collaboration between faculties and units at the executive and programs team levels.

A narrative precedes each recommendation, explaining the rationale and providing context for the recommendation that follows. The rationale for each of the sections is based on the review of background documents (*see Appendix 1*), historical context, the recognition that we must address the foundations of the inequities that have developed within our systems (derived from the TRC, MMIWG and UNDRIP), and ultimately, the feedback the committee heard throughout the consultations (*see Appendix 2: What We Heard*).



Figure 1: Indigenous Engagement and Achievement and the themes from “What We Heard”

Recommendations include a potential timeframe for implementation, based on current resources, scale, scope, and complexity. Short-term recommendations are considered to be a one to two-year implementation timeframe and long-term recommendations are three to five years. Finally, each recommendation links back to one or more of the four themes that emerged throughout consultations: Organizational Structure, Accountability, Community, and Governance.

### Recommendation 1: Executive and Senior Leadership – Enhance capacity with a critical mass of Indigenous leadership

‘What We Heard’ Themes: Governance; Organizational Structures

A critical mass of Indigenous leadership with strong professional connections will support the role of the Vice-President (Indigenous) in providing university-wide leadership in advancing the systemic and structural changes required for the achievement of equitable outcomes for First Nations, Métis and Inuit people within and external to the institution.

As articulated in background material and the TRC Calls to Action; establishing the role of Indigenous Senior Leadership at the University of Manitoba will require a commitment to the development of an organizational structure that fully supports the range of issues that require Indigenous leadership (Recommendations 1 and 5). The initial step toward decolonization and reconciliation is the need to fully respect and honor Indigenous guiding principles of partnership, engagement, and self-determination in the spirit of Indigenous (Cree & Anishinaabe) sacred teachings: humility, truth, honesty, bravery, love, kindness and respect.

In keeping with the enormous importance of relationships within Indigenous communities, we have organized our recommendations around concepts that will help our Indigenous leadership establish strong relationships with the university community and the extended Indigenous community.

These recommendations embody the need for Indigenous Senior Leadership to have a strong administrative team to rely upon and the need to have Indigenous voices at tables where important decisions specific to Indigenous students, staff, and academic issues are being made throughout the university faculties and administrative units. A revised Leadership structure and funding commensurate to the expectations for the portfolio will ensure the implementation of the Indigenous pillar of the strategic plan and compliance with the relevant recommendations of the TRC and MMIWG Final Reports, as well as recognize the commitments made in the Manitoba Collaborative Indigenous Education Blueprint and Winnipeg Indigenous Accord.

The consultation and listening sessions have been summarized in ‘What We Heard’ (Appendix 2), and the consensus emerged, that, in a province with 63 First Nation communities, an Urban Inuit population, and the Homeland of the Métis Nation, the necessary scope of the Vice-President (Indigenous) portfolio is far too large for one person to guide and lead the necessary change the university requires to continue to move forward on achieving its goals for Indigenous achievement and engagement.

A leadership structure with four Associate or Assistant Vice Presidents or Executive Directors will provide the focused capacity to give guidance, direction and energy to the four areas of university concern: Academic, Research, Student Affairs, and Community. Delegation of key operational responsibility and project management to a support team will allow the Vice-President (Indigenous) to dedicate leadership efforts to those issues identified as critical for success. The components of Recommendation 1 build the leadership framework on which all others will depend – this is the Leadership team or core ‘family’ that will guide and support us.

**1.1** Establish the Position of a Vice-President (Indigenous) who will:

Short term

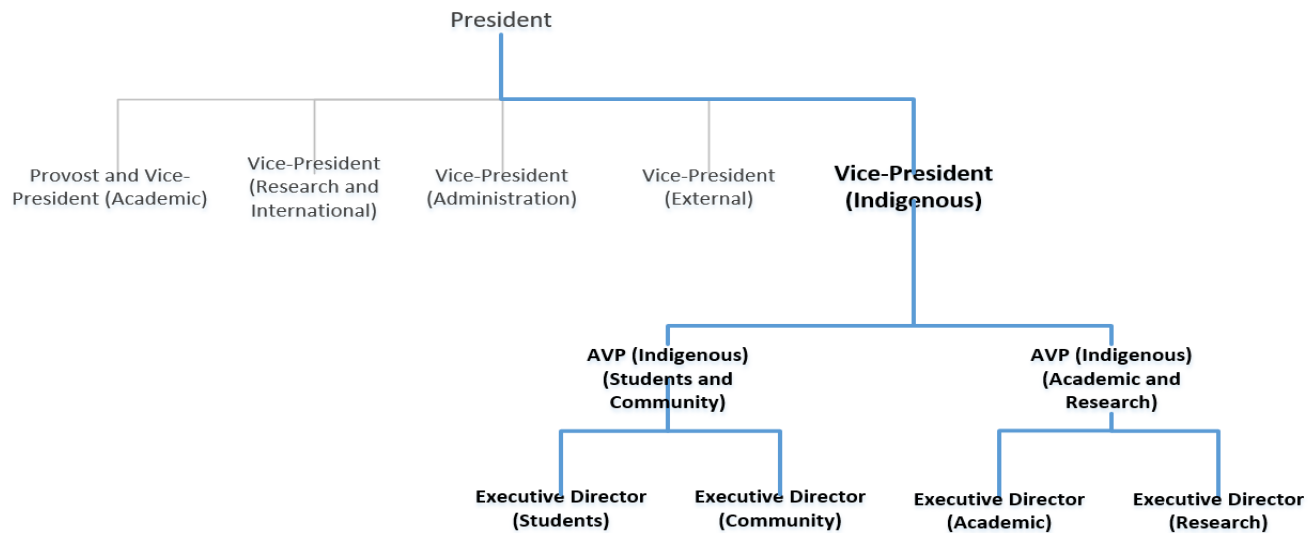
- Take a leadership role in the development of Indigenous focused guiding principles through strategic planning with Executive Leadership, Deans and Directors. This will provide an Indigenous foundational framework for leading and supporting reconciliation efforts and achieving the goals of the University of Manitoba’s Strategic Plan with regard to Indigenous inclusion and achievement;
- Have the authority and autonomy to speak the truth and enact change, who will be an important voice at the Executive level concerning the impact of university decisions on Indigenous students, faculty, and staff;
- Have administrative oversight of the U of M's strategic Plan Pillar "Creating Pathways to Indigenous Achievement" with a budget commensurate to the implementation of these goals. This is particularly important in the wake of Provincial cuts to Access programs which have a long and proven track record of success at the University of Manitoba;
- Identify and participate in innovation, funding and fundraising opportunities to advance strategies related to student achievement, Indigenous academic programs and faculty research with Indigenous communities;
- Build relationships and or articulation agreements with the Indigenous education focused organizations, colleges, and universities in Manitoba;
- Support and conduct senior level policy reviews to remove barriers to Indigenous student, faculty, and staff success;
- Contribute significantly to the local, provincial, and national dialogue on Indigenous education and rights; and,
- Work with faculties to identify an internal safe space for traditional teaching, smudging and ceremony space in each faculty.

## 1.2 Establish a Support Team of Portfolio Leads for the Vice-President (Indigenous).

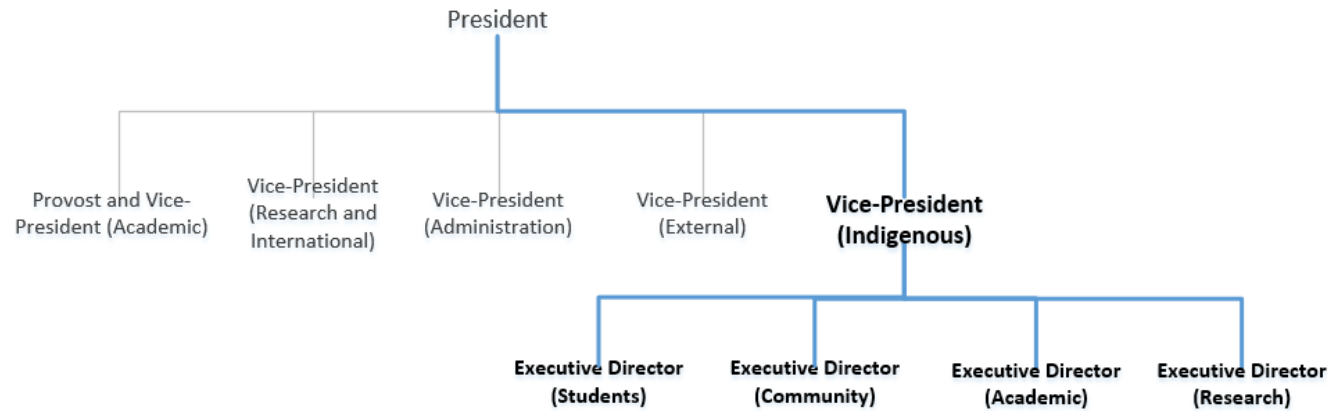
Short term

We provide examples of potential organizational structures. While we advocate for positions that are dedicated to the Indigenous focus we recognize that some of these positions may be part-time or, potentially, may provide support across groups of faculties. It is imperative, however, to recognize that the Vice-President (Indigenous) is a full-time position.

### *Example 1:*



*Example 2:*



- |     |   |            |
|-----|---|------------|
| 1.3 | Encourage Vice-Presidents to identify or hire an Associate Vice-President/Vice-Provost or Indigenous lead in each of the current Vice-Presidents' portfolios. | Short term |
| 1.4 | Establish Senior Indigenous Administrative Leads (Associate Deans, Directors, etc.) within each faculty (or collective groupings of smaller faculties).       | Short term |
| 1.5 | Establish an Elder in Residence to support the Office of the Vice-President (Indigenous).   | Short term |

## Recommendation 2: Programmatic Leadership – Develop the required plans, relationships, resources and Indigenous Leaders

‘What We Heard’ Themes: Accountability, Organizational Structure

Building on the existing mandates within the Strategic Plan, develop a multilevel Reconciliation Action Plan that the university is transparently accountable to; and develop the relationships, resources and Indigenous leaders necessary to implement the plan according to the Principles of Reconciliation. Under the leadership of the Office of the Vice-President (Indigenous), the Executive and Senior Leadership will support the following recommendations.

The Manitoba Collaborative Indigenous Education Blueprint for Universities, Colleges and Public School Boards dedicated their efforts to *'making excellence in Indigenous Education a Priority'* and recognized the need for reconciliation as a foundation for this work. This is consistent with the United Nations Declaration for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) that is considered a foundational template for achieving reconciliation as defined in the TRC's Calls to Action and the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls Commission's Calls for Justice. The signatories to the Blueprint recognized the need for authentic engagement with Indigenous communities, and committed to incorporating Indigenous Knowledge traditions and languages into curricula and pedagogy, developing a learning environment that supports success and not only celebrates the success of Indigenous Peoples, but reflects the diversity of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit in the institutional governance, policies and practices of each institution.

Under the leadership and direction of the Vice-President (Indigenous), the team of Indigenous AVPs or Executive Directors in collaboration with the Executive Leadership Team, Deans and Directors, and other key stakeholders as necessary will:

- |     |   |                     |
|-----|---|---------------------|
| 2.1 | In collaboration with the Vice-President (Indigenous), the support team of AVPs/directors will identify a Framework to Establish Community-Faculty partnerships for research and development.   | Short term          |
| 2.2 | Support the creation of a university-wide Reconciliation Action Plan to implement the relevant recommendations of the TRC and the University Strategic Plan. The Implementation Committee for the Action Plan could potentially be co-chaired by the NCTR and Vice-President (Indigenous) with representatives from all Vice-Presidents' portfolios.  | Short and long term |
| 2.3 | Establish a pool of Knowledge Keepers and Elders within the U of M community to support ceremonial aspects of university protocols (such as Indigenous land acknowledgements, graduation supports such as honour songs, guest speakers, research, curriculum development, etc.) in addition to the student supports currently existing in spaces such as Migizii Agamik, Ongomiizwin and Inner City Social Work.  | Short term          |
| 2.4 | Lead the response to and support faculty and administrative units' response to the TRC's Call to Action #57: All UM employees must be educated on ...“the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the UNDRIP, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills -based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights and anti-racism.” This process would include consultation with faculty Indigenous leads and faculty in the Department of Native Studies. (See also Recommendation 4.1). | Short term          |

<p>2.5 Lead the development of a community engagement action plan that supports research, academic programs and students through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending community events;</li> <li>• Hosting learning opportunities;</li> <li>• Creating a forum for Indigenous faculty leads and the Vice-President (Indigenous) team to share best and/or wise practices;</li> <li>• Partnering to address research and ethics needs, and;</li> <li>• Create summer institutes, programs and initiatives.</li> </ul>	Short and long term
<p>2.6 Pursue a mandate to participate in the collective bargaining to include language supporting Indigenous faculty and staff success in union collective agreement.</p>	Short term
<p>2.7 Support the establishment of networking supports for Indigenous scholars and staff across faculties and administration units through such means as mentorship programs and research collaboration programs.</p>	Short and long term
<p>2.8 Develop and implement professional development programs for Indigenous faculty and staff.</p>	Long term
<p>2.9 Establish a website with links to resources to support faculty incorporation of Indigenous content, pedagogies, and Indigenous knowledge into their curriculum, as well as campus approved Indigenous protocols as a support for non-Indigenous allies in fostering Indigenous engagement.</p>	Long term

### Recommendation 3: Clarify Expectations and Responsibilities at the Faculty and Administrative Unit Levels

‘What We Heard’ Themes: Organizational Infrastructure, Accountability

Achieving equitable outcomes for Indigenous peoples, responding to the Calls to Action of the TRC, and the university’s location on Indigenous homelands all require the action and support of every faculty and administrative unit. These actions should be based within an Indigenous rights framework, in particular, with Indigenous participation in key decision-making committees within faculties and units.

Our faculties are communities within the academic environment and, under the new budget model, are strong semi-autonomous revenue generating units. The faculties have full operational and administrative responsibility for academic issues and are the lead stakeholders and partners in making change that will ‘make excellence in Indigenous Education a Priority’ as indicated in the Blueprint.

To measure the success of faculties and recognize the need for action, the following steps can be implemented:

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|---|---------------------|
| <b>3.1</b> Each faculty will create a Reconciliation Action Plan (in response to 2.1) and, based on the themes identified, each faculty should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An annual report on faculty progress toward implementation of relevant TRC calls to action, Indigenous pillar of University of Manitoba Strategic Plan, The Blueprint, the Winnipeg Indigenous Accord and Faculty Indigenous strategic plan to be delivered to Provost, VP (Indigenous) and joint Senate/BOG committee on Indigenous Initiatives;</li><li>• Status reports on and recommendations for ongoing faculty and staff engagement in core Indigenous history, Indigenous legal status and cultural safety training as well as additional campus Indigenous training/events (See Recommendation 3.5).</li></ul> | Short and long term |
| <b>3.2</b> Each faculty or cluster of faculties to establish an Elder in Residence.   | Short and long term |
| <b>3.3</b> All relevant deans/faculty committees to have Indigenous representation (i.e., Admissions, Curriculum Review, etc.) or representation from an ally who has successfully completed advanced Indigenous training as relevant for key areas related to Indigenous student, faculty and staff success.   | Short term          |



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|--|---------------------|
| 3.4 Each dean should meet regularly with faculty Indigenous Lead/Associate Dean and at least once per year with Indigenous faculty and staff in their faculty/school.  | Short term          |
| 3.5 Conduct faculty-specific Indigenous training to build on general campus training identified above in (2.3) and require faculty and staff to engage in 3-5 hours of subsequent Indigenous training and/or community event attendance each year to be reported on annual progress reports. | Short and long term |

## Recommendation 4: Building a Campus Community

### ‘What We Heard’ Themes: Organizational Infrastructure, Accountability

The pervasive and systemic anti-Indigenous racism in society and in the institution must be aggressively interrupted and addressed so that the campus community is physically and psychologically safe for Indigenous peoples, and that First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples have the equitable opportunity to thrive personally and professionally.

There is a recognized need for a better understanding of the historical context for Indigenous Peoples in Canada and the foundation for the current state of anti-Indigenous racism. Feedback from the consultations indicated a gap between the commitment that the University of Manitoba makes to Indigenous achievement and the actual recognition of that achievement through authentic engagement.

Recognition of and action to address anti-Indigenous racism has been identified as a priority by the University of Manitoba President’s Office and several steps are underway to make this a reality. While the Indigenous Leadership Team and Vice-President (Indigenous) would be supportive participants in these efforts, the authority for this strategy should rest with the Office of Human Rights and Conflict Management. To support the anti-Indigenous Racism efforts, perhaps initially the Vice-President (Indigenous) could work as co-lead with the Office of Human Rights.

Currently External Relations supports efforts for fundraising for Indigenous issues at the university. Identifying an individual who would work closely with the Indigenous leadership team to develop a year-over-year strategy would support and promote continued growth for programming to support Indigenous Engagement and Achievement.

Ultimately, the need for Indigenous Workforce Development will support all of the activities in Indigenous Engagement and Achievement – an understanding of how this will be of benefit and why it is a critical component for success will be clear through education and training on historical, legal, and cultural contexts for Indigenous Peoples.

Under the leadership of the Vice-President (Indigenous) and action by relevant Vice-Presidents, we recommend the university implement the following:

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|---|------------|
| <b>4.1</b> Create an Education and Training Plan in response to the TRC’s Call to Action #57: All UM employees must be educated on “the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the UNDRIP, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations”. This will require the Vice-President (Indigenous) support team of portfolio leads, Native Studies Department, Faculty and Indigenous faculty leads and campus Elders to create skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights and anti-racism (See 2.3). | Long term  |
| <b>4.2</b> When promoting Indigenous achievement at the University of Manitoba, recognize the contributions of Indigenous students, staff, faculty, alumni and community, and provide compensation in some form when the request is beyond the normal expectations of service.  | Short term |
| <b>4.3</b> Establish an Indigenous Rights Officer within the Office of Human Rights and Conflict Management to support the creation and implementation of an anti-Indigenous racism strategy.   | Short term |
| <b>4.4</b> External Relations to identify Indigenous external relations officer within External Relations to coordinate various aspects of fundraising for Indigenous spaces, bursaries, scholarships, new programs and other needs as they arise.  | Short term |
| <b>4.5</b> Increase efforts to advertise all employment opportunities in the Indigenous community to increase Indigenous presence throughout all units of the university.   | Short term |

## Recommendation 5: Weave Us All Together- Governance and Administrative Infrastructure

‘What We Heard’ Themes: Governance, Accountability, Organization Structure, Community

In order to respond to the rights-based framework and imperatives behind the Strategic Plan and the recommended university-wide Reconciliation Action Plan, Indigenous self-determination and leadership must be embedded within the governance structures of the university. This will further support the leadership of the Vice-President (Indigenous) and support team make progress toward achieving equitable outcomes for First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples.

The narratives of the TRC, the Blueprint, the Strategic Plan and other background material identify the rationale and the need for greater involvement of the Indigenous community in the planning and implementation of key initiatives to support Indigenous

engagement and achievement. All of these documents emphasize the need for representative governance structure recognizing the need to view decisions through an Indigenous lens as well as the greater community.

In addition to building Indigenous capacity at the executive level, it will be beneficial to have Indigenous input at the governance level. The Senate has representation from across the university through faculty, staff and students. Theoretically, this should provide equitable Indigenous input, however, given the ratio of Indigenous academic, staff, and student representatives we cannot be assured that this is sufficient. While creating designated seats on the senate for Indigenous representatives would require re-opening the University of Manitoba Act, there are other much more attainable steps that the university can establish to weave Indigenous presence and participation in decision-making across our campus community.

The university administrative structures could benefit from these changes. It is recommended that the University of Manitoba:

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|--|---------------------|
| <b>5.1</b> Establish a permanent Indigenous Advisory Circle at the U of M, comprised of members of the Indigenous community at U of M, as well as the Indigenous communities external to U of M. The committee will serve in a consultative role to the President and other key university administrators.   | Short term          |
| <b>5.2</b> Establish a joint Board of Governors (BOG) / Senate Standing Committee on Indigenous Initiatives and Achievement. This could be chaired by the Vice-President (Indigenous) who would create a proposal with TOR including composition to present to Senate and BOG.   | Short term          |
| <b>5.3</b> Redevelop/restructure the annual reporting on Indigenous initiatives, including Faculty reports (see 3.1), progress on TRC Calls to Action and MMIWG Calls for Justice and University Strategic Plan as well as share these reports with the university community and public in a spirit of transparency, and the Indigenous values of truth and honesty. | Short and long term |
| <b>5.4</b> Engage in consultation with the NCTR to establish alignment with the Vice-President (Indigenous) portfolio within the University of Manitoba.   | Short and long term |
| <b>5.5</b> Ensure all relevant Senate and BOG Committees have Indigenous representation or representation from an ally who has successfully completed advanced Indigenous training.  | Short and long term |

## CONCLUSION

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We recognize that the University of Manitoba has multiple efforts and projects underway that seek to address Indigenous engagement and achievement. What is currently lacking in the process is a cohesive strategic approach, framed by Indigenous principles for engagement that is transparent and comprehensive in its reporting to clarify how we are achieving these goals. The recommendations above will also prevent duplication of effort, and will help to bring stakeholders in various parts of the campus together when developing similar projects.

We recognize that the historical context of colonization and laws and policies enacted to limit Indigenous freedoms have contributed to our current situation. Most Canadians have not previously received an education that included this information. We must commit as an institution to educating ourselves so that we may address the foundational aspects of inequity, disparities in Indigenous academic environments, colonial content and bias embedded in the western academic canon, and systemic policies that create barriers to success. It has been encouraging to hear of the current efforts to effect change, and to hear from decision makers the commitment that will be required to achieve these shared goals.

In keeping with the background material for this process and 'What We Heard', our recommendations target decolonization of the university through systemic change, a commitment to the development of an anti-Indigenous racism strategy, and administrative reorganization that will allow greater focus on achieving strategic goals for Indigenous equity, engagement and achievement.

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## APPENDIX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

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### Review of the Role/Mandate of Vice-Provost (Indigenous Engagement)

#### Committee Members:

- Catherine Cook (Chair), Vice Dean, Indigenous, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences
- Marcia Anderson, Executive Director, Indigenous Academic Affairs, Ongomiizwin Indigenous Institute of Health and Healing
- Laara Fitznor, Associate Professor, Educational, Administration, Foundations and Psychology
- Susan Gottheil, Vice-Provost (Students)
- Margaret Lavalley, Elder, Ongomiizwin Indigenous Institute of Health and Healing
- David Mandzuk, Dean, Faculty of Education
- Cary Miller, Head, Department of Native Studies
- Jordan Gelowitz, Student Representative (medicine) Bannatyne campus
- Jessica Stefano, Student Representative (undergraduate) Fort Garry campus
- Laura Forsythe, Student Representative (graduate) Fort Garry campus
- Christine Cyr (resource member), Director, Indigenous Student Centre
- Ruth Shead (resource member), Coordinator, Indigenous Achievement

Support for the Committee: Val Parker, Indigenous Engagement; Maire McDermott, Change Management and Project Services

#### Background:

In 2011, the President's Office and Senior Administration recruited the university's first leadership position dedicated to Indigenous achievement. Ms. Deborah Young held the position of Executive Lead, Indigenous Achievement and reported directly to the President.

Upon Ms. Young's departure, time was spent to consider the organizational structures and titles to best support the university's Indigenous achievement priorities. Dr. Frank Deer served as Interim Indigenous Lead from 2016-2017. In 2016, the position was reimagined and it was determined that the position carry the title of Vice- Provost (Indigenous Engagement) and report directly to the Provost.

Currently, the Vice-Provost (Indigenous Engagement) is responsible for advancing the university's strong commitment to Indigenous achievement through its learning, discovery and engagement pathways.

To this end, the Vice-Provost oversees the effective operations of the Indigenous Student Centre and works in collaboration to advance the university's academic strategic priorities with respect to programs/curriculum, students and faculty. The Vice-Provost works collaboratively with other Vice-Presidents, Vice-Provosts, Deans/Directors, other Academic Administrators and external partners to achieve the university's strategic priorities, and to provide advice, guidance and support to the Provost relating to Indigenous matters.

With the recent resignation of the Vice-Provost (Indigenous Engagement) in December, 2018, an opportunity to review and clarify the role and mandate of this challenging position is timely.

#### Background Material:

- Position profile of Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement as developed in 2016
- Current Organizational Structure
- Policy and procedures governing the appointment and duties of Vice-Provosts
- U15 survey of Indigenous lead roles across the country
- Manitoba Collaborative Indigenous Education Blueprint
- City of Winnipeg Indigenous Accord
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada; Calls to Action
- *Taking Our Place* - University of Manitoba Strategic Plan 2015 – 2020
- Strategic Plan progress report (January 2015 – March 2017)
- Other external commitments

#### Role / Mandate of the Committee:

- Review background material and consider the current mandate of the Vice-Provost (Indigenous Engagement) and the structure of the Indigenous Engagement and Achievement offices.
- Through a consultative process (including deans/directors, administrators, Indigenous faculty/staff, Indigenous student groups and other relevant stakeholders) assess the strengths and weaknesses of our current approach and consider the needs and supports going forward.
- Provide recommendations on the role/mandate for the next Vice-Provost (Indigenous Engagement), the appropriate reporting structure/units, and the supports necessary to fulfill this mandate.

**Timeline:** Interim report May 31, 2019; Final report with recommendations August 2019

**Provide written reports to:** Dr. Janice Ristock, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)





## Report and Recommendations to the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Dated: June 11, 2019

# Indigenous Senior Leadership Consultations:

What We Heard

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

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University of Manitoba.

When Dr. Janice Ristock, Provost and Vice President and (Academic) asked me to chair a committee to look at the role and mandate for Indigenous senior leadership at the University of Manitoba, I was pleased to accept the challenge. I feel privileged to lead an Advisory Committee that is well versed in the systemic barriers for First Nations (status and non-status), Métis and Inuit communities and students, to have the opportunity to consult with key stakeholders in establishing priorities for action, and in developing recommendations for University of Manitoba leadership to guide next steps in the goal of Indigenous achievement and engagement. Between March and May of 2019, we held 16 consultation sessions with Elders, University of Manitoba senior leadership, Deans and Directors, Indigenous and non-Indigenous faculty, staff and students, and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation including town halls at the three urban campuses of the

This document reflects 'What We Heard' from the feedback sessions, and includes four key themes of 'Organizational Structure', 'Governance', 'Community' and 'Accountability'. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission released its Final Report in 2015, and with that, 94 Calls to Action that would afford opportunities for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians to come together and address those identified matters. Included in the 94 Calls to Action was the call to fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as the framework for reconciliation. The four themes of our report are consistent with the recommended changes from the Calls to Action for structural changes in Education and Health.

Overwhelmingly, feedback from participants in the sessions reflected a need to establish a culturally safe work and learning environment for Indigenous students, staff and faculty; and to foster relationships with Indigenous communities. As we finalize our report, we have an opportunity to reflect on this feedback to make recommendations that will support Indigenous communities and the University of Manitoba in achieving common goals.

Thank you to the Advisory Committee for their commitment, their support and guidance and to Dr. Ristock for the opportunity to contribute to the future of Indigenous senior leadership at the University of Manitoba.

Dr. Catherine Cook

Chair, Indigenous Senior Leadership Advisory Committee

Vice-Dean, Indigenous and the Head of Ongomiizwin - Indigenous Institute of Health and Healing

Rady Faculty of Health Sciences

# INTRODUCTION

## Background

In 2011, the Office of the President and senior administration created the University's first central leadership position dedicated to Indigenous achievement: Executive Lead, Indigenous Achievement. The position reported directly to the President. After the departure of the Executive Lead in March 2016, an interim Executive Lead fulfilled the responsibilities of the role from 2016-2017. The President and the newly appointed Provost, Dr. Janice Ristock, considered the organizational structures and titles to best support the University's Indigenous achievement priorities. It was decided that a process to search for a Vice-Provost (Indigenous Engagement) with a focus on the academic priorities would be launched and in 2017, a Provost's Advisory Committee was formed. The Advisory Committee was representative of Indigenous faculty, staff and students and senior leadership and supported by Higgins International, a leading executive search firm specializing in Indigenous recruitment.

The VPIE position was responsible for advancing the University's commitment to Indigenous achievement through its learning, discovery and engagement pathways. To this end, the VPIE oversaw the effective operations of Indigenous Achievement and the Indigenous Student Centre and worked in collaboration with Vice-Presidents, Vice-Provosts, Deans/Directors, other Academic Administrators and external partners to advance the University's academic strategic priorities with respect to programs/curriculum, students and faculty, and provided advice, guidance and support to the Provost relating to Indigenous matters.

## Advisory Committee Mandate

The resignation of the VPIE in December 2018 afforded the university an opportunity to review and clarify the role and mandate of this challenging position. In response, the Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) struck an advisory committee<sup>4</sup> to:

- Review background material and consider the current mandate of the Vice-Provost (Indigenous Engagement) and the structure of the Indigenous Engagement and Achievement offices.
- Through a consultative process (including deans/directors, administrators, Indigenous faculty/staff, Indigenous student groups and other relevant stakeholders) assess the strengths and weaknesses of our current approach and consider the needs and supports going forward.
- Provide recommendations on the role/mandate for the next Vice-Provost (Indigenous Engagement), the appropriate reporting structure/units, and the supports necessary to fulfill this mandate.



Figure 2: Fort Garry Town Hall

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<sup>4</sup> See Appendix 1 for the advisory committee composition.

## Consultation Process

The advisory committee convened multiple focused consultation sessions beginning in March and concluding at the end of May. The committee asked participants to respond to four questions to inform the committee's recommendations<sup>5</sup>. This report is structured around the themes that emerged throughout the consultations.

The consultation process included:

- A dedicated webpage where university community members could view consultation opportunities and provide anonymous feedback.
- An email account to send feedback: [Indigenous.engagement@umanitoba.ca](mailto:Indigenous.engagement@umanitoba.ca).
- Three town halls (Fort Garry Campus, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences and the William Norrie Centre) open to all university community members as well as Indigenous organizations external to the University of Manitoba.
- Feedback from the advisory committee members.
- Thirteen focus groups including:
  - Elders
  - Indigenous Students (Fort Garry and Rady Faculty Health Sciences (RHFS))
  - Indigenous Staff (Fort Garry and RFHS)
  - Indigenous Faculty members (Fort Garry and RFHS)
  - The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation
  - Deans' and Directors' Council
  - Vice-President (Academic) Advisory Committee (VPAC)
  - Gaa wii ji'l diyaang
  - External Relations
  - President's Executive Team

\*\* Although the consultations were broad and numerous, the advisory committee did not consult with the Board of Governors. The Board of Governors should be considered in the list of stakeholders for future projects that seek to gather feedback through community consultation.

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<sup>5</sup> See Appendix 2 for the list of questions.

## WHAT WE HEARD

Between March and May of 2019, members of the advisory committee heard feedback from Indigenous and non-Indigenous members of the university community and from various Indigenous groups. The committee asked town hall and focus group participants four questions (see Appendix 2) that intended to inform recommendations for moving forward with a community-informed approach to Indigenous senior leadership at the University of Manitoba. While the majority of the feedback responded to the questions, participants also shared feedback from their past experiences, what their expectations had been during previous Indigenous senior leaders' terms, as well as their experiences in trying to advance Indigenous achievement at the University of Manitoba.

The committee reviewed and considered feedback from all 16 consultation sessions and grouped the feedback into four key themes: 1. Organizational Structure, 2. Governance, 3. Community and, 4. Accountability.

The feedback under each theme often intersected with other themes. For example, organizational structure often had elements of governance woven throughout and similarly, accountability and community often go hand in hand. Figure 2 demonstrates the intersection between all of the themes. The next section summarizes each theme by capturing the essence of participants' feedback.

### Organizational Structure

For the purposes of this report, organizational structure refers to the direct and indirect roles and responsibilities, resources, and reporting structure within the purview of Indigenous senior leadership.

Feedback indicated that the university and external community expected that past centralized Indigenous senior leadership positions address 'all matters Indigenous' at the University of Manitoba. Individuals in these positions were pulled in a variety of directions such as fulfilling requirements of the academy (e.g., curriculum development), promoting research in areas tied to Indigenous studies, ensuring safe spaces were made available to Indigenous students, and meeting commitments of the community (e.g., attending Indigenous community events). In other words, the university's and community's expectations of these positions were unrealistically broad and too numerous for one person. Accordingly, feedback from consultations indicated that a team of people and thoughtful organizational structure comprised of and focused on Indigenous Engagement and Achievement through a distributed leadership model is required in order to meet the responsibilities and expectations that span across the university.



*Figure 3: Themes of Indigenous Senior Leadership*



Figure 4: Fort Garry Town Hall

Feedback that also related to organizational structure, albeit indirectly, included the value of establishing a permanent Presidential Advisory Council. Increasing the number of Elders would support students and provide mentorship opportunities for faculty members, students, staff, and for individuals who may pursue future roles in Indigenous senior leadership positions.

Participants also emphasized inadequate resources as a barrier to moving forward. Examples of limited resources included positions to support the breadth of work centrally, funding to support faculties for various needs such as physical space or additional positions, and limited expertise for the purposes of cultural safety training, curriculum development, etc.

Feedback also highlighted the lack of Indigenous leadership positions and support within some faculties. Reference was frequently made to the idea of a network of

Indigenous leads as a means to address the gap at the faculty level. The reference to faculties is critically important because of the authority they have to execute on the goals of Indigenous engagement/achievement. As one participant noted, the heavy lifting will happen in the faculties themselves.

## Governance

Feedback highlighted existing formal governance structures as a barrier to Indigenous Achievement and Engagement throughout the consultations. For some, working within existing structures amounted to supporting colonial or western ideologies, which may not align with Indigenous methodologies and governance approaches. For others, the limited or lack of authority at the Board of Governors and the Senate curtailed the ability to assert influence on administrative or academic decisions.

Participants indicated that limited authority of previous Indigenous senior leadership positions hampered efforts. Having authority and autonomy to speak the truth and to enact change within their portfolio and having a voice at the executive level were considered essential to advance the extensive scope of the work ahead. The concept of a Vice-President (Indigenous) was raised frequently.

Participants also highlighted the need to integrate Indigenous perspectives into how research is approved, conducted and disseminated. Ensuring Indigenous criteria are integrated into research proposals, ensuring that research ethics boards apply an Indigenous lens and how research results and/or intellectual property are shared with community members was some of the feedback to the committee.

## Community

Students, staff, faculty and people at more senior levels indicated a gap in how Indigenous communities are connected, either formally or informally. Students shared that, despite being involved in student governance, they did not know whom, in terms of Indigenous senior leadership, to connect with in their faculty or elsewhere in order to implement their ideas. Staff and faculty members indicated that they would like more opportunities for connecting with each other, and senior leaders indicated that they would appreciate the opportunity to learn about and build upon current initiatives but that there is currently no mechanism that they are aware of to learn of and/or share ongoing initiatives and success stories.

However, to build community, participants indicated that leadership must recognize and acknowledge the diversity within the Indigenous community and, accordingly, the different needs and support mechanisms required. Highlighted examples included First Nations (status and non-status), Métis and Inuit students, urban, rural or Northern students and students who choose to follow a more traditional versus a non-traditional path. Participants shared that it is important that members of the university community, as well as the community at large, are informed and educated on the history, languages and cultures of Indigenous peoples in order to move forward collaboratively. Such education was referred to in the academic sense, such as integrating Indigenous knowledge into teaching and curriculum, but was also referenced in the context of capacity building and training, such as cultural safety, the history, languages and cultures of Indigenous peoples, treaties and self-governance, and anti-Indigenous racism.



Figure 5: Fort Garry Town Hall

With respect to anti-Indigenous racism, participants were asked specifically how Indigenous senior leadership could approach/support/guide a related strategy. Most participants felt that Indigenous Senior Leadership should participate but not lead the development of a strategy. Suggestions frequently related to the need for education, training and capacity building. Specific examples include engaging with Elders as a resource for support, online tutorials, with some suggesting they should be mandatory similar to Accessibility Training, an Indigenous rights resource within the Office of Human Rights and Conflict Management, and/or a Wellness Office that could include support for anti-Indigenous racism. Other ideas included sharing circles, increasing the number of safe spaces similar to Migizii Agamik and smudging spaces, and the need to work with non-Indigenous allies.<sup>6</sup>

The Indigenous university community values the support and commitment of non-Indigenous allies in achieving the milestones and current successes of Indigenous Achievement and Engagement. However, non-Indigenous participants in particular said they experienced some fear when trying to support Indigenous engagement. They indicated that fear of moving forward in the “wrong” way, or fear of getting it “wrong” prevented them from participating altogether, thereby stalling any momentum or initiatives. Building capacity and providing education and learning opportunities would mitigate some of the fear and empower allies to continue to support Indigenous engagement and achievement.

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<sup>6</sup> See definition of allyship: <https://theantioppressionnetwork.com/allyship/>

Participants also expect Indigenous senior leadership to play an important role with respect to external relations – building relationships with Indigenous communities and representing the university at community events, meeting with potential donors, being the Indigenous representative on U of M boards and committees, and being the voice of Indigenous matters at the U of M. This reinforces the point that one individual has been pulled in too many directions.

## Accountability

Developing accountability mechanisms and ways to measure progress on formalized goals, such as those in the Strategic Plan (e.g., Creating Pathways to Indigenous Achievement), featured prominently among the responses as an important role for Indigenous senior leadership. However, participants stressed that the accountability for meeting the goals needed to be a shared responsibility of all individuals in leadership positions across all portfolios. Without the commitment and action from all senior leadership, but especially within faculties, moving Indigenous engagement forward will be extremely difficult.

Other examples in which participants raised accountability included: 1. Accountability of Indigenous and non-Indigenous faculty, staff and students at the university to engage, learn and contribute to Indigenous achievement; 2. Development of institutional policies and procedures to support accountability and ensure continuity, and 3. Accountability to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action (i.e. Call to Action 57: For example: All UM employees must be educated on ....*"the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights and anti-racism"*).

Participants identified the relationship with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation as important, not only because of the nature of its work as a national archive and a centre for research and learning; but also as a partner to the University of Manitoba for moving forward on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action. Accordingly, as the relationship with University of Manitoba and the NCTR continues to evolve, Indigenous senior leadership must be an important stakeholder in the NCTR's future planning and operations.

An annual report was proposed as a possible accountability mechanism.

## **WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?**

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Participants shared some thoughts on what success would look like, such as "(...) meaningful representation of Indigenous peoples in administration, scholarship positions, service positions, support positions and student body". It is anticipated that this will be reflected by improved enrolment and graduation rates, enhanced awareness of Indigenous matters, increased Indigenous content in the curriculum, and a safer working and learning environment. The majority of feedback indicated that it should be the Indigenous community that defines what success looks like and that work should be conducted to get a more comprehensive understanding of how success is measured from the Indigenous community perspective. One participant clearly stated that 'If change is going to happen on the academic side, it is going to come from the grassroots.'



## NEXT STEPS

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Figure 6: Fort Garry Town Hall

In developing recommendations, the committee will draw from the feedback heard over the consultation period, background and other relevant information such as a U15 survey of Indigenous lead roles across Canada, the City of Winnipeg Indigenous Accord, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action, thoughts and insights from the previous Indigenous senior leadership, and Taking Our Place - UM Strategic Plan 2015-2020.

The final report with recommendations will be submitted to the Provost and Vice- President Academic at the beginning of August 2019.