

**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS of the FACULTY PARTNERS FOR  
RECONCILIATION (FPfR) PROJECT TEAM**



**Submitted to Dr. Catherine Cook, Vice-President (Indigenous), University of Manitoba  
March 4, 2022**

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### Preamble:

The collective work of the Faculty Partners for Reconciliation (FPfR) project team began in earnest in September, 2020 after an invitation was sent out earlier to those who had expressed an interest in strengthening partnerships between the Office of the Vice-President (Indigenous) or OVPI and academic units. The project team met 15 times from September, 2020 to February, 2022 for 1 ½ hours at a time to discuss and then make recommendations on the following commitments from the University of Manitoba Indigenous Senior Leadership Report approved by the University in the fall of 2019:

- 3.1 – Faculties to create Reconciliation Action Plans and annual progress reports for OVPI approval
- 3.2 – Faculties to establish Senior Administrative Indigenous Leads either within individual units or across clusters of units
- 3.3 – Faculties to ensure that they have Indigenous or ally representation on key faculty committees
- 3.4 – Deans to meet regularly with Indigenous Leads and Indigenous faculty and staff
- 3.5 – Faculties/units or clusters of units to establish an elder-in-residence
- 3.6 – Faculties to provide faculty-specific Indigenous training to build on general campus Indigenous training

The project team also decided to address the following additional commitments:

- 3.7 – Faculties to Indigenize/decolonize their physical and virtual spaces, and
- 3.8 – Faculties to strengthen their partnerships with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR)

The names of the project leads, team members, and project sponsors were as follows:

**Project Team Leads:** David Mandzuk and Marcia Anderson

**Project Team members:** Debra Beach-Ducharme, Jesse Boiteau, Adrienne Carriere, Thomas Falkenberg, Moni Fricke, Diane Hiebert-Murphy, Kaila Johnston, Vanessa Lillie, Cary Miller, Todd Mondor, Lisa O’Hara, Tracey Peter, Laurie Schnarr, Val Williams, and Michael Yellow Bird

**Project Team support:** Marion DeJong

**Project Sponsors:** Dr. Janice Ristock /Dr. Diane Hiebert Murphy (Provost)

In the following pages, we present each of the eight commitments and the recommendations we have made, sometimes with considerations and supporting commentary on issues that we believe are relevant. We trust that these recommendations will enable academic units and the OVPI to work together in further advancing the University’s mission to decolonize how we do things and work toward greater reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

### 3.1 Reconciliation Action Plans:

#### Recommendation #1:

**With respect to the development and implementation of Reconciliation Action Plans, we recommend that:**

- Every faculty/unit prioritize the development and implementation of a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). To this end, we recommend that faculty representatives consult with the Associate Vice-President Indigenous: Scholarship, Research & Curriculum and that a template be provided so that reports are consistent and include such things as: goals, objectives, timelines, responsibilities, and expected outcomes in the short, medium, and longer term;
- The Indigenous Lead along with the Dean of the unit work with others to develop the RAP;
- RAPs be developed and fully integrated into Faculty/Unit Strategic Plans, EDI frameworks, and articulated within the annual Planning and Budget submission process and Strategic Resource Plans that deans submit to the Provost;
- In those annual submissions, deans provide the Provost with a report on their progress, challenges, and opportunities in developing and implementing their RAPs to identify short and long-term outcomes and any resource allocations needed;
- RAPs be framed as collective, unit-wide efforts and not relegated only to Indigenous faculty and staff; and
- Members of committees tasked with the responsibility of developing RAPs begin their work by reading all 94 Calls to Action, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Calls for Justice of the Report of the National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls.

#### Recommendation #2:

**With respect to supporting the development of Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs), we recommend that:**

- Faculties/units be provided with guidelines on how to build collective responsibility for the development and implementation of their RAPs;
- Accountability and ultimate responsibility should rest with the Dean to build understanding, support, awareness, and commitment internally through education and training opportunities;
- Deans, Elders-In-Residence (where possible) and Indigenous Leads do an environmental scan to determine the appropriate timing for developing their RAP based on the education and training needs of their faculty and staff;

- Deans and Indigenous Leads take the lead in expecting all faculty and staff to take Indigenous and anti-racism training and provide support where appropriate and necessary and that these expectations be revisited as part of the annual activity report/performance review process;
- The plans be inclusive of First Nations, Métis and Inuit faculty, staff, and students; and
- The OVPI and their Elder-In-Residence provide oversight and coordinate activities that align with Reconciliation Action Plans to ensure consistency across the University.

#### **Recommendation #3:**

**With respect to integrating the Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) across faculties/units, we recommend that:**

- Time be allotted at Deans and Directors meetings and Senior Administrators' Retreats to share experiences and progress with the development and implementation of unit-level RAPs;
- Progress on developing unit-level RAPs be reported on and discussed at the meetings of Heads, Deans and Directors, and Faculty Council meetings; and
- In the name of transparency, concrete examples from those plans be shared occasionally with the broader community.

### **3.2 Indigenous Leads:**

#### **Recommendation #1:**

**With respect to the recruitment of Indigenous Leads, we recommend that:**

- Candidates be recruited internally from within faculties or units when possible or externally with preference for people from local Manitoba Indigenous communities;
- Successful candidates be expected to declare that they self-identify as Indigenous in accordance with the University's Indigenous declaration process; furthermore, that they be expected to speak to their connection and contribution to the broader Indigenous community and how they perceive their role as an advocate for Indigenous peoples;
- The faculty/unit should have a clear plan for how it will support their Indigenous Lead in meeting their teaching, service, and/or research expectations;
- There should be a high degree of transparency and honesty when engaging with any external candidates about the UM's progress with respect to Indigenous engagement and reconciliation; in other words, both successes and challenges should be a part of the conversation; and
- The OVPI consider developing orientation sessions for Indigenous Leads that would include information about supports and resources that are available to them.

#### **Recommendation #2:**

**With respect to the selection criteria and credentials expected of Indigenous Leads, we recommend that:**

- Faculties/units do an assessment of their priorities, specific needs, and goals at the outset;
- Based on the assessment of its own needs, each faculty/unit determine whether or not the candidate will need to have a Ph.D.; and
- Faculties/units strongly consider accepting candidates with a Master's degree or equivalent coupled with relevant disciplinary/professional experience.

**Recommendation #3:**

**With respect to the scope of the Indigenous Lead role, we recommend that the following duties be considered when determining unit-specific needs and priorities:**

- Liaising with Elders-in-Residence and Indigenous communities;
- Attending Indigenous-related community events with the Dean and when that is not possible, representing the Dean in their absence;
- Working with the Dean on reporting on progress on Indigenous-related initiatives in the unit's annual strategic resource plan and budget submission;
- Assisting and providing leadership with advising on the integration of Indigenous perspectives/knowledges in curriculum/program development;
- Advocating for respectful and informed ways to engage in Indigenous research;
- Developing co-op and/or community-engagement/experiential learning opportunities with Indigenous businesses, organizations, and communities;
- Facilitating faculty-specific professional development opportunities on Indigenous knowledges, history and awareness pursuant to TRC recommendation #57 that takes faculty and staff learning beyond the foundational Indigenous training that will be developed and offered centrally;
- Facilitating professional development for Indigenous faculty and staff;
- Liaising with Indigenous undergraduate and graduate students and Indigenous student groups;
- Liaising with local Indigenous communities;
- Advocating for Indigenous students, faculty, and staff;
- Informing the OVPI of any Indigenous faculty and staff hires, appointments, and achievements;
- Being consulted on how interview questions for Indigenous positions should be framed;

- Working reciprocally with any future EDI leads in central and academic units to ensure that their efforts align; and
- Making recommendations on revising Tenure and Promotion and Teaching Guidelines that are more inclusive of the teaching, research, and service of Indigenous faculty members, and being part of any conversations that address the possible need to adjust the weighting of these criteria for Indigenous faculty members.

**Recommendation #4:**

**With respect to their integration with the rest of the Faculty and their reporting lines, we recommend that Indigenous Lead positions:**

- Be a part of the unit's executive or administrative team;
- Be involved in the development of the unit's strategic plan; and
- Report to, be supported by, and meet regularly with the Dean.

**Recommendation #5:**

**With respect to internal supports and resources, we recommend that Indigenous Leads:**

- Have a dedicated budget that they can draw on for relevant programs, activities, and events;
- Have a private office; and
- Have Indigenous administrative support assigned when feasible.

**Recommendation #6:**

**With respect to university-wide supports, we recommend that:**

- Indigenous Leads be supported in participating in university-wide Indigenous initiatives, professional development, and events;
- Indigenous Leads be included as members of the future Indigenous Leads Circle that the OVPI will establish for discussing achievements and common challenges; and
- Indigenous Leads have access to and support from the OVPI.

### **3.3 Indigenous representation on faculty committees:**

**Recommendation #1:**

**We recommend that Indigenous Leads and Indigenous faculty members within each unit decide on which committees Indigenous representation is most important. To this end:**

- These decisions should be led by Indigenous faculty members in consultation with the Dean;

- This may require the modification of committee Terms of Reference and/or faculty elections for committee seats; and
- There should always be Indigenous representation on Indigenous Scholar Program faculty and instructor hiring committees.

**Recommendation #2:**

**We recommend that Indigenous Leads in consultation with Indigenous faculty members identify who within the unit should act as allies on committees where Indigenous representation is not possible; more specifically:**

- Given that most units do not have enough Indigenous faculty members to sit on all committees, we acknowledge and welcome non-Indigenous allies who can walk alongside Indigenous peoples;
- If further training is requested or required for allies, this should be decided upon in collaboration with the OVPI to ensure that a coordinated approach is used; and
- Allies will usually be individuals who have a history of working or conducting research with Indigenous communities but may also be individuals who have pursued advanced training available to faculty and staff at the UM such as the summer institute and other opportunities.

**Recommendation #3:**

**We recommend that Indigenous faculty and staff meet periodically with the Dean and Indigenous Lead to talk about their involvement on faculty committees and the observations they have made in that capacity. More specifically:**

- We believe that it is important to create a safe space for Indigenous faculty and staff to share their experiences so that areas that need attention are identified and acted upon; and
- We also believe that it is important for Deans and Indigenous Leads to meet occasionally with Indigenous faculty and staff separately to ensure that staff perspectives, in particular, are not overlooked.

**Recommendation #4:**

**We recommend that with respect to hiring committees, there be dedicated questions that address diversity in the workplace and working with Indigenous peoples. To this end, we recommend that:**

- Units work with Faculty and Staff Relations to ensure that they are complying with current UM hiring policies and procedures.

**Recommendation #5:**

**We recommend that the Dean and Indigenous Lead develop a process whereby all calls for faculty and university-wide committee involvement are directed to Indigenous faculty and staff. More specifically, we recommend that:**

- In order to build greater institutional capacity, all units should encourage Indigenous staff to participate in faculty and university-wide committees; and
- Indigenous staff members be provided with the time to serve on committees and to participate in events and professional development opportunities.

### 3.4 Deans meeting with Indigenous faculty and staff:

#### Recommendation #1:

**We recommend that Deans meet regularly with Indigenous faculty and staff and that these meetings focus on:**

- Addressing any emerging issues that Indigenous faculty and staff would like to discuss;
- Receiving updates from Indigenous Leads on their activities as well as activities at the Indigenous Leads network level;
- Having conversations about any progress made on Indigenous engagement initiatives within the unit and any barriers or areas of concern;
- Having conversations regarding any workload issues related specifically to Indigenous faculty and staff;
- Exploring new ideas and initiatives (curriculum, resources, recruitment);
- Assessing ongoing needs for further Indigenous training and professional development;
- Addressing any instances of lateral violence between Indigenous faculty and staff after consulting with the OVPI so that the relevant issue(s) are approached in a respectful and culturally appropriate manner; and
- If there aren't any Indigenous faculty and staff in a unit, the Dean should use this time by working on the recruitment of Indigenous faculty and staff in collaboration with the OVPI.

### 3.5 Elders-in-residence<sup>1</sup>:

**When interacting with Elders-in-Residence, we believe that the values of respect, reciprocity, relationship, and responsibility are particularly important.**

#### Recommendation #1:

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that although this section is entitled, "Elders-in-residence", there is a growing sense among many elders that the term "elder" itself is a colonial term. As a result, some now prefer to be addressed as "knowledge keepers", "knowledge holders" or "grandparents". As the University works more with elders in the future, it will be important to check with each one on how they would like to be addressed.



**We recommend that the Dean, faculty, and staff:**

- Meet with the Associate Vice-President Indigenous: Students, Community and Cultural Integration to gain an understanding of the role of Elders at the university level before they begin the hiring process;
- Work with the Indigenous Lead in a good way to develop a reciprocal relationship with the Elder; and
- Meet with the Elder on a regular basis to discuss goals, observations, and lessons learned along the way.

**Recommendation #2:**

**We recommend that:**

- Elders-in-Residence report to their respective Dean and the OVPI in a way that acknowledges and respects pre-existing relationships that Elders may have with members of the broader Indigenous community;
- The Faculty or unit determine the scope of the Elder's role in consultation with the OVPI;
- The Faculty or unit(s) determine the specific skill set and experience needed of an Elder for their unit or cluster of units;
- The Faculty or unit(s) create a clearly-articulated description of the scope of the Elder's responsibilities, work plan, and budget for teaching and ceremonial needs;
- Deans be mindful that if teaching is assigned to an Elder who is prepared to teach, that their hiring classification should be UMFA, and that the amount of teaching be reasonable given their other responsibilities; and
- Before Deans contemplate assigning teaching to their Elder-in-Residence, the OVPI should be consulted regarding workload.

**Recommendation #3:**

**With respect to the hiring of an Elder, we recommend that:**

- The hiring process be done respectfully and in consultation with the OVPI;
- Elder salary and rank be established in consultation with the OVPI;
- Hiring committees must be constituted by Indigenous individuals even if they must be appointed from other faculties or units. If this cannot be achieved, approval must be obtained from the OVPI; and
- Reference letters from community members be an integral part of the hiring process.

**Recommendation #4:**

**With respect to supports for Elders, we recommend that:**

- A private and consistent meeting space be provided;
- In consultation with Physical Plant, the Faculty/unit ensure that ceremonies/practices that may require smudging or the burning of materials such as medicine be permitted in that space;
- The Elder has a parking space close to the office for accessibility reasons;
- The Elder is provided with the proper technology (phone and computer) as well as IST and administrative support; and
- A helper is assigned to the Elder based on their individual needs which may include needing help in navigating university spaces.

**Recommendation #5:**

**We recommend that:**

- Flexibility is built into the Elder's schedule based on Faculty/unit priorities;
- Time be built in for the Elder to maintain relationships with the broader Indigenous community;
- The Elder's attendance at ceremonies be acknowledged as professional development; and
- If the Elder is requested to support activities outside of their salaried hours (i.e., running Sweat Lodges, running Pipe Ceremonies or Full Moon Ceremonies, etc.) they either be given proportional time off, or are compensated for the additional work, consistent with the forthcoming OVPI compensation recommendations.

### **3.6 Faculty specific Indigenous training:**

**Recommendation #1:**

**We recommend that, consistent with the recommendations made in the Indigenous Leadership report, faculty-specific training that is developed and delivered at the unit level be referred to as *Indigenous Training*. Furthermore, we recommend that:**

- A thorough and discipline-focused curriculum be established with the aim of building on the more general, foundational Indigenous training that will be developed centrally. It should advance knowledge of Indigenous history, culture, and ways of knowing, being and doing, and the impact of colonialism on Indigenous peoples but do so in a way that is specific to the respective faculty and its unique disciplinary and in some instances, professional context; and
- Knowledge Holders and Elders and the Associate Vice President Indigenous: Curriculum, Scholarship, and Research be consulted when developing faculty-specific Indigenous training content, and that an environmental scan of other relevant Indigenous training activities, resources, and educational materials be undertaken as part of the process.

**Recommendation #2:**

**We recommend that the Indigenous Lead of the unit work with a small group of interested Indigenous faculty and staff members and allies to determine what faculty-specific Indigenous training should look like given the faculty and disciplinary context. We also recommend that:**

- There be a strong alignment with the foundational Indigenous training that will be developed centrally to ensure that any redundancies in terms of content are intentional;
- The Associate VP Indigenous: Curriculum, Scholarship & Research be consulted before the development of the faculty-specific training has begun; and
- The dean of the unit be involved in and kept informed on the development of the training to the degree possible.

**Recommendation #3:**

**We recommend that much like the foundational Indigenous training that will be developed centrally, that the faculty-specific training be delivered in a blended format that includes synchronous/live components, recorded content, and mandatory in-person gatherings. We also recommend that:**

- Active reflection be integrated throughout the training as a means for participants to engage directly in mindfulness practices and to contemplate what they have learned and its impact in the context of their own lived experiences and the faculty-specific work they do at the University; and
- Assigned reading materials include articles and books authored by North American Indigenous scholars working in the relevant discipline/profession as well as public statements from Residential School survivors.

**Recommendation #4:**

**We recommend that, just as with the foundational Indigenous training that will be developed centrally, some mechanism for tracking progress and recognizing the completion of faculty-specific training be explored; more specifically:**

- We believe that alternative credentials such as micro-certificates could serve as mechanisms for delivering content and tracking the completion and recognition of both levels of training; and
- We believe that with respect to faculty-specific Indigenous training, faculty and staff be expected to report on their learning as part of the annual activity report/performance review process.

**Recommendation #5:**

**We recommend that the faculty-specific Indigenous training be assessed on an ongoing basis to ensure that:**

- The training content and associated materials are current, reflective of the diversity of Indigenous peoples, cultures, and lived experiences, and relevant for the particular faculty, disciplinary, and/or professional context.

#### **Recommendation #6:**

**We recommend that with respect to the roll-out of faculty-specific Indigenous training, that:**

- Those faculty and staff members who play major leadership roles in the faculty be expected to be part of the first cohort of learners to set an example for others within the unit;
- Those who have completed the faculty-specific Indigenous training be encouraged to continue their learning by taking advantage of the Colloquium Series, Fireside Chats, and other Indigenous events and learning opportunities on and off campus;
- A plan be established for the systematic delivery of faculty-specific Indigenous training to every undergraduate and graduate student in the unit. This training should include foundational Indigenous content requirements as well as advanced faculty-specific Indigenous content and should always take into account any compulsory Indigenous coursework that students may have already taken as part of admissions or program requirements; and
- Those involved in developing faculty-specific training designed for students consider ways to tie that training to experiential learning opportunities in the community as facilitated by the Experiential Learning Centre in Student Affairs.

### **3.7 Physical and virtual spaces:**

#### **Recommendation #1:**

**We recommend that the names of buildings and streets on our campuses be reviewed and that a process be developed to replace any controversial names that have ties to colonization, racism etc. with names in Indigenous languages or names of Indigenous people who have made significant contributions to Manitoba and/or the University.**

#### **Recommendation #2:**

- We recommend that anti-Indigenous racism training be strongly promoted so that all people—students, faculty, staff, and community members—feel safe and welcome in our University and faculty/unit spaces; and
- We believe that everyone should be treated with respect, generosity, and decency when they enter our offices so we recommend the creation of culturally appropriate mediation spaces.

#### **Recommendation #3:**

**We recommend that every faculty/school have a space to smudge. To this end, we suggest that:**

- The Associate Vice-President Indigenous: Students, Community, and Cultural Integration be consulted on the process to follow;

- Physical Plant be consulted on renovations deemed necessary; and
- The establishment of these kinds of smudging spaces be considered as opportunities for broad, faculty-based learning.

**Recommendation #4:**

**We recommend that the University make a concerted effort to display Indigenous art created by Indigenous peoples throughout its public spaces and on all campuses and that this effort be seen as an opportunity to also incorporate Indigenous languages.**

**Recommendation #5:**

**We recommend that Indigenous design elements be strongly encouraged and Indigenous architects be consulted in the renovation of existing instructional spaces and the creation of new spaces.**

**Recommendation #6:**

**With respect to virtual spaces, we recommend that:**

- Online security measures be reviewed so that safe spaces for Indigenous faculty, staff and students are created;
- The recording rules associated with virtual platforms be reviewed as they tend to be antithetical to Indigenous teachings, sharing, and promoting trust;
- Guidelines for virtual conversations be reviewed. When strict rules are instituted, it can stifle trust and sharing;
- Barriers to access and participation by students in remote communities be identified and solutions be found to increase Indigenous student recruitment, retention and graduation; and
- A culturally appropriate agreement for the recording of traditional teachings be created with the involvement of the Office of Legal Counsel, the Copyright Office, Faculty Communications Officers, and the Marketing and Communications Office; furthermore, that the agreement explicitly acknowledge that there is no transfer of IP from the Knowledge Holder.

### **3.8 Partnerships with the NCTR:**

**Recommendation #1:**

**We recommend that, in order to strengthen its connection to the NCTR, the University explore the possibility of arranging student internships, faculty fellowships, summer research awards, and other research and experiential learning opportunities that are outlined in the UM's Senate-approved Experiential Learning typology;**

**Recommendation #2:**

**We recommend that the University explore ways in which the NCTR archives, collections, and teaching resources can be used to enrich the curriculum and teaching that faculties deliver;**

**Recommendation #3:**

**We recommend that the NCTR look for ways to collaborate with the Experiential Learning Office in the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning and the Experiential Learning Centre in Student Affairs to offer curricular and co-curricular opportunities for both graduate and undergraduate students;**

**Recommendation #4:**

**We recommend that the University consider multiple forms of collaboration such as exhibits including potential opportunities for faculty and staff development;**

**Recommendation #5:**

**We recommend that at Deans and Directors and Indigenous Leads meetings, NCTR unit leads discuss the Centre's current activities and share best practices for collaboration between academic units and the NCTR; and**

**Recommendation #6:**

**We recommend that in their Faculty Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs), Deans and Indigenous Leads consider how their faculty/unit can support the goals and mission of the NCTR with respect to: a) archives, b) research, and c) education.**

## **Concluding comments:**

As one can imagine, there were many conversations that led members of the Faculty Partners for Reconciliation (FPfR) project team to making the 38 recommendations outlined in this report. As the Co-Lead of the team, I can tell you that every conversation we had was respectful and collegial, and every team member came to each of our meetings ready to contribute in a good way. Special thanks go to Vanessa Lillie who agreed to start each of our meetings with a song and a blessing that served as a constant reminder of why we were doing our work in the first place – to ensure that Indigenous faculty, staff, and students have a positive and supportive experience at the University of Manitoba, a place where, regardless of their faculty and academic interests, there will be opportunities for them to thrive now and well into the future.

Respectfully submitted,

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