

**EXCEPTIONAL. UNCONVENTIONAL.**





**Lakehead**  
UNIVERSITY

# **RR/G/PT of Indigenous Faculty and Students**

**Habitable spaces for sharing and learning**

**2015**



# Foundations of the conversation – why?

Recognition of Indigeneity as an important foundation and genesis of a strong Canadian identity ...

History – as HIS/story and our/story – un-blurring/blurring the lines ...

Treaties and other historical  
agreements ... Indian Act?

The Canadian Constitution and the  
Supreme Court of Canada ...

Promoting a redefinition of legislation,  
policy & practice ...



# Has the dialogue begun?

Understanding and acknowledging the realities of social and academic inclusion, exclusion and true integration ...

We are not a problem to be solved ...

Indigenous faculty bring identifiable elements to the academy ... different streams of knowledge and need

...

Academic perceptions of sameness and difference include and promote what kind of coexistence?

# Opening the dialogue

Where are existing barriers, boundaries and how will we address them to allow a comprehensive dialogue?

We will take 10 minutes to discuss perceptions of barriers, boundaries, challenges or changes you are aware of and are comfortable sharing ...

# “What if” means what?

What are the elements we can agree on  
and how can/will they be fully  
expressed within our institutions?

Inclusion/exclusion will prompt ...?



Indigenous peoples are dueling with academia on one hand, and dueling with the dire results of the imposition of artificial communities on the other

Much of the drive forward by Indigenous faculty is the movement of Indigenous knowledge in both places

# Indigenizing the curriculum

How do we (academy) unravel tightly narrated definitions of education and incorporate flexibility & innovation?

And, address public and academic perceptions on what constitutes “education” “knowledge” and “rigour” ...?

Truly wholistic education will require  
the incorporation of Indigenous  
knowledge and worldview – why?

What are we doing at Lakehead  
University to address these questions  
for students and faculty?

Once, we were afraid, now we understand it is us who will awaken us, but we can do this together too.

As Michael Greyeyes noted,  
“Identity is reformed in every generation” ...

# Decolonizing the Academy

What does this phrase mean?

Define your vantage point before you try to answer this ...

“The incorporation of the history of this continent – not 350 years, not 500 years, but 20,000 years of trade, governance, alliance, and survivance – all valid, with one history as well known as the other and embedded in learning”

# Recruitment and Retention

There are many ways to  
communicate ideas and knowledge

...

Language is not the only way to  
teach or embody knowledge, nor is  
literature ...

# Retention = Promotion and Tenure

What now counts as Peer Review?

What counts as an acceptable publication, if not in tier one journals? How can this be extended?

What IS the driving force behind their publications, according to Indigenous scholars?

What forms of community engagement count and how might they be best formatted to meet PT criteria?

# Creating Habitable space?

In every space Indigenous people occupy they remain in a precarious position and this is a key element of concern.

It will take courage and leadership on both sides of the dialogue to create and sustain change.

What Indigenous faculty understand and work from –  
“Leadership is about submission to **duty**,  
not elevation to **power**”  
(Gordon Tootoosis, 1941-2011).

Our primary concern remains restoration of the circle!



# Defining a habitable space?

What do Indigenous faculty have to say about habitable spaces?

What about the rest of the faculty, students?

What changes have already occurred and are working well?

What change is your institution ready to make to ensure the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge and the extension of cultural intelligence?

How high are the barriers to positive action?

# Next Steps?

What are we prepared to implement as academic institutions to make visible our commitment to inclusion and change?

Ministries, governments and universities have committed to the recognition of local Indigenous governments when they open important discussions.

The Premier of Ontario has included a statement on Indigenous issues in every mandate letter for every ministry in her government, what about us?

We will commit to?

An assessment of existing inclusion?

Faculty, Staff and Curriculum?

A Statement in the Strategic Plan?

The growth of habitable space on campus?

Raising the bar on Indigenous aspirations?

Community conversations?

Lunch and Learns?

University to community – community to

university outreach?

## Suggested reading

Barreiro, Jose ed. (2010) *Thinking in Indian: A John Mohawk Reader*, Fulcrum: Golden, Colorado

Daschuk, James (2013) *Clearing the Plains*, University of Regina Press: Regina

Newhouse, David (2008) *Ganigonhi:oh: The Good Mind Meets the Academy*, *Canadian Journal of Native Education*; 2008; 31, 1; Research Library, pg. 184

Sefa Dei, George, et al, eds. (2000) *Indigenous Knowledges in Global Contexts: Multiple Readings of our World*, University of Toronto Press: Toronto

Shotton, Heather J., Shelly Lowe & Stephanie Waterman, eds. (2013) *Beyond the Asterisk: Understanding Native Students in Higher Education*, Stylus: Sterling, Virginia

Stonechild, Blair (2006) *The Buffalo: The Struggle for Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education in Canada*, University of Manitoba Press: Winnipeg