



Western University Indigenous Postsecondary Education Council (IPEC) Terms of Reference

1. Background

In recognition of Indigenous¹ peoples' strengths, Indigenous Knowledge(s), and self-determining rights as distinct peoples of Canada, Western University will consult and engage with the *Indigenous Postsecondary Education Council (IPEC)*, as a formal advisory Council to the University representing the common interests and concerns of local Indigenous communities on matters relating to Indigenous postsecondary education at Western.

IPEC also serves to support Western University in fulfilling its strategic goals of “engaging Indigenous peoples in all levels of work, study and research at Western University” (Indigenous Strategic Plan, 2016) and implementing the Ontario government’s *Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework* (MTCU, 2011).

2. Vision

Indigenous peoples are engaging in all levels of study, work, and research at Western University, enriching campus life for the benefit of all.

3. Purpose

Western University values and elevates Indigenous voices and agency by engaging the Indigenous Postsecondary Education Council in providing input into various aspects of Western’s governance and long-term planning, student services, employment relations, academic programming, and research initiatives as it relates to Indigenous peoples.

4. Goals

Western’s broad level goals in the area of Indigenous relations are to:

1. Strengthen and build relationships with Indigenous communities;

¹ The term *Indigenous* is used to refer specifically to Aboriginal people of Canada including: First Nations, Metis, and Inuit which is a term recognized in the *Canadian Constitution Act of 1982*. Indigenous is also a more global term used to encompass a variety of Aboriginal groups from an international context and is sanctioned by the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

2. Nurture an inclusive campus culture that values Indigenous peoples, perspectives, and ways of knowing;
3. Enhance Indigenous students' experience at Western;
4. Achieve Excellence in Indigenous research and scholarship;
5. Excel in Indigenous teaching and learning;
6. Indigenize Western's institutional practices and spaces;
7. Become a university of choice for Indigenous students;
8. Increase Indigenous representation in staff and faculty complement.

5. IPEC Reporting

- IPEC will submit regular meeting minutes to the Office of the President, the Office of the Provost, and the Office of the Vice Provost;
- Each year, senior administration (Provost and/or President) will be invited to attend 1-2 IPEC meetings;
- The Council will play a central role in advising on the critical issues and agenda items for this meeting;
- IPEC will post Terms of Reference, membership, and meeting minutes on the Indigenous Services website for public viewing.
- IPEC will report to Western University's Board/Senate in fall and winter
- A member that sits on Board and senate members will provide communication and updates to IPEC annually

6. Membership

IPEC membership will reflect a broad representation of committed participants with diverse backgrounds. Members will be from both Western University and local Indigenous communities including; Indigenous students, staff, and faculty, local First Nations community representatives, urban organizational leaders, and other Indigenous stakeholders vested in postsecondary education matters.

7. IPEC Members Designated Seats

University Community Members (up to 20 seats)

- Office of the President designate.
- A University Faculty Member appointed by the President.
- Indigenous Services, Administrative Coordinator and Director
- First Nations Studies, Faculty of Social Science, Director.
- Aboriginal Education, Faculty of Education, Director.
- School of Graduate Postdoctoral Studies (SGPS) designate
- Dean(s) from a Faculty, 1-3 representatives.
- One Board of Governors member and one senate member on invitation by the IPEC co-chairs
- Affiliate College designates for each of the 3 Colleges.
- Indigenous faculty (2 reps)

- and Indigenous staff members representing a broad cross of Faculties and/or Unit/Departments (1-2 representatives);
- Indigenous students at the undergraduate and graduate levels (1 representative from the Indigenous Student Association (ISA) and 1 representative from the Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement (SAGE).
- Indigenous Services, Visiting Elder.
- Associate Vice-President, Student Experience (or designate)

Members may represent multiple roles.

Indigenous Community Members (up to 15 seats)

There will be seats dedicated to the following First Nations communities.

- Oneida Nation of the Thames.
- Chippewas of the Thames First Nation.
- Munsee Delaware Nation.
- Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation.
- Six Nations of the Grand River.
- Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation.
- Delaware Nation Moraivian of the Thames Band.
- Caldwell First Nation.
- Walpole Island First Nation.
- Aamjiwnaang First Nation.

There will be seats dedicated to the following Indigenous organizations in London area.

- Southern First Nation Secretariat postsecondary program.
- Southwestern Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre (SOAHAC)
- N’Amerind Friendship Centre.
- Fanshawe College, First Nations Centre.
- Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO).
- Atlosha
- Nokee Kwe Occupational Skills Development Inc.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Co-Chairs are responsible for:

There will be 2 rotating Co-Chairs chosen by nomination and consensus including 1 Western University representative and 1 Indigenous community representative;

- Championing the vision and goals of the Council;
- Actively seeking out new members as seats become available;
- Ensuring meetings are held regularly, seeking agenda items from members, and following up on action items at meetings;
- Chairing meetings and facilitating meaningful discussion toward action;
- Acting as a signing authority for the Council.

Secretary is responsible for:

- Taking minutes, preparing agendas, distributing lists, drafting correspondence, preparing and updating materials, coordinating meetings as directed by Co-Chairs;
- Maintaining membership lists, managing current and archival records, ensuring online presence, and circulating minutes to the Office of the President, Provost and Vice-Provost.
- Annual committee membership review and renewal, including:
 - Drafting invitation letters to communities to fill vacant positions
 - Prompting Co-Chairs to conduct follow up calls or visits to communities where representation is required.

Members are responsible for:

- Championing the vision and goals of the Council;
- Representing the perspectives of Western and Indigenous community stakeholders as it relates to Indigenous peoples unique needs in postsecondary education at Western;
- Recognizing the complex nature of academic institutions with respect to academic freedom and freedom of inquiry in teaching as well as the units administrative roles and responsibilities;
- Understanding that IPEC plays a supportive role in advocating for Indigenous peoples' needs, and informing and influencing the institution through recommendations that increase educational successes for Indigenous peoples;
- Attending and equally participating in meetings on a regular basis;
- Reading and approving the meeting minutes;
- Making recommendations and engaging in meaningful dialogue around issues brought forward that facilitate decision-making and action;
- Completing Council action item and business by deadlines;
- Participating in sub-committee work as needed.

9. Term

- 3 consecutive years with a possibility of renewal where feasible;
- As membership terms end and vacancies arise, Indigenous communities/organizations will be invited by IPEC to appoint new designates to the Council;
- Letters of appointment are required for all members.

10. Meetings

- Each meeting will begin with an Indigenous Caucus preliminary section chaired by the Indigenous Co-Chair representative which will give Indigenous community organizational representatives an opportunity to meet privately to highlight key issues of priority prior to the regularly scheduled meeting;
- There will be at least 4 meetings per academic year;
- Sub-committee work as needed;

- 1 half-day professional development/celebration retreat per year held in the summer months at a local Indigenous community;
- Rotate meeting locations to be held occasionally in Indigenous communities.

11. Decision Making

- Ideally, decisions are made by consensus;
- Decisions about issues where there is not complete agreement will be deferred until a future meeting;
- If consensus cannot be achieved after the process, the issue will be resolved by a vote called at the discretion of one of the Co-Chairs;
- A decision will require 50% + 1 quorum from both Indigenous and University membership. A secret ballot to determine consensus may be taken and must be approved by either Co-Chairs.
- All members have voting privileges.
- All IPEC members are expected to declare conflicts of interest and recuse themselves from voting when appropriate.

12. Quorum

- At least 6 voting members are in attendance with a minimum of 3 external Indigenous community members.
- In meetings in which quorum is not met, action and approval of decisions will be summarized in minutes and communicated electronically to the full committee. Decisions will be considered approved upon acceptance of the meetings minutes at the next meeting.