



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 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 implement Ontario’s *Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework* (MTCU, 2011), take action on Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC, 2015), and observe Indigenous peoples’ rights in education (UNDRIP, 2010)

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 (IPEC) 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.

Goals

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 Indigenous groups from an international context and is sanctioned by the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

IPEC broad level goals in the area of Indigenous relations are to:

1. Strengthen and build relationships with Indigenous communities;
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 (Indigenous Strategic Plan, 2016).

4. IPEC Reporting

- IPEC secretary will post regular meeting minutes to the Office of Indigenous Initiatives website and the Office of the Vice Provost Academic;
- Each year, senior administration (Provost and/or President) will be invited to attend 1 IPEC meeting;
- IPEC 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 Office of Indigenous Initiatives' website for public viewing.
- The IPEC, with support from the OII, will contribute a yearly section detailing its activities, meetings, and membership to the OII annual report shared with Western's University's Board/Senate.
- The VP/AVP (Indigenous Initiatives), will provide relevant communication and updates to IPEC on a regular basis.

5. Membership

IPEC membership will reflect a broad representation of individuals with diverse backgrounds who are committed to the work of Truth and Reconciliation. Members will be comprised of representatives 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.

6. IPEC Members Designated Seats

University Community Members (Voting)

1. Vice-Provost/ Associate Vice-President (Indigenous initiatives).
2. University Faculty Member appointed by the President.
3. Director of Indigenous Engagement, Wampum Learning Lodge and Indigenous Student Centre
4. Indigenous Elder.
5. Indigenous Studies, Faculty of Social Science, Director.

6. Indigenous Education, Faculty of Education, Director.
7. Associate Vice-President, School of Graduate Postdoctoral Studies (or designate).
8. Vice-Provost, Students (or designate).
9. Dean(s) (1-3 representatives).
10. Affiliated University College designates (Huron, Kings and Brescia).
11. Indigenous faculty member
12. Indigenous student (Indigenous Student Association)
13. Indigenous Relations Coordinator, University Student Council (USC).
14. Indigenous Coordinator, Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement (SAGE)

*Special Note: University members may represent multiple roles.

Indigenous Community and Organization Membership (Voting)

1. Oneida Nation of the Thames.
2. Chippewas of the Thames First Nation.
3. Munsee Delaware Nation.
4. Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation.
5. Six Nations of the Grand River.
6. Mississauga of the Credit First Nation.
7. Eelünaapéewi Lahkéewiit
8. Caldwell First Nation.
9. Bkejwanong Territory (Walpole Island First Nation)
10. Aamjiwnaang (Sarnia) First Nation.
11. Saugeen First Nation
12. Southern First Nation Secretariat Postsecondary Education Program
13. Southwestern Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre (SOAHAC) representative.
14. N'Amerind Friendship Centre representative.
15. Fanshawe College, First Nations Centre representative.
16. Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) representative.
17. Atlohsa Family Services representative.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

IPEC will be co-chaired by the VP/AVP (OII) and a representative from the Indigenous community.

In consultation with the President and or Provost, the VP/AVP (OII) may appoint a temporary designate from Western leadership, in the event such co-chair is unable to attend a meeting.

The Indigenous Community co-chair may appoint a temporary designate from the members of the IPEC Indigenous community or organizations membership, in the event such co-chair is unable to attend a meeting.

The Indigenous Community co-chair will be chosen by nomination and consensus for a 3-year term with an option for renewal. The Co-chairs will be:

- Responsible for championing the vision and goals of IPEC;
- Chairing meetings and facilitating meaningful discussion toward action;
- Acting as a signing authority for IPEC.

Office of Indigenous Initiatives will act as the Secretary for IPEC:

- Responsible for taking minutes, preparing agendas, distributing lists, drafting correspondence, preparing and updating materials, coordinating meetings as directed by Co-Chairs;
- 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;
- Maintaining membership lists, managing current and archival records, ensuring online presence, and circulating minutes to the Offices of the President and the 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:

- Establishing the vision and goals of IPEC;
- Representing the perspectives of Western and Indigenous communities as they relate 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 and research and administrative units roles and responsibilities to maintain financial accountability and confidentiality;
- Advocating for Indigenous peoples' needs, and informing and influencing the institution through recommendations that increase educational successes for Indigenous peoples;
- 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 IPEC action items and business by deadlines;
- Participating in sub-committee work as needed.

9. Meetings

- To maximise accessibility, Co-chairs will provide virtual access to in-person meetings.

- Each meeting will begin with an Indigenous Caucus chaired by the Indigenous Community Co-Chair representative which will provide Indigenous representatives an opportunity to meet privately to highlight key issues of priority and concern prior to the regularly scheduled meeting;
- There will be at least 4 meetings per academic year;
- Sub-committee work may be implemented as needed;
- At least one regular meeting will be held outside the University and within an Indigenous community or organization.

10. Decision Making

- Primarily, decisions are made by consensus. If consensus cannot be achieved through discussion, the issue will be resolved by a vote of IPEC members;
- A decision will require 50% + 1 quorum from both the Indigenous Community and University membership.
- All members have voting privileges.
- All IPEC members are expected to declare conflicts of interest and recuse themselves from voting, when appropriate.

11. Quorum

- At least 50% of voting members are in attendance with a minimum of 51% 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.