

**Indigenous Postsecondary Education Council (IPEC)
Western University**

Meeting Minutes

November 22, 2019

The meeting was held at 9:00am – 12:30pm at University Community Centre (UCC) 147B

PRESENT:

Bernita BRIGHAM-
JACOBS
Candace BRUNETTE
Brent DEBASSIGE
Paula HEDGEPEETH
Riley KENNEDY
Ashley KEWAYOSH -
SAMUEL
Amanda MYERS
Jody NOAH
Tehya QUACHEGAN
Peter SIMPSON
Jeff TENNANT
Kiersten WILLIAMS

AFFILIATION:

Post-Secondary Coordinator, Walpole Island First Nations (tele-conference)
Special Advisor to the Provost, Indigenous Initiatives
Director, Indigenous Education, Faculty of Education, Western University
Project Coordinator, Indigenous Initiatives
Student Senator

Program Coordinator, Indigenous Student Centre, Student Experience
Indigenous Student Centre, Director, Student Experience
Southern First Nations Secretariat
Indigenous Student Association (ISA) President
Associate Vice-Provost, School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (SGPS)
Special Guest, CONGRESS Convener 2020
University Student Council (USC) Indigenous Student Liaison

REGRETS:

Danielle ALCOCK	SOAHAC Representative
Bob ANDERSEN	Dean of Faculty of Social Sciences
Regna DARNELL	President's Appointee representing the Faculty of Social Science
Janice FORSYTH	Director, Indigenous Studies, Faculty of Social Science
Myrna KICKNOSWAY	Visiting Elder, Indigenous Student Centre, Student Experience
Jennie MASSEY	Associate Vice President, Student Experience
Melanie MOLNAR	Affiliate Designate, Brescia University College
Rick MONTURE	Grand River Post-Secondary Education
Geoff READ	Dean of Students, Huron University College
Laura SPERO	Post-Secondary Counsellor, Aamjiwnaang First Nation
Bette SUMMERS	Oneida Nation of the Thames, Education Director

1. **Traditional Opening**

- Smudge provided

2. **Approval of Agenda**

- Community Co Chair Jody Noah welcomed everyone

Items added to agenda:

- Dean of Social Science Appointment Committee
- IPEC Terms of Reference - Riley Kennedy Student Senator to fill the Senate position vacancy

3. Approval of Minutes

Minutes approved with the following changes.

- #8 – BJ –ISC staffing position – Change the title from Wholistic Wellness Coordinator title to Community Enhancements Coordinator.
- Cultural advisor – students have expressed a strong need for this position but ISC has funding for only on a PT basis.
- #9 – delete struck item.

4. CONGRESS 2020 – Brainstorming ways to engage Indigenous communities

Convener Jeff Tennant presented

- Congress involves Western hosting the Social Sciences and Humanities scholarly community on campus during May 2020 – estimated 8000 people to attend.
- With this hosting role, Western has the opportunity to showcase Indigenous scholarship and coordinate and deliver programming around the theme – “confronting colonialism and anti-black racism”
- The Special Advisor sits on the Congress Steering Committee.
- The Convener recognized the importance of engaging community in the conference in various ways (e.g. reduced conference fees, an Elders room and delivering land acknowledgments). The Convener is working with the Special Advisor to book different Elders and knowledge keepers to assist in this work.
- The conference will feature two *Big Thinking* Series where Indigenous guest speakers will act as keynotes. The speakers have yet to be determined. Big Thinking speakers will be finalized by January.
- The Convener imagines Big Thinking Series to open to community members to attend. Possible transportation options to be arranged from the local First Nations (if desired). The conference will also include activities downtown London at Dundas place Flex Street where Indigenous performers will be featured. Specific performer options were brainstormed.
- The downtown program may involve a vendor fair. The Convener is open to suggestions on how to engage Indigenous artisans and other Indigenous vendors to participate.
- Chantelle Richmond and Janice Forsythe have confirmed their participation in the event in terms of delivering a panel.
- The Convener is looking into providing waivers or reduced conference fees for Indigenous community members.
- The Convener will work with the Special Advisor to outreach and build relationships with local First Nations and community partners.
- Some discussion around engaging Indigenous Institutes (e.g. FN Technical Institute and Six Nations polytechnic were identified)
- The Convener may also invite Indigenous student volunteers to help host Elders.

- There are 2 Indigenous associations that will host specific Indigenous conferences.
- ISC offered as a space to host Elders. They also identified their summer staff as being interested in participating. IPEC members suggested an Elders tent and a golf cart for Elders accessibility.
- The Convener will continue to update IPEC in upcoming meetings.

5. IPEC Terms of Reference & Membership Update

Special Advisor Candace Brunette presented.

- IPEC Terms of Reference have been updated based on consensus at last meeting, and approved by the Provost. They will be posted online.
- Updated that invitations were sent to Atlohsa and Fanshawe College.
- Community Co-chair indicated that she received an email from Mississauga First Nation and they are interested in participating.
- Senator role has been filled by Riley Kennedy.

6. Office of Indigenous Initiatives Updates

Special Advisor presented.

Indigenous Initiatives Unit and Staff Planning Update – please see attached handout

- The Indigenous senior leadership position (VP/AVP Indigenous) was passed through Senate.
- The Selection Committee is chaired by the Provost and is expected to convene in January 2020.
- The Selection Committee is in the process of being finalized. The Special Advisor has proposed a strong representation of Indigenous peoples including students, staff and faculty members. Senate nominating committee approves this list in December 2019.
- The process will be led by an Executive Search firm. A request for proposals will be released shortly.
- The Executive Search firm will work with the Selection Committee to host community engagement and finalize the job ad etc.
- The hiring process will take a few months with potential interviews occurring in May 2020. The ideal situation would be to have the new leader in place by July 1st 2020.
- While the Special Advisor's contract end June 30, 2020, the Provost and Special Advisor are in discussions around a transition plan.

Indigenous Learning Space Update – please see attached handout

- The Office of Indigenous Initiatives hosted an Indigenous Learning Space community engagement session on October 3rd 2019 4:30PM to 7:30PM
- Over 40 people attended the session.
- The Indigenous Space Advisory continues to meet regularly.
- The Indigenous Learning Space Steering Committee plans to meet with architects in December to review preliminary sketches.
- The Office of Indigenous Initiatives plans to host one more community engagement session in December 2019 or January 2020 before construction begins.

Staffing update

The office has appointed a new Indigenous Curriculum and Pedagogy Advisor - Sara Mai Chitty

- Sara starts December on a part-time basis and full-time in January.

Biography: Sara Mai Chitty is Anishinaabekwe, a storyteller, an educator, and member of Alderville First Nation. Completing her Masters of Journalism at Western University in 2015, Sara Mai has worked with Journalists for Human Rights in two fly-in OjiCree communities in Northern Ontario teaching community journalism. After returning to Deshkan Ziibing to be closer to family, she has worked for the Institute of Indigenous Learning at Fanshawe College, teaching storytelling and WRIT in Chippewa, Oneida and on main campus. Sara Mai is an active member of the local arts and music scene and has been involved with programming for the 2019 One Book, One London initiative at London Public Library, and led an "Indigenous Art and History Walk" for Museum London this past summer. More recently, Sara Mai Chitty has joined Western's new Office of Indigenous Initiatives to serve as the Indigenous Curriculum and Pedagogy Advisor. In this new role, Sara Mai will develop and facilitate Indigenous learning opportunities across campus and community partners.

OII Planning Update

- Special Advisor is preparing the new Office of Indigenous Initiatives budget for 2020-21
- The Office continues to lead various Indigenous Sub-committees including a Curriculum and Learning and a Communications Sub-Committee.

Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) Project

- Special Advisor updated and reported on activities related to the Thirty Meter Telescope Project on Mauna Kea in Hawaii. She reported that the Office had responded to community concerns regarding Western's affiliation with TMT as members on ACURA.
- Through collegial and productive conversations between Western Research, Indigenous Initiatives and various Indigenous and non-Indigenous faculty member, Western's Vice President Research released a statement that nuanced Western's position on the project and highlighted Indigenous community concerns.
- Statement: <https://www.uwo.ca/research/tmt.html>

Open Letter

I have been watching with great concern the on-going conflict around the construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) project on Maunakea in Hawaii. This conflict has garnered significant global attention from scholars, policy makers and communities.

As a member of the Association of Canadian Universities for Research in Astronomy (ACURA), Western has affirmed its interest in supporting the cutting-edge astronomy research that will be enabled by TMT. As a result, the research community at Western has been in dialogue around the choice of Maunakea as the site to build TMT, and the implications of colonization on the inherent rights of those Native Hawaiian people who oppose this choice. Western colleagues are in consensus that the TMT project has a long and complex history. Our community members hold diverse positions and perspectives on aspects

of the TMT project.

At Western, it is clear that the situation in Hawaii offers opportunities to more deeply reflect on and discuss the role of ethics in research, especially in relation to working with Indigenous peoples in settler colonial contexts.

Western is committed to strengthening relationships with Indigenous peoples and nurturing an environment of respect, reconciliation and collaboration in our research, education and campus life. These principles guide us in our work here at home, and in our relationships abroad.

While the potential for scientific advancement offered by the TMT is immeasurable, we also recognize that research should not be pursued at the expense of Indigenous community engagement and recognition of Indigenous peoples' rights. Moreover, Western does not condone the use of military force or violent action in response to these types of disputes.

As the situation in Hawaii unfolds, we are taking the necessary time and steps to create ethical spaces in our academic community, where diverse peoples and ways of thinking can come together in pursuit of a way forward.

Dr. Sarah Prichard
Acting Vice-President (Research)
Western University

7. Indigenous Student Association Update

ISA Secretary, Riley Kennedy presented.

- ISA raised an issue related to powwow funding provided by the Office of Indigenous Initiatives describing the \$4000.00 as inadequate to pay for the annual powwow expenses.
- ISA Secretary requested that powwow funding be increased in the future.
- Special Advisor requested for a formal request to be emailed which she would incorporate into the budget (pending approval).
- ISA announced their hosting a Health Conference in January 2020. This event will cost \$20,000.00 for a two day event. ISA has confirmed funding from Health Sciences and VP Research.
- Chantelle Richmond and Carol Hopkins will be speaking at this event.

8. Indigenous Student Centre Updates

Program Coordinator, Ashley Kewayosh-Samuels and Director Amanda Myers presented.

Tutor Pilot Program

- ISA continues to work with TVDSB on a piloted tutor program at Saunders, Beal and Clark Road Secondary schools in London.

- This program partnership involves hiring and training 6-8 Western Indigenous students to work as academic tutors for up to 10 hours a week. The academic tutors will mentor high school students in a variety of areas including; time management, reading and research tips etc...
- So far, the program has received positive feedback from students and teachers. Western Indigenous students are compensated for their work and build their resumes and leadership skills.

Work/Staff Exchange – Student Exchange Opportunity

- ISC Director Amanda Myers completed an international exchange in New Zealand in November. Amanda was clear to explain that the ISC did not pay for this New Zealand trip and that costs were covered through International Leadership Exchange Office.
- This trip allowed Western to scope out Otago University as a potential place for Indigenous students to attend as part of a new International Exchange program.
- International exchange opportunities are on the rise for Indigenous students in the university sector.
- ISC Coordinator Zeeta Cayuga will be completing a similar visit at the University of Monash visit in August 2020.

Upcoming Program Highlights

- ISC annual Harvest Feast next Wednesday December 17 2019 at 12pm to 2pm
- ISC monthly Corn Soup Dec 4 2019 at 11AM to 2PM

Staffing Updates

- The Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement (SAGE) Coordinator search has not been successful to date.

9. Indigenous Education Updates

Director of Indigenous Education, Brent Debassige presented

- Indigenous faculty cluster hire – David Barillas Chon public talk on November 27, 2019 at 10:30am to 12:00pm. IPEC members are welcome to attend all public talks. More information to be sent via IPEC list serve email.
- Upcoming job posting: Indigenous Program Coordinator housed in the Faculty of Education will be posted shortly. This role will report and work closely with the Director of Indigenous Education.

10. Indigenous Studies Updates

Unavailable

11. Outstanding Action Items

- At a previous meeting, an IPEC member asked whether they could send a proxy in their place (e.g. possibly ask a university member to sit as FN community member). IPEC members discussed this request at length and determined that it would be challenging and unadvisable for university Indigenous members to sit as FN community representatives.

Other Discussion Items

ISC Ancillary Fee Breakdown

- An IPEC member ISC requested for more understanding of ancillary fee and the budget model for Indigenous Initiatives at the University.
- Special Advisor and ISC Director together outlined the ISC budget model as relying on multiple sources of funding such as PEVAL, ancillary (student_ funding, and donor funding.
- Special Advisor explained how the new OII will be requesting for base funding.
- Special Advisor also contextualized the current government's funding cuts and how the university is undergoing a 2 year budget reduction process, and how this has impacted ancillary fees.

Continuing Studies Opportunities for IPEC members

- An IPEC member brought forward the idea of paying for PD for IPEC community members to take classes through Continuing Studies. This idea was positioned as an incentive to attract community members to commit to IPEC and help them understand the context of higher education.
- IPEC member unanimously agreed that this was an excellent idea and Special Advisor agreed to look into this option.
- Inspiring events and actions taking place at Western – cluster hires and the opportunities here at Western.
- It was suggested that this would be a Pilot program –a way of engaging community and offering reciprocal benefits.

Indigenous Relations Committee – Kierstin Williams

Kierstin announced plans to host an All Our Relations (event) –geared toward Western community as a whole. This will be a dry event held at the Wave to all students to act as a way to Indigenize. This event will be a concert with Indigenous artists possible artists are: Snotty Nose Rez kids, Tribe Called Red, Buffy St. Marie and/or Logan Stats.

President's Antiracism Committee

Special Advisor announced that the President will be forming an Anti-racism committee and that names have been put forward by the Special Advisor to sit on this committee.

12. Traditional Closing/Adjournment

Closing words and adjournment

Next IPEC meeting

Friday January 24th, 2020 9:00AM to 12:30PM