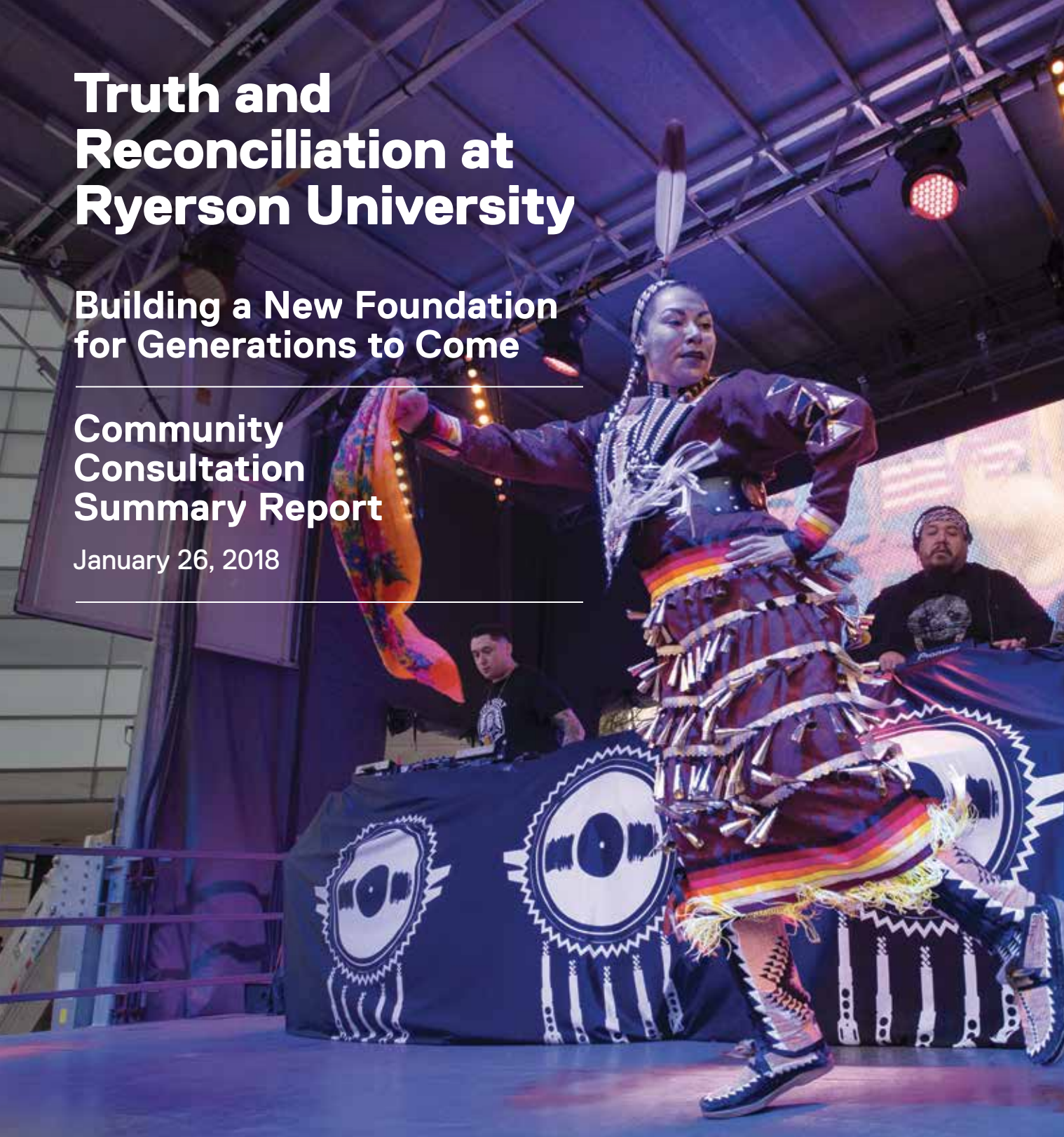


Truth and Reconciliation at Ryerson University

Building a New Foundation for Generations to Come

Community Consultation Summary Report

January 26, 2018



The ones who are going to lead us are the young Indigenous and non-Indigenous students... they can turn this experience into the foundation of a new relationship.

– Honourable Murray Sinclair
Senator, Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), 2016 Ryerson Faculty Conference Keynote Address, “Canada’s Residential Schools: The Story We Must All Know.”

Ryerson University

Office of the Vice-President,
Equity & Community Inclusion



The Star Blanket

In 2010 the Aboriginal Education Council was launched at which time they hosted a healing ceremony which acknowledged the role and impact Egerton Ryerson had on the Indian Residential School policy. They gifted Ryerson with a Star Blanket (now displayed in Jorgenson Hall), to mark the beginning of a new relationship between Ryerson and the Aboriginal community of Toronto.

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Preliminary Remarks

The university's respect for Indigenous perspectives and commitment to building relationships with Indigenous communities is an important part of our culture at Ryerson and has been embedded as a core value in our Academic Plan. We support the Commission's call for increasing access to post-secondary education for Aboriginal students, and we will build on our existing efforts of outreach and recruitment within the Aboriginal communities, on our development of an Aboriginal-focused curriculum and on the work of the Aboriginal Education Council.

– President Mohamed Lachemi, 2015

This report summarizes our community's aspirations that were voiced in the talking circles, consultation meetings, events and course projects held at Ryerson over the past year and a half. While this report concludes the first stage of Ryerson's path to reconciliation, it provides the foundation for the next stage of discussions with the entire community and groups on campus, including faculties, departments, unions and governing bodies, on a plan to strategically move forward together.

Ryerson is overcoming the legacy of a painful past. For years there was a lack of understanding of the concerns of its Indigenous community and little desire to accept responsibility to address these concerns. There was also a reluctance to acknowledge the harmful role played by the University's namesake. As this report's authors can readily attest, attitudes are quickly changing. Within the Ryerson community there is growing recognition of the need to demonstrate respect and understanding of the land the university sits on, and to recognize the cultural knowledge and ways of knowing brought by Indigenous students, staff and faculty.

Ryerson has committed to respond to the Calls to Action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada. It is doing so by creating its own pathway to reconciliation. The first stage of this process is now complete. It featured a round of consultations and discussions in which Ryerson's Indigenous community played a prominent part. This community consultation report reflects the culmination of the initial stage. It highlights the challenges the university faces, identifies opportunities for change, and outlines a series of suggestions which, if adopted by the Ryerson community, would ensure that the university expands its recognition and funding for current and new Indigenous initiatives, infuses Indigenous knowledges into the curriculum in all faculties and incorporates Indigenous concerns as a priority in strategic planning.

The benefits that will flow from Ryerson's path to reconciliation are important and long-lasting. Already the university has a substantial profile within the Indigenous community of Toronto. In the longer term, it has the opportunity to become a national leader in Indigenous education. Those involved in producing this report believe its recommendations will help bring these aims to fruition. We hope the wider Ryerson community agrees.

Authors

Dr. Denise O’Neil Green is the Vice-President, Equity and Community Inclusion and provides the leadership, partnerships and strategic direction needed to integrate the values of equity, diversity and inclusion throughout the entire university community.

Joanne Dallaire, Shadow Hawk Woman of the Wolf Clan, is Cree Omushkego with ancestry from Attawapiskat, Ontario. She holds an honorary doctorate from Ryerson. Her many Ryerson roles include Elder of the Aboriginal Education Council, traditional counsellor for Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services and recognized Elder for Ryerson.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to acknowledge the contributions of the Ad Hoc Group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous faculty, students and staff who identified the need for all members of the Ryerson community to engage in a conversation on how to respond to the Calls to Action to bring about reconciliation and decolonization in ways that speak to the practical concerns of their work at Ryerson. The Ad Hoc Group includes:

- Centre for Indigenous Governance,
- Chair in Indigenous Governance, Dr. Pamela Palmater,
- Continuing Education Students’ Association of Ryerson (CESAR),
- CUPE 3904,
- Indigenous Students Association,
- Racialized Students Collective,
- Ryerson Faculty Association (RFA),
- RFA Aboriginal Caucus,
- Ryerson Students’ Union,
- Ryerson Sociology Students’ Union,
- RFA Equity Issues Committee, and
- Former Unifor Sam Gindin Chair in Social Justice and Democracy, Dr. Winnie Ng.

We would like to thank all of the Indigenous and non-Indigenous Ryerson students, staff and faculty who participated in the TRC Talking Circles and meetings with senior leadership who voiced their concerns, insights and recommendations as to how Ryerson can move forward with implementing the Calls to Action.

We also wish to acknowledge the First Nations Technical Institute (FNTI), the Indigenous Students Association and Indigenous Students Rising for their contributions to the TRC consultations. We thank the Social Justice Week Committee for their ongoing commitment to making space for annual TRC conversations at Ryerson and for encouraging education and dialogue on the topic of reconciliation, including the annual TRC Check-In on the first day of Social Justice Week. Finally, we would like to acknowledge the Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, and the President’s Office for launching and supporting this TRC community consultation process.

Ryerson’s Land Acknowledgement

Land acknowledgement has become an important acknowledgement of Indigenous presence and assertion of sovereignty. Originally started in British Columbia, where there are few treaties, the land acknowledgement is stated at the openings of events, ceremonies and meetings. Ryerson’s Land Acknowledgement statement was created in 2014 by the Aboriginal Education Council and is used uniformly across the university.

Toronto is in the Dish With One Spoon Territory. The Dish With One Spoon is a treaty between the Anishinaabe, Mississaugas and Haudenosaunee that bound them to share the territory and protect the land. Subsequent Indigenous Nations and Peoples, Europeans and all newcomers have been invited into this treaty in the spirit of peace, friendship and respect.

This treaty was made between the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee after the French and Indian War. Newcomers were then incorporated into it over the years, notably in 1764 with The Royal Proclamation/The Treaty of Niagara. The territory it refers to – the Dish or, as it is sometimes called, the Bowl – represents what is now southern Ontario, from the Great Lakes to Quebec and from Lake Simcoe to the United States.

We all eat out of the Dish, all of us that share this territory, with only one spoon.

In other words, we have to share the responsibility of ensuring the Dish is never empty, which includes taking care of the land and the creatures we share it with. Importantly, there are no knives at the table, representing that we must keep the peace.

Section One: A Path To Reconciliation

Much of the current state of troubled relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians is attributable to educational institutions and what they have taught, or failed to teach, over many generations. Despite that history, or, perhaps more correctly, because of its potential, the Commission believes that education is also the key to reconciliation... Education must remedy the gaps in historical knowledge that perpetuate ignorance and racism.

Truth and Reconciliation of Canada Final Report, 2015

Introduction

This is an important time at Ryerson, as we acknowledge the harms of the past and move forward along the path to reconciliation. More generally this is a pivotal time for Canada. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Principles of Reconciliation provide the building blocks needed for reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canada to occur. A key step in this process, as recognized by the Commission, is the elimination of the educational gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians.

In June 2015, the Commission released its final report on the history and legacy of Canada's residential school system for Aboriginal children. The report, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future*, contains ninety-four Calls to Action to advance and sustain the process of reconciliation in Canada. Several of these Calls to Action were directly addressed to post-secondary educational institutions to develop Indigenous focused programs in specific fields, including education, health care and law; to increase opportunities for intercultural competency training; and to promote an awareness of Indigenous rights, histories and perspectives. Others were connected to education more generally.

Egerton Ryerson and Residential Schools

As Ryerson moves forward on its path to reconciliation the university has had to confront an especially harmful connection to the past. This connection is with the university's famous namesake. Egerton Ryerson was instrumental in the establishment of Ontario's public education system. However, while he supported free and compulsory education, he also believed in a different system of education for Aboriginal children. These beliefs influenced, in part, the establishment of what became the Indian Residential School System that has had such a devastating impact on First Nations, Métis and Inuit people across Canada.

In 2010, Ryerson's Aboriginal Education Council conducted research on Egerton Ryerson's role in what became the residential school system. Once the statement was finalized, the Council hosted a healing ceremony and in 2013 gifted Ryerson with a Star Blanket, currently displayed in the lobby of Jorgenson Hall, which marked a positive move forward in the relationship between Ryerson and the Indigenous community of Toronto.

Consultations

The authors have undertaken extensive consultations on how best to move toward implementing the TRC Calls to Action so that the university cultivates a respectful and welcoming environment for Indigenous students that will prevail over the legacy of colonization. The consultations and educational programming events began in March 2016 and are still continuing. This community consultation report reflects the overwhelming support for the growth and development of Indigenizing programs and services across the university which the report's authors discovered during their consultations, while bringing to light many of the challenges that exist as Ryerson embarks on a path to respond to the Calls to Action.

Since the TRC report was released, there have been numerous conversations, some quite emotional and spirited, as the Ryerson community explores what the report means for Ryerson and how best to implement the TRC Calls to Action in the context of the university's distinctive role within Canada's post-secondary system. The conversations have taken a range of forms across the university: talking circles, consultations, panel discussions, formal keynote addresses and class assignments.

Themes that Emerged during the Consultations

Six major themes emerged from Ryerson community consultation:

1. Develop and implement a strategic vision to Indigenize Ryerson University.

In the consultations it was strongly emphasized that when Ryerson develops its strategic plans, including its next Academic Plan, there needs to be a significant focus on reconciliation that includes the needs of Indigenous students, faculty, administrators and staff in academic areas, operations, recruitment and campus planning.

2. Improve and expand support for Indigenous learners.

The main areas of discussion centred on:

- Enhancing Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services (RASS),
- Addressing barriers for Indigenous Peoples to attend post-secondary education,
- Increasing funding for Indigenous students' education, and
- Ensuring Indigenous student retention.

3. Indigenize teaching and learning practices.

This relates to the need to develop and promote culturally responsible and respectful curriculum that integrates Indigenous pedagogies and ways of knowing. The main areas of discussion included:

- Incorporating Indigenous knowledges and content as part of a required curriculum for all Ryerson learners,
- Providing training and support to faculty on how to bring Indigenous knowledges and research methodologies into the classroom and curriculum,
- Developing new Indigenous focused programs, and
- Contributing to Indigenous language revitalization.

4. Increase Indigenous staff and faculty, and recognize other ways of knowing for faculty and students.

The main areas of discussion included:

- Ways to increase the number of Indigenous faculty and staff at Ryerson, and
- How to create space for Traditional Knowledge Keepers.

5. Deepen engagement and establish partnerships with the local community, Indigenous communities and other post-secondary institutions.

The discussions focused on the importance of Ryerson increasing its engagement and partnerships with Indigenous communities and other post-secondary institutions as a way to expand Indigenous awareness, cross-cultural experiences, Indigenizing curriculum and creating new degrees and certificates in Indigenous languages.

6. Increase the Indigenous visibility at Ryerson and honour the Indigenous history and cultures through symbolic gestures such as offering a formal statement of apology and expressions of reconciliation.

The range of recommendations included having a campus-wide event to recognize National Aboriginal Day. However, the most significant recommendation that was offered relates to the need for Ryerson University to do more to publicly acknowledge (in ways other than on its website) the impact that Egerton Ryerson had on the residential school system and for that acknowledgment to be equal to Ryerson University's description of his work on early educational development.

A Word on “Indigenization”

The term Indigenization is an emerging 21st-century concept, and, as such, it is important to have a common understanding of what it means and how it is applied. For the purposes of this report, the following definition is used:

Indigenization is the process of infusing Aboriginal knowledge and perspective into the structural layers of an institution. The goal is to create a more inclusive environment through the presentation of a different world view, and to enhance and enrich the educational and cultural experience of the educational community. This does not mean the institution is Indigenous-centred, however it does mean that consideration of Aboriginal issues comes “naturally.”

Learning about Indigenization, Camosun College¹

Steps Already Taken

Since the inception of the TRC Ryerson Community Consultation, significant steps have already been taken at the university. For instance:

- Since May 2016, the Learning and Teaching Office has collaborated with Aboriginal Initiatives to offer training and educational sessions to the annual Ryerson Teaching and Learning Conference.
- Each year the first full day of Social Justice Week, organized by the CAW-Sam Gindin Chair in Social Justice and Democracy, is now dedicated to Indigenous Sovereignty and Solidarity, and includes panel discussions, a rally and march and sharing circles.
- An annual TRC Check-In during Social Justice Week has been included as a permanent annual feature in the program line-up. The Check-In provides an update on the progress of the commitments made in the prior year on implementing the various Ryerson TRC initiatives.
- The Ryerson School of Journalism has responded to the Calls to Action in a special way. In September 2016, Duncan McCue, reporter for CBC’s the National and host of the CBC Radio show Cross-Country Checkup, was appointed as Rogers Visiting Journalist at the school. His role has been to work with the instructors in the school to develop new approaches and educational strategies for reporting Indigenous stories and issues, culminating in new curriculum for students.
- The School of Journalism began collaborating with Journalists for Human Rights (JHR) to develop material to incorporate Indigenous education into JHR’s 2017 curriculum.
- Master’s students at the School of Journalism embarked on a digital reporting project inspired by the TRC Calls to Action in areas such as holistic healthcare, criminal justice, preserving languages and fostering new generations of athletes.

Steps Now Underway

In addition, the following initiatives at Ryerson are currently underway:

- A plaque for the statue of Egerton Ryerson will be unveiled in winter 2018, outlining Ryerson’s participation in the establishment of the residential schools system in Canada and the harm that was caused by the system that robbed many Indigenous Peoples of their culture and left them with psychological, emotional and physical damage.
- The acknowledgement and display of the Star Blanket that was presented as a gift to Ryerson University by the Aboriginal Education Council in 2013 is being improved.
- Artwork and sculptures will be installed around the university to enhance the Indigenous campus presence and provide increased educational awareness of the Indigenous presence and history on campus.
- Signage is being improved to increase the visibility of the Indigenous presence on campus.
- The staff positions in Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services (RASS), the Aboriginal Human Resources Consultant (AHRC) and the Aboriginal Education Council Coordinator were moved to base budget funding in fall 2017.
- A full-time EDI/Aboriginal curriculum development consultant position has been funded to develop Aboriginal curriculum resources and content for faculties across campus.
- The Faculty of Arts has hired an advisor to the dean on Indigenous education to help lead a variety of Indigenous initiatives in the faculty.

Further Steps

And to further steps on the path to reconciliation, Ryerson University leadership will immediately undertake seven key initiatives:

1. Double the number of Indigenous faculty at Ryerson.
2. Increase the number of Indigenous staff.
3. Create more pathways for Indigenous students to study at Ryerson.
4. Provide more award and scholarship funding for Indigenous students.
5. Provide resources for faculty to Indigenize the curriculum.
6. Designate outdoor space for Indigenous ceremonies.
7. Commit to raise external funding to create a Ryerson Chair in Reconciliation.

¹ <http://web.camosun.ca/cetl/curriculum-design/learning-about-indigenization#pdf>

Section Two: **Setting The Context**

I see a lot of students in my classes wanting to learn a different version of history, wanting to learn about Indigenous, non-Indigenous relations from Indigenous perspectives. What they often express in terms of encountering these stories is a sense of shock or sadness or anger, and realizing that as adults living in what is now known as Canada they didn't know about residential schooling, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, about the Indian Act and, unfortunately, the list goes on and on...So, I think there's a lot of learning and unlearning that needs to happen and institutions such as this university can play an important role.

Panel Member – Dr. Julie Tomiak, Assistant Professor,
Department of Sociology, Campus Dialogue on TRC Calls to Action,
Social Justice Week, October 5, 2015

Toronto: A Gathering Place of Knowledge and Exchange

Ryerson is located in the heart of downtown Toronto. The Greater Toronto Area (GTA) is a cultural hub and home to one of the most diverse ranges of cultures based within the traditional territories of multiple Algonquian and Iroquoian First Nations. These First Nations historically established Toronto as a Gathering Place of trade, commerce and cultural exchange which remains reflective of the city today.

Toronto continues to serve as a magnet for talented immigrants, attracting the highest number of new immigrants to Canada. For Indigenous Peoples today, education, employment and training are the key motivating factors for making the move to urban centres. As a downtown campus, Ryerson is in the heart of Toronto's cultural institutions, government and business, as well as its thriving innovation sector, providing a wealth of opportunities for Indigenous students. Ryerson also has much to offer in working with and understanding the local urban Indigenous community, with Toronto having one of the largest and most diverse urban Aboriginal populations in Canada.²

Snapshot of the Indigenous Programs and Services at Ryerson University

Ryerson University is home to a small but vibrant Indigenous community that includes the Aboriginal Education Council (AEC), Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services (RASS), the Chair and Centre of Indigenous Governance, as well as a number of other Indigenous initiatives. In May 2012, Ryerson University and Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services were presented with the Eagle Staff, one of the highest forms of honour, for leadership within Aboriginal learning and education. It recognizes the university's effort to cultivate a strong, holistic support system for Indigenous learners and was designed especially for the university and Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services. The Eagle Staff is present at significant university events such as convocation and remembrance ceremonies.

² The agencies serving the Aboriginal community in Toronto estimate that there are 70,000 residents from this community in the city. However according to the 2006 census, there were 31,910 Aboriginal persons living in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). This represents 2.7 per cent of all Aboriginal persons in Canada and 13.2 per cent of those in Ontario. Among Aboriginal persons in the city, 67.1 per cent were First Nations, 26.8 per cent Métis, and 1.4 per cent Inuit. <https://web.toronto.ca/city-government/accessibility-human-rights/aboriginal-affairs/torontos-aboriginal-peoples/>

Ryerson Indigenous Programs and Services

The following is a snapshot of the many Indigenous resources and programs that currently exist at Ryerson.

Aboriginal Education Council (AEC)

In 2010 Ryerson established a University Advisory Council on Aboriginal Issues and Education (Aboriginal Education Council), which is committed to developing a new relationship of truth and reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples at Ryerson and within the community at large. Through initiatives driven by Indigenous needs and values, the AEC works to ensure that the next generations of Aboriginal Peoples have greater opportunities at Ryerson.

Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services (RASS)

Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services was initiated in 1993 by Monica McKay (Nisga'a Nation) as an Indigenous Social Work student at Ryerson. Presently the office includes a staff team of six Indigenous Peoples who provide services and programs to students, staff and faculty at Ryerson using a holistic, responsive model of support.

Chair in Indigenous Governance and Centre for Indigenous Governance

The mandate of the chair is to conduct research and scholarship in relation to Indigenous law, governance and politics in a First Nations context. In addition, part of the chair's work is to teach and develop curriculum at both the undergraduate and graduate levels on topics related to Indigenous governance. The associated Centre for Indigenous Governance builds capacity for Indigenous governance, advances research in governance issues, and increases educational opportunities for Aboriginal students.

Aboriginal Knowledges and Experiences Certificate Program

This certificate program provides a broad orientation to Indigenous experiences in Canada and how Indigenous Peoples have been impacted by laws, policies and practices in the health, social services, human resources and other sectors. Indigenous and non-Indigenous students have the opportunity to learn about Indigenous lived experiences through curriculum from Indigenous perspectives taught by Indigenous scholars and experienced community teachers.

Aboriginal Human Resources Consultant

Ryerson's Aboriginal Human Resources Consultant (AHRC) is available to candidates thinking of applying for Ryerson positions, Ryerson employees who seek support settling in, and Ryerson leaders who wish to hire Indigenous employees.

Indigenous Student Association (ISA)

The ISA is a student-run group focusing on addressing the needs of Ryerson's Indigenous students and widening the circle of understanding between the Indigenous community and the diverse cultural groups on campus.

First Nations, Metis, Inuit Community Group (FNMI)

The First Nations, Metis, Inuit Community Group (FNMI) is made up of faculty, staff and instructors who work at Ryerson. The group hosts scheduled events and activities during the year for members to meet each other, learn, share and support one another.

Ryerson & First Nations Technical Institute (FNTI) Partnerships

In partnership with the First Nations Technical Institute (FNTI), Ryerson offers two unique programs with the School of Social Work and the Department of Politics and Public Administration that are specifically designed to respond to the needs of Indigenous students and communities following in the traditional practice developed by FNTI.

Section Three: **Themes, Discussion Highlights**

According to the TRC report, “Reconciliation calls for personal action.”... We are all personally responsible to educate, understand and work towards implementing the calls to action...Students, faculty and staff should be in agreement to implement these actions in order to begin to repair the legacy of lack of support for First Nations, Metis and Inuit People.

– Ryerson student from Réal Carrière’s course -
Chang School of Education Courses in Interdisciplinary Studies “Canada’s Story: An Aboriginal Perspective,” Class Assignment on Recommendations to Ryerson for Action on Truth and Reconciliation

TRC Consultation’s Framework and Methodology

In this section, we detail the major themes that were identified in the TRC Community Consultation along with barriers, concerns, suggestions and opportunities that were brought forward.

Elder Joanne Dallaire led and facilitated each of the Talking Circles with Denise O’Neil Green, Vice-President, Equity and Community Inclusion. Representatives from Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services attended each session and were available as a resource to the participants. Talking Circles are a foundational approach to First Nations pedagogy-in-action since they provide a model for an educational activity that encourages dialogue, respect, the co-creation of learning content and social discourse. “When everyone has their turn to speak, when all voices are heard in a respectful and attentive way, the learning atmosphere becomes a rich source of information, identity and interaction.”³

Each of the Talking Circles was facilitated in a similar fashion. Elder Joanne Dallaire opened each circle with a smudge ceremony, an important aspect of establishing a positive space for dialogue. In addition to addressing the TRC Calls to Action specific to post-secondary education, other relevant Calls to Action that speak more generally to education and to the programs offered at Ryerson were selected.

³ <http://firstnationspedagogy.ca/circletalks.html>

Major Themes - Barriers, Concerns, Solutions and Opportunities

Numerous suggestions and recommendations were offered to improve education programs and services for Indigenous learners to support and make them feel more welcome and at home at Ryerson. Talking Circle participants also brought to light challenges and barriers, along with solutions and opportunities presented under the six themes detailed in this section.

1. Develop and Implement a Strategic Vision to Indigenize Ryerson.

In the consultations, it was often noted that it is important for Ryerson to establish a strategic vision for reconciliation and for Indigenizing the university. This includes putting a significant focus on the needs of Indigenous students, faculty, administrators and staff when undertaking strategic planning activities in academic areas, operations, recruitment and campus planning.

Barriers and Concerns Expressed

There is a need to increase the Indigenous presence within the administrative structure and faculty complement throughout the university. Currently, only seven out of fifty-three departments have Indigenous faculty. There is a need for increased cultural awareness and information sharing between units and departments, but “mandatory” training is not practiced at Ryerson. There needs to be something more systemic that is driven from the top. Targets are lacking for faculty and staff hires as well as for student enrolment and retention. In instances such as the TRC Call to Action to Repeal Section 43 of the Criminal Code of Canada, the Ryerson leadership should publicly demonstrate leadership, advocate, show commitment and take a higher profile role to provide awareness and education.

Solutions and Opportunities Presented

Suggestions included the establishment of a Centre for Indigenous Studies at Ryerson, to champion curriculum reform focused on introducing Indigenous ways of knowing and learning at Ryerson; support existing and new academic programs with an Indigenous focus, which will serve to attract Indigenous faculty and students to Ryerson. Create a senior level position or Chair of Reconciliation to increase the Indigenous presence within the university-wide administrative and/or research structure; build cultural awareness and information sharing between the units and departments; and champion the development of the work that has already been done.

In many of the consultations, the need was expressed for Ryerson to develop collaborations and partnerships with others to develop and Indigenize courses and programs. It was further noted that this needs to be championed and supported by the university leadership, which should commit financial resources to be able to continue the work that needs to be done at Ryerson to Indigenize the campus.

More governing bodies and more faculty need to voice that this is the direction we want to go in and commit to including Indigenous knowledges and content as part of a required curriculum and training for all students, faculty, administrators and staff. Establish a specific TRC website that provides information and resources for and between departments and students, to administration and outwards into the broader community. Create an implementation working group, which reports to the president, with representation from a cross-section of the university’s faculties, setting targets for faculty and staff hires, along with recruitment and retention targets for students.

2. Improve and Expand Support for Indigenous Learners.

Participants discussed the need to expand support for Indigenous learners which encompassed the following broad spectrum of issues:

Barriers and Concerns Expressed

Perspectives and understanding of Indigenous students’ lives is limited and needs to be expanded. For instance, many Indigenous learners are mature and have families to care for. Because some of the core courses offered in the Aboriginal Knowledges and Experiences Certificate program are offered only in the evenings, this makes the program inaccessible to learners who have children, given the limited access to childcare in the evenings. In addition, OSAP is geared more to the younger single student and does not adequately address the needs of mature learners with families.

Many Indigenous students in Toronto are being streamed into applied studies programs as early as grade eight. There needs to be more provincial funding for teaching and federal funding for Indigenous communities to attract teachers and improve education outcomes for students. Some Indigenous students have limited access to band funding while others have no access due to loss of Aboriginal status according to the Federal Indian Act. Many urban-based Indigenous students find it difficult to access band funding when they are displaced from their communities and competing for limited funding. Increase the Indigenous visibility at Ryerson and honour the Indigenous history and cultures through symbolic gestures such as offering a formal statement of apology and expressions of reconciliation.

Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services (RASS) is inaccessible, difficult to find and needs more space, and there need to be more resources for students requiring additional supports, such as those who are deaf or hard of hearing. RASS's website is not inviting and does not give a clear picture of the breadth and scope of the support and services offered to Indigenous learners. This is especially important as prospective Indigenous learners go to the Ryerson website to research and make a decision whether they wish to attend Ryerson or not. The organization and hosting of large events is often required of RASS. Resources have not been dedicated from other areas and, as such, RASS resources are quickly expended. Learners are often not aware of the services that RASS provides.

Solutions and Opportunities Presented

Suggestions included the establishment of cultural competence amongst academic counsellors and recruitment staff and to provide support services to Indigenous students to bridge the gap from public high schools and reserve high schools to post-secondary institutions. Different types of funding are also needed to enable Indigenous students to come to Ryerson. These can take the form of scholarships, work-study student positions, more funding for transitional services and student support services such as funding support to live in residence and scholarships for part-time students. Mobilizing existing partnerships, Ryerson needs to invest in access programs and build on the access programs that currently exist here for Indigenous students.

The university should set targets for undergraduates and graduates and set pathways that have strong support for students. There are strong models that Ryerson can borrow from. Focusing on the Aboriginal Education Council's Community Development Fund, academic programs can be informed and supported by hiring an Aboriginal curriculum consultant. Establish culturally appropriate, relevant and meaningful student resources and programs, such as Spanning the Gaps specifically for Indigenous learners, peer mentorship, tutoring and daycare services. Make employers more accountable to hire Indigenous students for student placements, internships and employment opportunities after graduation, ensuring that cultural safety is put in place before the student arrives at their placement. Build community events such as monthly Knowledge Symposiums and Gatherings to support a more culturally inclusive environment.

Relocate RASS to the Ryerson Student Learning Centre to make it easier to extend its space as well as the number of staff. For example, an Indigenous event planner could be hired to organize large events, so as not to strain RASS resources. It was also suggested that an alliance could be built between the Tri-Mentoring Program (TMP) and RASS to establish an Indigenous-specific group at TMP and that more could be done to create a strong outreach for Foundation Course programs.

3. Indigenize Teaching and Learning Practices.

Indigenizing teaching and learning practices speaks to the need to develop and promote culturally responsible and respectful curriculum that integrates Indigenous pedagogies and ways of knowing. The main areas of discussion included the commitment to include Indigenous knowledges and content as part of a required curriculum for all Ryerson learners; the need to provide training and support to faculty on how to bring Indigenous knowledges into the classroom and curriculum; the benefits that could come from developing new Indigenous programs; and the need for Indigenous language revitalization.

Barriers and Concerns Expressed

Many courses still perpetuate long-standing myths about Indigenous Peoples and knowledges, which some professors do not refute. Faculty need to understand and accept Indigenous ways of writing, references to Aboriginal knowledges within their assignments, and Indigenous research approaches and methodologies.

Solutions and Opportunities Presented

Develop a multi-pronged professional development strategy so faculty are informed about Indigenous knowledges, writing and communication and research methodologies; including establishing a university-wide process to include traditional knowledge and how to reference it within a paper. Extend the Library's Indigenous Research Portal to cover journalism and address issues requiring education on the history of Aboriginal Peoples along with dedicating a section of the Library Indigenous Research Portal to the topic of Truth and Reconciliation. Commit to include Indigenous knowledges and content as part of a required curriculum for all Ryerson students. Increase the integration of Indigenous content, resources and pedagogies in curricula across Ryerson including field experiences, service learning, practicums and work experiences. Establish mandatory Indigenous courses across all Ryerson programs. The requirement for a mandatory course or courses creates other opportunities such as increased recruitment of Indigenous faculty and future students. For instance, both Lakehead University and the University of Winnipeg made taking an Indigenous course a mandatory requirement, both offering the students a range of courses to choose from. Establish a university-wide committee to vet current and future courses for designation as including Indigenous content. Provide training courses for instructors on how to utilize Indigenous resources in their program, with a focus on journalism instructors and an emphasis on positive Indigenous stories.

4. Increase Indigenous Staff and Faculty and Recognize Other Ways of Knowing.

Main areas of discussion included the need to increase the number of Indigenous faculty, staff and Traditional Knowledge Keepers. Participants observed that Ryerson is not doing a good enough job of recruiting, hiring and retaining Indigenous faculty, instructors or visiting scholars.

Barriers and Concerns Expressed

There is a need to address instances where non-Indigenous instructors are insensitive to Indigenous issues. Some instructors do not accept Indigenous ways of writing; for instance referencing Indigenous knowledges, research practices and methodologies.

Solutions and Opportunities Presented

Suggestions included developing a process to recruit, retain and promote Indigenous employees with specific annual targets to increase the numbers to a level that is representative of the provincial population. The university could also glean best practices from other institutions that recognize faculty accreditation for Traditional Knowledge Keepers. Finally, there could be more cultural awareness and sensitivity initiatives such as a handbook, workshops and retreats for non-Indigenous faculty and staff.

5. Deepen engagement and establish partnerships with the local community, Indigenous communities and other post-secondary institutions.

The discussions focused on the importance of Ryerson increasing its engagement and partnerships with Indigenous communities and other post-secondary institutions as a way to expand Indigenous awareness and cross-cultural experiences, Indigenous curriculum and creating degrees and certificates in Indigenous languages.

Barriers and Concerns Expressed

We need to have societal change and look at education differently. We have to be able to create relationships and partnerships and provide education in the communities.

Solutions and Opportunities Presented

Ryerson should partner with Indigenous communities to bring Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers to Ryerson as well as to develop distance education courses that would allow students to study in their own community. The university could also support faculty to become change agents in their respective areas of expertise by encouraging the offering of this expertise in the community and in the broader university network. This could include a greater role in the GTA by partnering with local Aboriginal institutions to expand access programs such as Bridges to Ryerson, RUN and Road to Ryerson.

6. Increase the Indigenous visibility at Ryerson and honour the Indigenous history and cultures through symbolic gestures such as offering a formal statement of apology and expressions of reconciliation.

The range of recommendations for this theme included having a campus-wide event to recognize National Aboriginal Day. However, the most significant recommendation dealt with the need to more publicly acknowledge the impact that Egerton Ryerson had on the residential school system.

Barriers and Concerns Expressed

In many of the Talking Circles and panel events, participants noted that, because of Egerton Ryerson's role in establishing the residential school system, the name of the university is a significant barrier that must be acknowledged and addressed in a more fulsome manner. There can be no tokenism when acknowledging Indigenous Peoples on campus. There is not enough recognition of policies that allow time off for Indigenous religious and ceremonial holidays and observances.

Solutions and Opportunities Presented

It is important for Ryerson to continue to enhance Indigenous visibility on campus, by adding visual representations of the Canadian Indigenous community, such as Indigenous art, posters and messaging, that conveys a welcoming, inclusive, knowledgeable environment for all students. A means of increasing visibility is to create campus-wide Indigenous events such as conferences, ceremonies and feasts to increase visibility, generate publicity and celebrate Indigenous culture. For example, the university could commit to annual campus-wide events that celebrate Indigenous Peoples, such as National Aboriginal Day and Indigenous History Week. The University of Manitoba gathers and permanently records traditional teachings. Ryerson could do the same.

Ryerson Education Programs

Below are highlights from Ryerson-based programs that are specifically mentioned in the TRC Calls to Action. Several of the TRC Calls to Action are directly addressed to post-secondary institutions with calls to develop mandatory courses such as child-welfare, education, journalism, health care, language revitalization and law, with the goal to increase opportunities for intercultural competency training. Others stress the need to include awareness of Indigenous rights, histories and perspectives and to learn the true history of Canada, such as the legacy and impact of the residential school system and the need to develop and promote culturally responsible and respectful curricula that integrate Indigenous ways of knowing.

Ryerson School of Journalism

One TRC Call to Action calls upon Canadian journalism media programs and schools to require education for all their students on the history of Aboriginal Peoples including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law and Aboriginal-Crown relations. It was recommended that the course Special Topics in Journalism become a permanent fixture in the curriculum. Also, it was noted to expand the collaboration with Journalists for Human Rights as they provide workshops for post-secondary journalism students.

Ryerson Community Service Programs

There are two TRC Calls to Action that relate to programs in the Faculty of Community Services. The first is to address the critical need to reduce the number of Aboriginal children in care by ensuring that social workers and others who conduct child-welfare investigations are properly educated and trained about the history and impacts of residential schools and about the potential for Aboriginal communities and families to provide more appropriate solutions to family healing. The second is for the medical and nursing schools in Canada to require all their students to take a course dealing with Aboriginal health issues that includes the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal Rights and Indigenous teachings and practices.

Participants stressed the need to provide students in the Faculty of Community Services with a mandatory, in-depth course on the history and legacy of residential schools and the resulting impact on Indigenous families and communities in the first or second year of their studies to help set the context for further studies in their programs. There was also a call to integrate Indigenous stories, methodology, traditional ways of learning and content into program curricula and to establish an inventory of Indigenous skills and knowledges to assist faculty with their teaching. It was also suggested that more supports are needed for Indigenous students in some community services programs, especially the joint FNTI/Ryerson Social Work program.

Indigenous Language Revitalization

In line with the TRC Calls to Action on language revitalization, there was a call to create a program within Ryerson that offers certificates or degrees in Indigenous languages. This could be achieved by collaborating with Indigenous communities and other post-secondary institutions that already have language programs, ensuring there are opportunities for Ryerson students to receive transfer credits for language courses taken elsewhere. Reaching out to Indigenous language speakers who have instructor certificates, for example from Lakehead University, is one approach to take. Indigenous language instruction must have an Indigenous pedagogical approach, include an urban context and be taught by Indigenous instructors.

Section Four: **Next Steps**

Turning ideals into action is never easy. The 50 suggested recommendations outlined in Appendix A are drawn from the various solutions and opportunities cited in Section Three. They represent and reflect our community's aspirations in response to the TRC and its Calls to Action, given the university's commitment to taking steps to remove barriers.

It is recommended that the president identify an annual budget and establish a Working Group that will be led by the provost and the vice-president, equity and community inclusion. It is proposed that the Working Group lead a second consultation with other bodies on campus, including faculties, departments, unions and governing bodies (i.e. Senate and the Board of Governors) based on the following suggested next steps:

1. Take an inventory and review the current courses that contain Indigenous content. This will help guide the conversation on how to build the strategies concerning Indigenous content in the curriculum, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. The inventory should be conducted by applying the infusion model that the Aboriginal Education Council currently uses with curriculum development.
2. Take an inventory of the current Indigenous courses offered by the university, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. This will provide an opportunity to examine who is teaching these courses and to have the conversation on how to attract Indigenous instructors to teach these courses and to develop a longer-term strategy to hire Indigenous faculty.
3. Take an inventory of the current Indigenous research that is being led by Indigenous and non-Indigenous faculty, with the aim of using multi-year funding to increase research output on Indigenous topics, especially those related to advancing reconciliation and to issues of special significance to Indigenous Peoples in an urban context, through various forms of collaboration and professional development.
4. Take an inventory of the Truth and Reconciliation initiatives that currently exist at Ryerson with the goal to provide guidance and multi-year funding to address gaps and identify next priorities.
5. Continue with plans to offer an Indigenous language course by hosting Talking Circles with the Ryerson Aboriginal community, the Ryerson community at large and Ryerson's institutional partners to explore our current MOUs with other post-secondary education institutions offering Indigenous languages to determine if students can enroll in courses for transferable credits and determine which Indigenous language is best to begin with here at Ryerson.
6. Increase resources for the outreach, recruitment and retention of Indigenous students. This should include raising money for scholarships geared to Indigenous students and the establishment of concrete enrolment targets by setting aside a certain number of spaces for Indigenous students in programs across the university.
7. Increase resources for access programs for Indigenous students to participate in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) programs; create an Indigenous adult education access program; and establish a partnership with the Toronto District School Board to create outreach and retention programming in the middle schools.
8. Increase opportunities for Indigenous self-identification to include second-, third- and fourth-year and graduate students; and ensure that this information is designed, reviewed and kept by Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services in collaboration with the Office of the Vice-President, Equity and Community Inclusion.
9. Increase resources for the infusion of Indigenous content into courses and programs. This should include an emphasis on areas such as science and engineering where there is the opportunity for Ryerson to initiate significant curricular innovations.
10. Increase resources to hire an experienced Indigenous curriculum developer to help faculty develop Indigenous courses, certificates and degrees. This should include professional development of scholars who can champion Indigenous content within their departments.

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11. Develop the annual Aboriginal Student Showcase to become a premier event for the university.
 12. Establish dedicated space for Indigenous activities (smudging, ceremonies, feasts).
 13. Improve outreach and supports for Indigenous scholars to complete their PhDs and establish opportunities to become faculty members at Ryerson.
 14. Increase the complement of Indigenous faculty and staff members by devising a recruitment and professional development strategy.
 15. Promote partnership development by creating annual events such as forums and symposiums on topics such as water, housing and State of the Land which engages the Indigenous community, participants in pertinent Ryerson Zones and external stakeholders such as social enterprises and NGOs. Such forums should bring Indigenous community leaders, entrepreneurs, scholars and students together to discuss research and projects. This will allow them to assist one another in capacity building in environmental protection, green energy, traditional food sources and models of sustainability.

Section Five: **Concluding Remarks**

...Now you understand about why things are the way they are in the Indigenous community...why the social conditions are so horrendous, and why the government of Canada and the Indigenous community are so at odds with each other and in a state of constant conflict....It has to do with trust, and we do not yet trust each other. It is going to take a while...The ones who are going to lead us are the young Indigenous and non-Indigenous students...they can turn this experience into the foundation of a new relationship...But keep in mind that for young Indigenous Peoples, before we can talk about mutual relationship, we have to give them an opportunity to develop self-respect first... and we need to do what we can to help them to find their self-respect before we say we have to have mutual respect.

– Honourable Murray Sinclair
Senator, Chair of the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Learning & Teaching Office –
2016 Ryerson Faculty Conference – Keynote Address:
“Canada’s Residential Schools: The Story We Must All Know”

As Ryerson implements its response to the TRC Calls to Action, it faces immense challenges in acknowledging the negative impacts on Indigenous education and communities within its past as well as the current inequities and educational gaps that exist today. The university must emerge from an unbalanced system that has resulted in a current climate of tension and distrust and embrace practical mechanisms to resolve accumulated disputes and regulate the daily workings of the new relationship.

This report reflects only the ending of the first stage of the path to reconciliation that needs to take place, and those who have contributed to this report are all aware that the most challenging stages of the path are to come. As we move to this next stage in the process, it is useful to keep in mind the ultimate aim that lies ahead.

If Ryerson is willing to embrace the path to reconciliation and the institutional changes this path necessitates, it has the opportunity to become a place where both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples can come together to celebrate and learn about Indigenous values and cultures. The benefits that would flow from this institutional shift are incalculable, not just for Ryerson itself as an institution, but for the broader society. By becoming a leader in Indigenous education, the university will not just be making amends for a painful past, but build a new foundation for a far more progressive, intellectually rich and inclusive future for generations to come.

Appendix: Suggested Recommendations

Theme 1: Develop and Implement a Strategic Vision to Indigenize Ryerson University

1. Establish a Centre for Indigenous Studies at Ryerson, which can champion curriculum reform focused on introducing Indigenous ways of knowing and learning at Ryerson; support existing and new academic programs with an Indigenous focus; and serve to attract Indigenous faculty and students to Ryerson.
2. Establish an Indigenous Teaching Chair in each faculty, to increase the Indigenous presence within the university-wide administrative structure, build cultural awareness and information sharing between the units and departments and champion the development of the work that has already been done.
3. Build on the Aboriginal Education Council work and the Community Development Fund and inform the academic programs by hiring Indigenous curriculum consultants.
4. Commit multi-year financial resources to be able to continue the work that needs to be done at Ryerson to Indigenize the campus.
5. Commit to constructively address colonialism and its present-day legacy and Indigenous worldviews and their potential for positive impacts in all fields as part of required curriculum for students and professional development sessions for faculty, administrators and staff.
6. Where numbers allow, mandate Ryerson advisory and decision-making committees to have varied Indigenous representation.
7. Expand the number of Indigenous librarians.
8. Establish a specific Truth and Reconciliation website that provides information and resources for and between departments, students, to administration and outwards into the broader community.

9. Set targets for faculty and staff hires and retention, along with recruitment and retention targets for students. This includes establishing an Indigenous Student Recruitment Plan along with culturally appropriate, relevant and meaningful resources.

Theme 2: Improve and Expand Support for Indigenous Learners

10. Relocate Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services to the Ryerson Student Learning Centre.
11. Create an Indigenous-only space within the Student Campus Centre that is student-run and student-operated.
12. Hire an Indigenous event planner to organize large events, so as not to strain Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services' resources.
13. Establish Indigenous cultural competency amongst academic counsellors and recruitment staff.
14. Provide support services to Indigenous students to bridge the gap from high school and reserve high schools to post-secondary institutions.
15. Improve resources for students such as increased daycare spots.
16. Develop a program similar to Spanning the Gaps specifically for Indigenous learners.
17. Build on the Aboriginal Foundations Program's success to create a strong outreach effort for bridging and/or access related programs and courses.
18. Provide different types of funding to enable Indigenous students to come to Ryerson. These types of funding can come in the form of scholarships, work-study student positions, more funding for transitional services and student support services such as funding support to live in residence and scholarships for part-time students.

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19. Build an alliance between the Tri-Mentoring Program and Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services and establish an Indigenous specific group at the Tri-Mentoring Program.
 20. Make employers more accountable to hire Indigenous students for student placements, internships and employment opportunities after graduation. Also ensure that cultural safety is put in place before the student arrives at their placement.
 21. Build community events such as monthly Knowledge Symposiums and Gatherings similar to the successful Soup & Substance series, except based on Indigenous needs and interests.

Theme 3: Indigenize Teaching and Learning Practices

22. Develop a multi-pronged professional development strategy so faculty are informed about Indigenous knowledges, writing and communication and research methodologies; including establishing a university-wide process to include traditional knowledges and how to reference it within a paper.
23. Dedicate a section of the Library Indigenous Research Portal to the topic of Truth and Reconciliation.
24. Increase the integration of Indigenous content, resources and pedagogies in curricula across Ryerson including field experiences, service learning, practicums and work experiences.
25. Develop and promote culturally responsible and respectful curriculum that integrates Indigenous pedagogies and ways of knowing, with the long-term goal of requiring all undergraduate students to take a mandatory Indigenous course in their program.
26. Create a program within Ryerson that offers certificates or degrees in Indigenous languages. This could be achieved by collaborating with Indigenous communities and other post-secondary institutions that already have language programs.
27. Provide training courses for instructors on how to utilize Indigenous resources in their program and courses.
28. Provide support for students, faculty and staff who wish to invite Indigenous guest speakers within each field or department, faculty and campus-wide sessions as well as in-class sessions.
29. Collaborate with Journalists for Human Rights as they provide workshops for post-secondary journalism students.

30. Establish Indigenous Studies and Governance degrees with a focus on Indigenous governance and resistances, strengths and histories.
31. Establish a minor in Indigenous Studies with the expectation of basic foundational knowledge upon entry with a bridging program offered specifically for Indigenous Peoples – e.g. the Certificate in Indigenous Knowledges and Experiences, whose courses can then be applied to the minor itself.
32. Establish a certificate and minor specifically targeted to educating public servants on the history of Aboriginal Peoples, including anti-colonial frameworks and Indigenous cultural competency training.
33. Incorporate concrete approaches to examining privilege and allyship training, especially in Faculty of Community Services courses.

Theme 4: Increase Indigenous Staff and Faculty and Recognize Other Ways of Knowing

34. Develop a multi-pronged recruitment and professional development strategy for staff and faculty that includes a process to recruit, retain and promote Indigenous employees with specific yearly targets to increase the numbers to a level that is representative of the provincial population and implement university-wide equivalency statements for both external and internal hires.
35. Develop training sessions with an Indigenous focus through the Aboriginal Human Resources Consultant for members of the Ryerson Faculty Association, and in particular members of Departmental Hiring Committees.
36. Require training in the history of Egerton Ryerson's colonial role and anti-colonial frameworks, as well as Indigenous cultural competency training, for all Ryerson staff and make this training also available to all faculty.
37. Train staff managers and apply accountability measures in the hiring of Indigenous employees. Encourage unions to assist in ensuring the retention of these employees.
38. Acknowledge that the current credentialing policies restrict opportunities to hire Traditional Knowledge Keepers. Change the policies to support traditional knowledge accreditation. The university can glean best practices from some British Columbia-based institutions, which recognize faculty accreditation for Traditional Knowledge Keepers.

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39. Compensate Indigenous staff and faculty for additional responsibilities placed on them through the adjustment of job descriptions and salaries to make them comparable to their counterparts.
 40. Put in place administrative mechanisms that ensure HR consultants are change agents, consulting regularly with the Aboriginal Human Resources Consultant and opening doors to individuals with transferable skills and equivalent experience.

Theme 5: Deepen Community Engagement and Establish Partnerships

41. Partner with Indigenous communities to develop courses and distance learning and other initiatives. For instance, the University of British Columbia has a First Nations Satellite Bachelor of Social Work Program at a First Nation community.
42. Support faculty members to become change agents in their respective departments by encouraging the offering of their expertise in the community and within the broader university network. For instance, host a conference for daycare providers and early childhood educators on best practices for integrating Indigenous stories, methodologies and traditional ways of learning.

Theme 6: Increase the Indigenous Visibility at Ryerson and Honour the Indigenous History and Cultures

43. Follow through on plans to acknowledge the history of Egerton Ryerson's role in the residential school system by placing a plaque next to the statue of Egerton Ryerson explaining his role in the system's establishment.
44. Greater recognition of policies that allow time off for Indigenous religious and ceremonial holidays and observances.
45. Continue to increase Indigenous visibility on campus, by adding visual representations of the Canadian Indigenous community, such as Indigenous art, posters and messaging that conveys a welcoming, inclusive, knowledgeable environment for all students.
46. Make land acknowledgement, including an explanation of its importance, compulsory at the start of signature Ryerson events and meetings.
47. Host at least one pow-wow on campus a year.

48. Create campus-wide Indigenous events for National Aboriginal Day, a Residential School Memorial Day and a campus-wide Orange Shirt Campaign with conferences, ceremonies and feasts to increase visibility, increase awareness and understanding and celebrate Indigenous culture.
49. Increase the celebration of and education about Indigenous issues, culture and history throughout the entire campus.
50. Establish an annual Indigenous History Week.

The Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services Eagle Staff:

In 2012 Ryerson University and Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services (RASS) received an Eagle Staff, the traditional flag of Indigenous Peoples. Ryerson is the only Ontario university to receive this spiritual honour, which is present at significant events. This Eagle Staff recognizes Ryerson and RASS's leadership in creating a strong holistic support system for Aboriginal students.

