



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 in providing input into various aspects of Western’s governance and long-term planning, student services, employment relations, academic programming, and research initiatives as it relates to Indigenous peoples.

4. Goals

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

1. Strengthen and build relationships with Indigenous communities;

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

2. Nurture an inclusive campus culture that values Indigenous peoples, perspectives, and ways of knowing;
3. Enhance Indigenous students' experience at Western;
4. Achieve excellence in Indigenous research and scholarship;
5. Excel in Indigenous teaching and learning;
6. Indigenize Western's institutional practices and spaces;
7. Become a university of choice for Indigenous students;
8. Increase Indigenous representation in staff and faculty complement (Indigenous Strategic Plan, 2016).

5. IPEC Reporting

- IPEC will submit regular meeting minutes to the Office of the President, the Office of the Provost, and the Office of the Vice Provost;
- Each year, senior administration (Provost and/or President) will be invited to attend 1-2 IPEC meetings;
- 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.
- IPEC will submit a report to Western University's Board/Senate annually.
- A member that sits on Board and Senate will provide communication and updates to IPEC annually.

6. Membership

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

7. IPEC Members Designated Seats

University Community Members

1. Office of the President designate.
2. A University Faculty Member appointed by the President.
3. Indigenous Student Centre, Director.
4. Indigenous Student Centre, Coordinator.
5. Indigenous Student Centre, Visiting Elder.
6. Indigenous Studies, Faculty of Social Science, Director.
7. Indigenous Education, Faculty of Education, Director.
8. Indigenous Leader-in-Residence, Schulich School of Medicine
9. School of Graduate Postdoctoral Studies (SGPS) representative.
10. Associate Vice-President, Student Experience (or designate).
11. Dean(s) (1-3 representatives).

12. One Board of Governors and Senate member by invitation by the IPEC Co-Chairs
13. Affiliate College designates (Huron, Kings and Brescia).
14. Indigenous faculty member representative (2 representatives).
15. Indigenous staff member representatives (2 representatives).
16. Indigenous Student Association (ISA) designant.
17. Indigenous Liaison to the University Student Council (USC).
18. Indigenous Coordinator, Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement (SAGE).
19. Indigenous Society of Graduate Students (SOGS) representative.

Special Note: University members who are Indigenous are considered part of Indigenous communities.

Indigenous Community Members

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

20. Oneida Nation of the Thames.
21. Chippewas of the Thames First Nation.
22. Munsee Delaware Nation.
23. Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation.
24. Six Nations of the Grand River.
25. Mississauga of the Credit First Nation.
26. Eelünaapéewi Lahkéewiit
27. Caldwell First Nation.
28. Walpole Island First Nation.
29. Aamjiwnaang First Nation.
30. Saugeen First Nation.

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

31. Southern First Nation Secretariat postsecondary program.
32. Southwestern Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre (SOAHAC) representative.
33. N’Amerind Friendship Centre representative.
34. Fanshawe College, Institute for Indigenous Learning representative.
35. Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) representative.
36. Atlohsa Family Healing Services representative.
37. Nokee Kwe Occupational Skills Development Inc. representative.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Co-Chairs are responsible for:

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

- The Co-chairs terms will generally expire after 3 years, but can be renewed if necessary.
- Responsible for championing the vision and goals of IPEC;

- Actively seeking out new members as seats become available;
- Ensuring meetings are held regularly, seeking agenda items from members, and following up on action items at meetings;
- Chairing meetings and facilitating meaningful discussion toward action;
- Acting as a signing authority for 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;
- Maintaining membership lists, managing current and archival records, ensuring online presence, and circulating minutes to the Office of the President, Provost and Vice-Provost.
- Annual committee membership review and renewal, including:
 - Drafting invitation letters to communities to fill vacant positions
 - Prompting Co-Chairs to conduct follow up calls or visits to communities where representation is required.

Members are responsible for:

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

9. Meetings

- To accommodate First Nations, Co-chairs will automatically offer toll free conference and Zoom link for members to join from a distance.
- Each meeting will begin with an Indigenous Caucus chaired by the Indigenous Co-Chair representative which will give 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 as needed;
- There will be 1 half-day professional development/celebration retreat per year held in the summer months in a local/regional Indigenous community;
- Regular meeting locations will be held occasionally in Indigenous communities.

10. Decision Making

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

11. Quorum

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