

Indigenous Education Council

March 22, 2024 | 9:30 – 12 pm
Guild Room – Welcome Centre

Meeting Minutes

Members In attendance:	Luane Roberts (co-chair), Danielle Boissoneau, Tammy Webster, , Roxane Shawana, Nelson Chukwuma, Trish Weigel-Green, Anastasia Lyons
Guests:	Stephen Svenson, Big Bear Hardy,
Regrets:	Christina Restoule (co-chair), Brandi Bilodeau, Tammy Webster, Nicole Robinson, Michelle Rehel, Shawn Brake, John Tibbits, Elder in-Residence Lois Thomas, Zandra Bear-Lowen
Minutes:	Tracy Riley

1. Welcome and Introductions

- Introductions were made by all attendees.

2. Update on Pow Wow

- The Pow Wow event was very successful.
- The food at the Pow Wow received high praise.

3. Indigenous Language Initiative

- Danielle announced that there would be increased use of Indigenous languages in meetings, presentations, and communications to enhance the visibility of Indigenous culture.

4. Indigenous Food Sovereignty

- Discussion focused on access to Indigenous food and promoting Indigenous Food Sovereignty.

5. Office of Indigenous Initiatives Update

- Updates on Conestoga College renovations.
- Partnership with Highness Global for murals and art installations:
 - Isaac Murdoch (Guelph Campus): Animal mural symbolizing unity and shared space.
 - Nyle Johnston (Waterloo Campus): Art installation in the courtyard for relaxation.
 - Jackie Traverse (Skilled Trades Campus): Visit scheduled for Spring 2024.
 - Door 13: Artist to be confirmed.

6. Indigenous Knowledge Symposium

- Dates: April 30 - May 1
- Keynote Speakers:
 - Zhaawnong Webb (Anishinaabek, Crane Clan, Kitigan Zibi)
 - Makasa Lookinghorse (Haudenosaunee, Lakota, Six Nations)
- Focus Areas:
 - Indigenous Knowledge as Pedagogy
 - Enhancing program quality with Indigenous approaches
 - Engaging Indigenous ways of learning in teaching practice
- Workshops and Plenaries:
 - Indigenous Futurisms: Defining Indigenous-Led Education at Conestoga College
 - Beyond Morality: Including TRC Recommendations in Education
 - Indigenous Led Education and PEQAB Mandates – Dr. James Brown, Dr. Pamela Williamson, and Dr. Armand La Barge
- Venue: Blue Room, on campus
- Registration: 30 people registered so far (cap at 50). Decision pending on inviting faculty. Representative from IEC desired.

7. Indigenous Book Club

- Book: Leanne Simpson's *Islands of Decolonial Love*
- Partnership with Library Services
- Meeting Date: April 19, 2024
- Venue: Be-Dah-Bin Gamik Ceremony room (attendance capped at 10)
- Pilot Program: Decision pending on inviting more people. Offered as a PD opportunity during work hours.

8. Indigenous Student Success Strategy

- Current Status: In the third round of edits
- Expected Release: September 2024

- Recommendations to be shared via video, pamphlet, and original document on the website. May include cartography and map-making as art to reclaim identity.
- Luanne's Question: Will IEC track implementation and hold people accountable?
- Danielle's Response: It will be looked into. Danielle offered to send the draft to Tammy.
- Institutional Research: Indigenous individuals make up less than 5% of the community. Data collection methods discussed included social media outreach, constant contact, and speaking to people. Community members participated as well.

9. Indigenous Classrooms

- One classroom at Doon now, another planned for Waterloo later.
- Discussion on elements to incorporate into the room:
 - Designer has tried to incorporate all indigenous elements, but it might be too much.
 - Possible to select some elements, e.g., mural in the hallway.
- Desks and Configuration:
 - Desks need to accommodate all body sizes and have room for laptops and class supplies.
 - Circle configuration may pose problems for laptops and cords (consider floor setup).
 - Remove tropical living wall.
 - Discussion on circle opening direction (West opening has different meaning - "death door").
 - Different desk configurations affect the number of desks available; need to find out typical enrollment.
 - Screen on a windowed wall may cause glare.
 - If desks are in a circle, where will the instructor stand? Who must turn their desks around?
 - Raven suggested different desks and open circle configuration (4 quarters).
 - Discussion on the necessity of a living wall; suggestion to remove it to open another wall.
 - Consider desks in half-circle configurations; needs revisiting.
- Additional Points:
 - DB wants to do it right the first time and is open to suggestions.
 - DB and Roxanne to discuss indigenous high school students in August 2024.
 - Further discussion planned for the next IEC meeting.

10. Wiijindamaan Presentation

- Dr. Stephen Svenson and Big Bear presented on Wiijindamaan: An Indigenous Land-based Futurity.

- Key Points:
 - Restoration of 200 acres of previous monocrop land (increase from 33 acres).
 - Training in traditional Indigenous land-based practices for Conestoga College students, partners, and community members.
 - Strengthening of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous ally communities.
 - Workshops to support transfer of land-based knowledge, practices, and skills.
 - Project Support: Danielle emphasized the importance of making the project sustainable.
 - Website Launch: The upcoming website will be hosted by the White Owl Native Ancestry Association.
 - Indigenous Knowledge: Need to prioritize Indigenous knowledge on campus and incorporate Wijindamaan into the Pathfinder program.
 - Website Content: An Indigenous section should be added to the website to make information about Be-Dah-Bin Gamik more accessible.

11. Engagement Opportunities

- IEC Expansion: Recruitment and next steps discussed.
 - Subcommittee for Recruitment: Danielle called for volunteers. Volunteers: Danielle, Raven, and Luanne.
 - Academic Subcommittee: No volunteers yet; further discussion needed. Danielle will outline the subcommittee's responsibilities in the minutes.

12. CSI - Indigenous Relations Coordinator

- Hiring Announcement: Nelson announced the hiring of an Indigenous Relations Coordinator and requested support for vetting applications.
- Interview Panel: Interested individuals should contact Nelson or Danielle.
- Important Dates:
 - May 3: Job postings go live
 - May 3-17: Application period
 - May 21-22: Screening applications
 - May 23: Scheduling interviews
 - June 4-5: 1st round interviews
 - June 12: 2nd round interviews
 - June 17-20: Verification and final hiring decision
 - June 21: Employment offer

Next Meeting: June 28, 2024 (Last Friday of every third month)