

2020/2021 Indigenous Plan Report

Executive Summary

Launched in September 2017, the University of Victoria's *Indigenous Plan* (2017-2022) has offered a framework for creating, maintaining, and expanding Indigenous programs and initiatives across campus. Significant work has been undertaken with respect to Indigenization and decolonization within the five key strands identified by the *Indigenous Plan*: Students, Faculty and Staff, Education, Research, and Governance.

Capturing these efforts, recognizing contributions, and highlighting continued momentum at UVic, the *2020-21 Indigenous Plan Report* shares a detailed overview of the work currently being done to implement, and respond to, the *Indigenous Plan*. As with previous reports, Deans and administrative leads were sent questionnaires and asked to report on how their units have taken up the particular goals and objectives relevant to each of the five strands during the 2020-21 year. Gathered and edited, the collective findings of these reports form the basis for the *2020-21 Indigenous Plan Report*, which aims to accurately identify, recognize, and share the contributions and commitments being made across campus. This report acknowledges persistence and ongoing care through, and despite, the difficult and uncertain circumstances arising from the COVID-19 Global Pandemic. Highlights from the various reported initiatives from the *2020-21 Indigenous Plan Report* include:

Strand 1 | Students

- Faculty members from six schools and one department have co-led research and community projects, partnering with Indigenous youth and expanding outreach and mentorship initiatives for pre-university and prospective students.
- A number of divisions reported new or revised equity and preferential admissions practices for Indigenous applicants. In 2020, the School of Social Work implemented their Decolonial Equity admissions process, whereby Indigenous intake in the BSW increased to 22% of accepted applicants in 2020, up from 13% the previous year.
- Nine academic divisions confirmed that scholarships, bursaries, emergency funds, and research fellowships for Indigenous learners increased both in number and amount.
- Services, programs, courses, and some cultural activities were transitioned to virtual and online platforms in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with some units reporting a 200% increase in students accessing services.
- CIRCLE received Aboriginal Service Plan funding to revitalize SAGE (Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement), hosting the SAGE Workshop Series and The Resilience of Indigenous Nationhood: Indigenous Graduate Student Conference, with more than 500 Indigenous students attending six events.

Strand 2 | Faculty and Staff

- Committing to limited and preferential hiring practices, nine departments and divisions collectively reported hiring thirteen Indigenous faculty (11) and staff (2) in new positions, with the Department of Geography welcoming its first Indigenous faculty member in 2021.
- Faculty Relations notes that collective agreement changes in 2019 require evaluation criteria to speak to community engaged research. In 2020-1, units have revised merit, tenure, and promotion standards to reflect this requirement.
- 11 faculties, schools, and departments reported expanding existing EDI resources (2), regularizing anti-racism training (6), conducting an equity or course-content audit (2), and formalizing Codes of Conduct for off-campus community work (1).
- Ten divisions reported accessing ICAT while eight schools and departments developed and delivered anti-racist, field/discipline-specific, and/or land-based professional development sessions in partnership with local Indigenous communities and Knowledge Keepers.

Strand 3 | Education

- Several faculties, schools, and divisions worked to integrate, and formalize the participation of, Elders and Knowledge Keepers in the development and delivery of courses, field schools, workshops, and programs.
- Thirteen academic units reported significant revisions and additions to course offerings, accounting for the revision of multiple core courses to incorporate Indigenous knowledges and histories, and the addition of four land- and waters-based courses, two Indigenous-restricted courses, nine upper-level courses, and six introductory or core courses.
- Co-op & Career received \$154,900 in funding from the BC Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training to lead the development of an Indigenous Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) Resource Hub in partnership with experiential learning practitioners and colleagues from across the province.
- Several LTSI grants were offered to, and accessed by, academic units working to develop new courses, Indigenize existing courses, update programming, create anti-racism workshops and teaching resources, and conduct audits.
- A part-time Indigenization Advisor was hired by the Department of Psychology to grow positive relationships with local Indigenous communities, advise on curriculum, and offer support for departmental research projects and community-engaged initiatives.
- The School of Nursing, in collaboration with three other BC universities, is in the planning stages for an Indigenous stream to the Masters of Nursing program.

Strand 4 | Research

- The new Research and Creative Works Strategy *Aspiration 2030* identifies “A commitment to Indigenous scholarship” as one of the five Aspirations outlining its vision.
- UVic Libraries welcomed their inaugural Associate University Librarian – Reconciliation, offering guidance with respect to the Libraries’ response to the TRC and the Indigenous Plan, and partnering with Indigenous communities to introduce and sustain Indigenous ways of knowing and being within the Libraries.
- 13 divisions reported developing and maintaining significant partnerships with Indigenous scholars and communities living and working abroad, with international collaborations highlighting the knowledge and experiences of Indigenous people and nations in Aotearoa [New Zealand], Australia, the USA, the Kamchatka peninsula, Tanzania, Taiwan, & Ecuador.
- Several academic divisions reported increased funding and resourcing for community engagement and relationship-building, with an emphasis on establishing MOUs and following the protocols of regional Indigenous Nations and community partners.

Strand 5 | Governance

- Six divisions reported the continued representation of Indigenous students, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, alumni and/or local community members on advisory committees and governing bodies.
- On a three-year term, a Tri-Faculty Indigenous Resurgence Coordinator joined the faculties of Science, Social Sciences and Humanities to support staff, faculty, and students with events, initiatives, and committee work to support Indigenization and decolonization.
- Seven departments, schools, and divisions updated their webpages and/or reviewed their social platforms to better communicate Indigenous initiatives, opportunities, and resources.
- The new Research and Creative Works Strategy *Aspiration 2030* identifies “A commitment to Indigenous scholarship” as one of the five Aspirations outlining its vision. One of the actions identified under that aspiration is to “establish an Indigenous Research Advisory Committee to guide the implementation of new supports for Indigenous scholars.”