FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
INDIGENOUS PLAN 2018-2023

PREAMBLE

In 2016, the University of Victoria underwent a significant internal and external consultation process on its first ever Indigenous Plan. This plan, launched September 2017, identifies institutional goals and actions to move the university forward in meeting the commitments made in its Strategic Plan to build and strengthen respectful relationships with Indigenous communities locally, provincially, nationally and around the world in order to recruit and retain Indigenous students. Recognizing the importance of this work and the need for Indigenous and non-Indigenous faculty, staff and students to engage meaningfully with it, the Faculty of Social Sciences has identified our own goals and actions, aligned with the institutional Indigenous Plan, that reflect the foundational teachings and values within it. These goals and actions are the foundation of our own 5-year Indigenous Plan. As the Faculty with the largest number of Indigenous students, we hope that through these more localized goals and actions, SOSC faculty, staff and students will be able to find their place and their role in the work to be done as we strive to make our Faculty and the university a more welcoming, safe and diverse learning environment for everyone.

As the university contemplates how to best move forward with its “commitment to education that redresses the historical and continued barriers that Indigenous peoples have faced in accessing and participating in postsecondary education” (Indigenous Plan 2017-2022), there has been much discussion and debate around concepts and definitions of “indigenization” and “decolonization”. We acknowledge that people have differing perspectives and opinions in regard to what these terms mean and how they are used, and we also acknowledge that they are used extensively within the context of post-secondary institutions and education. As a means to clarify our intentions, goals and actions, we are providing working definitions of these terms within the context and confines of this plan. Note that these definitions are not meant to replace or contest other definitions or approaches, but rather to enhance understanding of the work that we intend to do.

We see the work of indigenization and decolonization as inherently linked. This work requires contributions and engagement from all members of the faculty. We are committed to both supporting and expanding stand-alone/autonomous Indigenous programming as well as decolonizing and indigenizing existing programs.

We use the term “indigenization” to refer to the infusion and inclusion of Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing into the curricula and programs.

We use the term “decolonization” to refer to the restoration of the Indigenous worldview and the replacement of the dominant interpretation of history with Indigenous
perspectives of history. Decolonization requires the creation of space and support for Indigenous peoples to reclaim all that was taken from them.

**APPROACH**

1. Establish an advisory/working group of students and faculty
2. Create a background report (e.g., graduation success rates of SOSC Indigenous students, strategies/approaches at other universities, current relevant initiatives at First Peoples House, canvas perspectives of current Indigenous students regarding concerns and ideas, current initiatives at the Faculty and unit level, scan courses with Indigenous content, and what it means to “decolonize” and “indigenize” curriculum)
3. Develop an overall goal and objectives in consultation with the Dean’s Indigenous Advisory Forum
4. Develop a strategy to achieve goals and objectives
5. Ensure consistency and alignment with the institutional Indigenous Plan
6. Consult internally with Indigenous leaders on campus
7. Revise document and begin broad consultations in SOSC
8. Launch SOSC Indigenous Plan
GOALS AND ACTIONS

In keeping with the institutional Indigenous Plan, we have sorted our Goals and Actions according to the strands found in the Plan – Students, Faculty & Staff, Education and Governance. We further acknowledge the importance of Elders, knowledge keepers and community in binding these strands together.

STUDENTS

GOAL 1: INCREASE RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND SUCCESS OF INDIGENOUS STUDENTS, IN ALL PROGRAMS OF STUDY, EXPANDING PATHWAYS AND SUPPORTING TRANSITIONS.

ACTIONS:

a. Support Indigenous graduate students by revitalizing SAGE (Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Education/Enhancement) starting with Indigenous graduate students across SOSC.

b. Coordinate a phone campaign where current Indigenous students (and/or faculty, Dean, Associate Deans) contact Indigenous applicants who have been offered admission to congratulate them, answer questions, offer advice and build a relationship to encourage them to accept the offer.

c. Engage with prospective students and their families in communities and on campus with Indigenous university members and other SOSC members (e.g., high school visits, MiniU).

d. Engage Indigenous alumni in recruitment activities and mentorship programming.

e. Continue the new student mentorship with Campus Cousins.

f. Increase focus on fundraising specifically for scholarships for Indigenous students.

g. Develop a ‘Pathways’ program for Indigenous students.

h. Consider reserved seats for Indigenous students or a cohorted provisionally accepted first semester with orientation. [see UBC-O’s entrance program]

i. Increase the visible representation of Indigenous instructors in the classroom.

j. Build relationships/partnerships with local communities/organizations (e.g., host a community gathering/info night with faculty and current Indigenous students, then invite interested participants and their families to UVic for an “Open House” focused on experiential/hands-on activities and land-/water-based activities where possible).

k. Profile Indigenous SOSC students on the internet and in print.
GOAL 2: CREATE A WARM, WELCOMING AND RESPECTFUL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND SENSE OF PLACE.

ACTIONS:

a. Develop resources, tools and training for faculty and students to respond to racist comments.

b. Consider offering a credit-based course on Elders’ teachings.

c. Create mechanisms (such as monthly meet-and-greets) to develop one-on-one connections between Indigenous undergraduates and faculty.

d. Create specific spaces for Indigenous students to mingle and share their experience. Once this space is created, host an Elders’ tea once a month.

e. Invite departmental speakers to educate instructors and staff on indigenization, decolonization and cultural safety in the classroom.

f. Ensure that all departments have undertaken the Indigenous Cultural Acumen Training.

GOAL 3: PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO RECOGNIZE/FOSTER INDIGENOUS STUDENTS’ IDENTITY.

ACTIONS:

a. Offer place-based educational opportunities on- and off-campus (e.g., Koeye River, Tl’ches, Victoria Native Friendship Centre tribal journey, etc.).

b. Offer field trips designed with Indigenous student interests and needs in mind (e.g., provide lunch and go to RBCM with a specific tour theme in mind with a knowledgeable faculty member to foster connections between students and faculty).

c. Hold an Indigenous conference highlighting the research, community engagement and accomplishments of Indigenous students and faculty.

d. Develop relationships with other Indigenous-focussed institutions and/or programs (e.g., consider working with Dechinta: Bush University Centre for Research and Learning for exchanges—need financial structure and course articulation for credit).
FACULTY & STAFF

GOAL 1: INCREASE THE RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND SUCCESS OF INDIGENOUS FACULTY.

ACTIONS:

  a. Support units to recruit and hire Indigenous faculty and to implement equity hiring practices, including the opportunity for Indigenous self-identification and, when appropriate, preferential and limited hiring, in accordance with the University of Victoria Employment Equity Plan 2015-2020.

  b. Build a critical mass of Indigenous faculty through targeted and cluster hiring, thereby moving Social Sciences towards a more inclusive and multi-voiced community, while providing a cohort of support for new Indigenous faculty.

  c. Explore and support viable alternative hiring methods in recruiting and hiring Indigenous faculty (possibilities could include cross-departmental hires, open hires and cluster hires).

  d. Increase high profile and senior level research positions across the Social Sciences that highlight the strengths of Indigenous research across the disciplines (e.g., preparing a Canada Research Chair proposal so that when a call comes forward, we are prepared. Such a CRC would generate national attention and prestige and attract students and faculty).

  e. Create a resource document on recruiting Indigenous faculty (e.g., identifying the most effective avenues for advertising).

  f. Ensure web and print communications clearly state that the Faculty of Social Sciences is committed to recruiting, retaining and supporting Indigenous students, faculty and staff.

  g. Identify employment opportunities for Indigenous graduate students (e.g., TAs, RAs and sessional instructors).

GOAL 2: INCREASE THE RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND SUCCESS OF INDIGENOUS STAFF.

ACTIONS:

  a. Support units to recruit and hire Indigenous staff and to implement equity hiring practices, including the opportunity for Indigenous self-identification and, when appropriate, preferential and limited hiring, in accordance with the University of Victoria Employment Equity Plan 2015-2020.

  b. Recognize Indigenous staff in their reviews and performance evaluations for their significant contributions to university activities and programming for Indigenous students.
GOAL 3: DEVELOP CULTURAL SAFETY/KNOWLEDGE, LEADERSHIP/MENTORSHIP AND ALLYSHIP AMONG SOSC FACULTY AND STAFF, INCLUDING IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS AND COMMUNITIES.

ACTIONS:

a. Host an annual SOSC pit cook.
b. Partner with a local First Nation to host a faculty retreat in the community to build and/or strengthen the relationships and understanding between the people in SOSC and the community.
c. Work with the Centre for Indigenous Research and Community-Led Engagement (CIRCLE) to identify opportunities for new Indigenous SOSC faculty to become part of a larger Indigenous academic community and ensure they are supported and mentored in culturally appropriate and meaningful ways.
d. Develop additional faculty training modules that considers identifying and acknowledging one’s own social location and privilege.
e. Organise territorial tours including with new graduate students as departmental and interdepartmental events.
f. Implement an awareness campaign (e.g., Orange Shirt Day, Red Dress Day).
g. Work with local communities on developing long-term partnerships to identify interests/needs and applicable expertise and how SOSC and the community can best work together to address these interests/needs (e.g., faculty guest lectures in community, community guest lectures at UVic, research partnerships, LE, NONET Community Internships/Research Apprenticeships).
h. Encourage/require all units to participate in Indigenous Cultural Acumen Training (ICAT) and subsequent modules and consider its inclusion within faculty evaluations.
i. Bring in Indigenous scholars to engage with SOSC faculty, staff and students (e.g., Lansdowne speakers series).

GOAL 4: SUPPORT AND RECOGNIZE FACULTY IN INDIGENOUS RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP AND SERVICE.

ACTIONS:

a. Make greater space for courses that fit within the scholar's research area including cross-listing courses.
b. Work towards establishing an endowment and funds for fellowships, scholarships, pre-docs, and post-docs as well as a model to support community scholars to work in partnership with SOSC researchers.
c. Devise considerations and criteria for merit/tenure and promotion that include selection committee and external reviewers who are well positioned to speak to the work and service of the scholar where there are few Indigenous faculty members to be called upon.
d. Devise considerations and criteria for merit/tenure and promotion that consider the workloads and service expectations of Indigenous faculty, including specific considerations for community-engaged work (i.e., how it is measured, how it counts, and what category it fits under).
EDUCATION

GOAL 1: ENSURE THAT ALL SOSC STUDENTS GRADUATE WITH PROFICIENCY IN INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE, HISTORY, REALITIES AND WAYS OF KNOWING.

ACTIONS:

a. Explore the effectiveness of different avenues to ensure students have this proficiency. For example:
   i. Appropriate content in core required courses
   ii. Consider mandating one (1) required course out of several approved courses centered around Indigenous knowledge, history, realities and ways of knowing offered through SOSC or Indigenous Studies.
   iii. Special topics course on Indigenous issues
   iv. Cross listing with Indigenous Studies
   v. A dedicated first year course for all SOSC students
   vi. Accessibility; enabling students from other disciplines to take individual departmental courses; flexibility in prerequisites.
   vii. A 3-4 day land-/water-based experiential course partnered with a local community (similar to the Faculty of Law’s AbCamp) focused on the history of the land and its peoples.
   viii. Field schools.

b. Implement the most effective avenues for ensuring that all SOSC students graduate with this proficiency.

GOAL 2: SUPPORT FACULTY IN DECOLONIZING AND INDIGENIZING THE CURRICULUM.

ACTIONS:

a. Work towards establishing an Indigenous community scholar supported by Indigenous teaching assistants in partnership with Indigenous Studies.
b. Encourage all faculty and sessional instructors across SOSC to include the land acknowledgement on all course outlines.
c. Support the Learning and Teaching Centre to provide workshops and to be a resource hub for indigenizing/decolonizing curricula, to effectively align academic programming goals with the Indigenous Plan.
d. Support the LTC to provide workshops on how to incorporate land/water-based programming into curricula across disciplines.
GOAL 3: SUPPORT AND EXPAND STAND-ALONE/AUTONOMOUS INDIGENOUS PROGRAMMING.

ACTIONS:

a. Support the expansion of Indigenous Studies by participating in discussions on a sustainable funding model.

b. Support the establishment of an Indigenous Studies department with the same standing as other departments and recognition as an autonomous and distinctive field and discipline of study. These efforts would be reinforced by recognizing the autonomy and distinctiveness of the field in its own right.

c. Ensure appropriate cross-listing of courses to support both SOSC and the Indigenous Studies program (e.g., cross-listing SOSC Indigenous courses to IS and cross-listing IS courses to SOSC).

d. Promote the LE,NONET grad seminar to Indigenous graduate students in SOSC.

e. Ensure the Indigenous Studies Program is aware of key departments in SOSC with strong Indigenous focus/content/methods.

f. Consider the actual costs of Indigenous research and compensate accordingly.

g. Invest in building strong Indigenous Studies programs that will attract more students and faculty rather than waiting for strong student demand.

h. Recruit and create a safe space for Indigenous faculty by working with Indigenous Studies (e.g., through joint/cross appointments that can result in hybrid tenure and evaluation committees creating transparency about standards and criteria).
RESEARCH

GOAL 1: VALUE, SUPPORT AND PROMOTE INDIGENOUS RESEARCH.

ACTIONS:

a. Recognise faculty for their Indigenous research and promote their achievements.
b. Develop a database for SOSC that begins to list community research requests/needs and link to faculty members in respective disciplines (can also be used for linking graduate students to potential community projects/research).
c. Develop clear spaces on the SOSC website about current Indigenous research.
d. Build relationships with Indigenous communities and enable discussions around specific partnerships to support their research needs.
e. Identify, promote and support opportunities for undergraduate students and postdoctoral fellows to be involved in Indigenous research initiatives.
f. Recognise modes of research dissemination other than peer-reviewed journals as scholarly work.
g. Establish and promote culturally appropriate and inclusive definitions, guiding principles and protocols for research with Indigenous participants, in Indigenous communities or on Indigenous lands.
h. View Indigenous research methodologies as legitimate and productive.
i. Develop mechanisms that ensure accountability for valuing, supporting and promoting Indigenous research from all departments (e.g., include in resource planning documents).
j. Provide faculty and student training on indigenizing research linking with existing research methods and LE,NONET.
k. Partner with other interested faculties to host an Indigenous Graduate Student Symposium that showcases Indigenous graduate students’ work/research.

GOAL 2: TARGET FUNDRAISING TO SUPPORT INDIGENOUS RESEARCH.

ACTIONS:

a. Target additional funds for community-driven research.
b. Work with the SOSC Development Officer to increase funding for priority initiatives in Indigenous research, teaching and community engagement (see Faculty & Staff, Goal 4b. for examples of potential priorities).
c. Work with CIRCLE to identify and promote opportunities for funding of Indigenous research initiatives by faculty members in all fields and disciplines.
GOVERNANCE

GOAL 1: REINFORCE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR THE SOSC INDIGENOUS PLAN.

ACTIONS:
   a. Embed shared accountability for the goals of this plan into SOSC governance, planning, and management by ensuring their integration into appropriate governance and planning mechanisms.
   b. Develop an advisory group that focuses on a meaningful accountability mechanism and community engagement protocol.

GOAL 2: PROMOTE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT, COLLABORATION AND INFORMATION SHARING.

ACTIONS:
   a. Ensure that SOSC is a participant in the UVic Indigenous Community Engagement Council.
   b. Continue to participate in and contribute to the Indigenous Academic Advisory Council.
   c. Continue to use the Dean’s Indigenous Advisory Forum as a venue to engage Indigenous and non-Indigenous faculty and students, and provide input to SOSC planning and practice.
   d. Continue to support the Dean’s Indigenous Advisory Forum and provide resources (e.g., website) to more broadly share information and ideas (e.g., a resource guide, recommended reading list, recruitment and hiring guide).

GOAL 3: DEVELOP A COORDINATED APPROACH AND COMMITMENT TO FUNDRAISING TO SUPPORT INDIGENOUS STUDENTS, PROGRAMMING AND INITIATIVES.

ACTIONS:
   a. Work with the Dean’s Indigenous Advisory Forum to identify short- and long-term funding priorities that align with the SOSC and institutional Indigenous Plans.
   b. Work with SOSC Development and External Relations Officer and SOSC Alumni Annual Giving Officer to build a fundraising strategy for Indigenous initiatives.
APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: NOTABLE ACTIVITIES/INITIATIVES TO DATE

- To be completed