

Continuing Scholarly Activity and Engagement Committee Report to Emeritus College Council on the UBC Indigenous Strategic Plan

Submitted: May 2022

On March 15, 2022, the Continuing Scholarly Activity and Engagement Committee (CSAEC) organized a virtual discussion session that focussed on the UBC Indigenous Strategic Plan, with ~35 emeritus members and guests in attendance. Vickie George, the Associate Director of the UBC Office of Indigenous Strategic Initiatives presented ISP background information, planning tools, and funding grants to units for ISP purposes. Afterwards, four discussion groups focussed on one of the following topics in relation to the Indigenous Strategic Plan: (1) Role and Contributions of EC Committees and Clusters; (2) Role and Contributions of the EC Organizational Structure, Programs, and Communications; (3) Open Discussion on ISP Emerging Issues and Suggestions; and (4) Role and Contributions of Individual EC Members. Two CSAEC and other EC members either facilitated the discussion or took notes (see Appendix B).

The notes from the discussion groups were then organized into major ISP themes (see Appendix A). The CSAEC devoted its April 26, 2022 committee meeting to the results of the ISP discussion notes and thematic recommendations. The CSAEC agreed to the seven major thematic actions presented in this report. Each thematic action includes recommendations for achieving it.

The CSAEC also made the following motion for the seven ISP thematic actions: that the Emeritus College Executive and Council commit resources and staff time to supporting the thematic actions identified by the CSAEC. This motion was passed unanimously.

The CSAEC also encourages the EC Executive and Council to develop an internal process for determining a short-term and ongoing implementation and reporting plan to generate and maintain momentum on the seven thematic actions based on the UBC Indigenous Strategic Plan.

Thematic Actions

1. Confirm Emeritus College (EC) commitment and systemic action to address aspects of the Indigenous Strategic Plan (ISP)

-all levels of the EC (for example, committees, council, clusters etc) should be involved in the university's ISP.

-embed Indigenous viewpoints at all levels of the EC, by including Indigenous members or members who have interests and expertise in Indigenous areas.

-work with applicable UBC Indigenous units (such as the First Nations House of Learning), listed in the university's Indigenous Portal, on thematic actions related to education and awareness about Indigenous matters.

-establish a specific role or designate a person to assist with identifying educational and awareness opportunities for EC members, identifying potential Indigenous speakers, seeking Indigenous-related perspectives for ISP actions, and other Indigenous matters as needed.

-consider annual funding of ISP initiatives through the EC budget and the university's ISP funding grants (for example, committees submit applicable budget requests)¹.

2. Educate EC members about Indigenous topics, approaches, issues, and services

- use existing EC program structure to develop activities such as a seminar series, a study group, and individual talks, on Indigenous topics such as Indigenous art, sustaining the environment, harvesting resources in a sustainable way etc.

- list appropriate on-going UBC courses on Indigenous topics (that EC members are allowed to access) on the EC website (examples may include: April 2022, Senate List of Indigenous Courses, the Faculty of Education's Indigenous MOOC, and Orientation course at MOA).

-in relation to the university's land acknowledgement, learn more about the Indigenous perspective on land, and the historical and present situation.

-use Indigenous services where possible; eg. events, travel (for example, through the alumni trips), catering etc.

3. Share EC members' expertise and experience with Indigenous students and Indigenous communities

-obtain input from the AMS Indigenous groups to obtain feedback from them on their needs; also from the SAGE group of Indigenous graduate students.

--develop a list of EC members willing to mentor (or just converse with) Indigenous students, if this is concluded to be appropriate by Indigenous student groups.

-consider meeting with Elders from Musqueam and other Indigenous communities to develop personal contacts and to learn from each other, if there is interest in doing so from the Musqueam and other Indigenous Elders.

¹ Action items in bold font could be started fairly soon.

4. Address Indigenous EC members' needs within EC

-determine what barriers, disincentives or structural problems may be limiting Indigenous involvement in the EC and correct them (Membership Committee and EC departmental representatives could be of value here).

5. Ensure Indigenous and Indigenous-informed input to EC

-expert guidance is required to ensure accurate information and direction.

-learn about the role of Elders and Elders' Councils and how organizations have benefitted from their guidance, which may be lessons for the EC to consider. (Topic for panels/guest speakers; grandparenting special group).

6. Share the ISP work of the EC and expand ISP dialogue with units external to EC

-ensure that UBCO is involved; (possibly others).

-share the ISP objectives with others, such as colleagues (for example, University of Victoria and Simon Fraser University; CURAC, AROHE) and friends.

7. Create EC awareness of emerging Indigenous academic needs

-commit to educating ourselves in such topics as endangered languages and the need for the training of Indigenous scholars in these areas.