



University of Alberta Students' Union

ABORIGINAL RELATIONS AND RECONCILIATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday, July 9, 2019
5:00pm
SUB 0-48

We would like to respectfully acknowledge that our University and our Students' Union are located on Treaty 6 Territory. We are grateful to be on Cree, Dene, Saulteaux, Métis, Blackfoot, and Nakota Sioux territory; specifically the ancestral space of the Papaschase Cree. These Nations are our family, friends, faculty, staff, students, and peers. As members of the University of Alberta Students' Union we honour the nation-to-nation treaty relationship. We aspire for our learning, research, teaching, and governance to acknowledge and work towards the decolonization of Indigenous knowledges and traditions.

AGENDA (ARRC-2019-04)

2019-04/1 **INTRODUCTION**

2019-04/1a **Call to Order**

2019-04/1b **Approval of Agenda**

2019-04/1c **Approval of Minutes**

2019-04/1d **Chair's Business**

2019-04/2 **QUESTION/DISCUSSION PERIOD**

2019-04/3 **COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

2019-04/3a **SUNDAY MOVES** to approve the 2019/2020 ARRC Budget.

See ARRC-2019-04.02.

2019-04/3b **SUNDAY MOVES** to approve the ARRC Chair's Report.

See ARRC-2019-04.03.

2019-04/4 **INFORMATION ITEMS**

2019-04/4a ARRC Minutes (ARRC-2019-03-M) - Tuesday, June 25, 2019.

See ARRC-2019-04.01.

2019-04/4b ARRC 2019/2020 Budget.

See ARRC-2019-04.02.

2019-04/4c ARRC Chair's Report.

See ARRC-2019-04.03.

2019-04/5 **ADJOURNMENT**

2019-04/5a **Next Meeting:** Tuesday, July 23, 2019 at 5:00PM in SUB 0-48.



University of Alberta Students' Union

ABORIGINAL RELATIONS AND RECONCILIATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday, June 25, 2019

5:00pm

SUB 0-48

We would like to respectfully acknowledge that our University and our Students' Union are located on Treaty 6 Territory. We are grateful to be on Cree, Dene, Saulteaux, Métis, Blackfoot, and Nakota Sioux territory; specifically the ancestral space of the Papaschase Cree. These Nations are our family, friends, faculty, staff, students, and peers. As members of the University of Alberta Students' Union we honour the nation-to-nation treaty relationship. We aspire for our learning, research, teaching, and governance to acknowledge and work towards the decolonization of Indigenous knowledges and traditions.

ATTENDANCE

| NAME | PROXY | PRESENT | SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN FEEDBACK (IF ABSENT) |
|--------------------------|-------|---------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Permanent Members | | | |
| Nathan Sunday (chair) | | Y | |
| Juan Vargas Alba | | Y | |
| Kathrine Belcourt | | Y | |
| Jocelyn Proulx | | Y | |
| Tahra Haddouche | | Y | |
| Yiming Chen | | N | |
| Luke Statt | | Y | |
| Joel Agarwal | | Y | |
| Mohamad Jamaledine | | Y | |
| Members | | | |
| Adam Brown | | Y | |
| Akanksha Bhatnagar | | Y | |
| Jared Larsen | | Y | |

MINUTES (ARRC-2019-03)

2019-03/1 INTRODUCTION

2019-03/1a Call to Order

SUNDAY: Called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

2019-03/1b Approval of Agenda

STATT/AGARWAL MOVED to approve the agenda with the addition of 10/0/0 - CARRIED

2019-03/1c Approval of Minutes

STATT/BELCOURT MOVED to approve the agenda of *ARRC-2019-02-M* 7/0/2 - CARRIED
Brown, Bhatnagar abstain.

2019-03/1d Chair's Business

SUNDAY: Noted that he is consolidating the University Graduate Survey Report and the Identity Matters report for councillors to read. Noted that the Committee will need to read and approve the consolidated package prior to its release to Council as a whole.

2019-03/2 QUESTION/DISCUSSION PERIOD

2019-03/2a ARRC Budget

DUMOUCHEL: Proposed that ARRC submit an estimate to create its budget.

SUNDAY: Expressed concern that it is unclear how much money is in the ARRC budget and who can use these funds for what purpose.

DUMOUCHEL: Reaffirmed the need for more guidance in how the Committee intends to use its budget.

SUNDAY: Proposed that ARRC have a reoccurring standard budget like Council Administration Committee.

2019-03/2b Recommendations Clarification

DUMOUCHEL: Outlined that an internal working group tasked with implementing the ARRC Recommendations requires further clarification as to the content of recommendations. Expressed concern that it is unclear how math and sciences focused academic supports could offer Indigenous tailored service. Noted that this recommendation for Indigenous focused service is sensible in the context of a support such as counselling. Inquired into whether the Committee intended that the SU only advocate for Indigenous focused services where reasonable.

SUNDAY: Responded in the affirmative.

DUMOUCHEL: Expressed concern that the Indigenous Partnership Development Program, which the Recommendations direct the Executive to take, per individual and occurs at the end of an executive's term. Proposed subsisting this Program with the Indigenous Canada Massive Open Online Course. Determined to attend the Program workshop to assess whether it would be valuable for other internal managers, who also take other Indigenous courses.

STATT: Expressed concern at spending student's money to develop skills for end-of-term executives who will not have the chance to use the skills in service of students.

VARGAS ALBA: Noted that the MOOC option is possible for no cost.

BELCOURT: Expressed concern that the MOOC would not be sufficient to engage and educate participants. Proposed finding an alternative training opportunity.

BHATNAGAR: Requested Belcourt offer suggestions as to an alternative training course.

DUMOUCHEL: Expressed concern that the Recommendations request an internal audit but do not clarify its bounds. Inquired into whether the audit would be programming, staffing, process, or structure review. Confirmed that the newly hired FNMI Coordinator will complete an internal review with or without an external Indigenous audit.

SUNDAY: Responded that the review was directed at hiring and programming. Expressed concern that Aboriginal students are underrepresented in the Students' Union staff.

DUMOUCHEL: Noted that, according to his understanding, the internal hiring matches with the student population.

SUNDAY: Cited the 2018 Undergraduate Survey outcomes as indicating that there is a need to improve Indigenous recruitment.

BELCOURT: Noted that, for example, an Inuit cultural aversion to looking strangers in the eyes may speak in reference to individual achievement may affect the population's interview performance.

DUMOUCHEL: Inquired into whether the Committee intends for the internal review to be an assessment of barriers affecting Aboriginal job applicants.

BELCOURT: Responded in the affirmative.

DUMOUCHEL: Inquired into whether the audit should look at how friendly the Students' Union is to Indigenous applicants.

BELCOURT: Expressed concern that the term 'friendly' is diminishing as the review may find that there is a toxic environment internally. Suggested that disinterested external auditors would best be able to complete the review.

DUMOUCHEL: Noted that there is no time within new student orientation to add new content, as proposed in the Recommendations.

SUNDAY: Proposed, alternatively, having the Aboriginal Student Council President speak at Presidents' Address during Orientation.

DUMOUCHEL: Considered that new content could be added to the existing programming focused on challenging ideas and stereotypes.

SUNDAY: Determined to discuss this issue in greater detail at the next meeting.

BHATNAGAR: Expressed concern that permitting the ASC President to speak as part of President's Address will seem unfair to the other faculty and residence associations. Clarified that the UASU Executives are permitted to speak because the SU, in part, pays for Orientation. Noted that residence associations are not even permitted to deliver remarks to their primary constituency at Basecamp.

SUNDAY: Expressed concern at equating Aboriginal Student Council with other faculty associations.

DUMOUCHEL: Proposed that the Committee create a content map for Indigenous inclusion.

BELCOURT: Proposed integrating ASC messaging into the remarks of executives.

SUNDAY: Suggested that Bhatnagar's slippery slope argument was used in an attempt to deny the creation of ARRC on the basis that other groups would want their individual committees.

2019-03/3 **COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

2019-03/3a **BHATNAGAR MOVED** to allow a Presentation titled 2019/20 Students' Union Update on the Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Recommendations.

Presenters:

- President Akanksha Bhatnagar
- VP Operations & Finance Luke Statt
- VP Student Life Jared Larsen
- VP External Adam Brown
- VP Academic Joel Agarwal
- General Manager Marc Dumouchel

See ARRC-2019-03.02.

BHATNAGAR: Outlined that this review focused on four ARRC priority areas (advocacy, education, operation, and Council) since the Recommendations were formalized.

LARSEN: Outlined that, in Advocacy, there is 1 complete, substantial progress on 20, and research and planning on all those remaining.

BROWN: Noted that the ARRC Recommendations were received well by CASA. Noted that CASA is contacting its membership to develop the relationship between students associations and their students as part of an Indigenous student representative pilot project. Noted that CASA will host a conference for Indigenous student leaders.

SUNDAY/BROWN MOVED to extend the meeting by fifteen minutes.
CARRIED

LARSEN: Confirmed that the Executive met with many stakeholders on advocating for childcare support.

AGARWAL: Noted that Maskwa House of Learning will not be constructed immediately due to the limited funds for capital spending.

BHATNAGAR: Noted that the FNMI Coordinator is co-developing a framework for training executives and staff within the Students' Union.

STATT: Outlined that, for operational recommendations, there are 22 total, 8-10 with significant progress, 3 complete, and research and planning on most others.

BHATNAGAR: Confirmed that a FNMI Initiatives Coordinator was hired to do the groundwork on the position and work on programming initiatives for SU training and FNMI leadership. Confirmed that the SU completed a study on Aboriginal leadership in the Identity Matters 2: Ancestral Diversity and Aboriginality Report. Noted that there were 12 Recommendations for Council with progress on 3 and preliminary planning on all others.

PROUX: Inquired into what recommendations have not made progress.

BHATNAGAR: Responded that one example is the creation of a Campus Saint Jean Indigenous Learning Space (where there are only 17 FNMI students) as it is uncertain they want the space. Noted that research occurred on all Recommendations.

BROWN: Proposed that an executive permanent member do monthly or semi-annually progress update to the Committee. Noted that the website tracker will be live shortly.

BHATNAGAR: Noted that she cannot share the internal tracking spreadsheet as it does not accurately represent the progress being made on the project and includes personnel details.

BROWN: Reaffirmed that these Recommendation implementation progress updates can be communicated by the executive.

PROUX: Inquired into whether there could be a redacted version of the spreadsheet shared with the Committee.

BHATNAGAR: Responded that the website will be launched in the next two weeks. Noted that the Executive can share a redacted version if the website cannot be launched by this time.

SUNDAY/BELCOURT MOVED to enter the meeting in camera.
10/0/0 - CARRIED

2019-03/4 **INFORMATION ITEMS**

2019-03/4a ARRC Minutes (ARRC-2019-02-M) - Tuesday, June 11, 2019.

See ARRC-2019-03.01.

2019-03/4b ARRC Progress Overview - Presentation.

See ARRC-2019-03.02.

2019-03/5 **ADJOURNMENT**

SUNDAY: Adjourned the meeting at 6:30pm.

2019-03/5a **Next Meeting:** Tuesday, July 9, 2019 at 5:00PM in SUB 0-48.

2019/2020 Budget

| ARRC BUDGET | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Item | Price | Description |
| <i>Elder (\$1070.00)</i> | | |
| Elder's Honorarium | \$1000.00 | \$250.00 per honorarium = 4 visits |
| Parking | \$40.00 | Parking rate for 4 visits |
| Elder Food & Drink | \$30.00 | To pay for food and drink when Elder visits ARRC. Food/drink for Council meetings is free. |
| Gift | N/A | This can be something small, it's more about intent. |
| <i>Medicine (\$71.63)</i> | | |
| Ceremonial Tobacco | \$61.63 | 4 packages of ceremonial tobacco from Indigenous company. |
| Smudge | N/A | N/A |
| Print/Flag(s) | \$10.00 | Flags are 2 metres each and available at First Peoples' House . |
| <i>Outreach (\$1000.00)</i> | | |
| Student Engagement | \$1000.00 | Town hall, Recommendations launch, brochures, etc. |
| <i>Miscellaneous (\$266.00)</i> | | |
| TRC/UNDRIP Booklets | \$266.00 | \$7.00 per booklet x 38 members of Students' Council. |
| Total: \$2407.62 | | |



ABORIGINAL RELATIONS AND RECONCILIATION COMMITTEE

Report #2

XX XXXX 2019

Students' Council
University of Alberta Students Union
Students' Union Building, University of Alberta
8900 114 Street NW
Edmonton AB, T6G 2J7

RE: ARRC Chair's Report

Dear Students' Council:

I am writing this report on behalf of the Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Committee (hereafter, "ARRC"), a committee of Students' Council given the delegated authority to advance and promote reconciliation within the Students' Union.

In accordance with section 1 of the ARRC Standing Orders, the following report has been submitted to the University of Alberta Students' Union. Furthermore, this report remains consistent with the ARRC Recommendations and the following five pillars of our mandate:

- **Pillar I:** We cultivate relationships.
- **Pillar II:** We empower students to take action.
- **Pillar III:** We create space for discussion, understanding, and vulnerability.
- **Pillar IV:** We actualize change.
- **Pillar V:** We educate our community.

Lastly, this report has also been reviewed and approved by the members of the Committee pursuant to Section 10(5) of ARRC's Standing Orders.

1. Introduction

In keeping with the above principles and documents, this report is intended to provide a condensed analysis of Aboriginal student experiences and statistics. As a number of reports have recently been released about Aboriginal students at the University of Alberta, this report acts as a consolidation of information. This report is intended to provide members of Students' Council, and anyone wishing to read it, with knowledge on the Aboriginal student experiences. As stated in the ARRC Recommendations, education is essential in bridging the divide between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. This report intends to educate readers on the University of Alberta-specific Aboriginal community; drawing heavily on the following reports:

- Identity Matters 2: Ancestral Diversity & Aboriginality;
- 2018 Annual Survey Report;
- 2018-19 Annual Undergraduate Enrolment Report; and
- University-provided statistics.

The reports conducted by the Students' Union ("Identity Matters 2: Ancestral Diversity & Aboriginality" and "2018 Annual Survey Report") drew on the ARRC Recommendations published in 2019. The information in these reports further corroborates and strengthens the ARRC Recommendations.

It is important to note that the Aboriginal community at the University of Alberta, like the Aboriginal community nationally, is incredibly diverse. This report is meant to act as a starting point for members of Students' Council wishing to engage Aboriginal students within their respective faculties. I encourage us all to reach out to Aboriginal students, as well as People of Colour and LGBTQ2S+ individuals, so that our advocacy can be more robust and fulsome.

2. Aboriginal Students at the U of A: A Snapshot

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Currently, there are 1,175 self-identified¹ Aboriginal student enrolled at the University of Alberta, making up 3.7% of the total undergraduate population.² According to information obtained from the Office of the Registrar, the following is the current enrolment (as of Winter 2018) of Aboriginal students by Faculty:

| Faculty | Total Registered | Approx. % of Pop. |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| ALES | 69 | 4.5% |
| Arts | 219 | 7.7% |
| Augustana | 56 | 5.5% |
| Business | 28 | 1.4% |
| Education | 225 | 7.7% |
| Engineering | 57 | 1.3% |
| FSJ | 17 | 2.3% |
| KSR | 41 | 4.1% |
| Law | 29 | 5.1% |
| Medicine/Dentistry | 30 | 2.9% |
| Native Studies | 101 | 50.5% |
| Nursing | 50 | 4.2% |
| Open Studies | 147 | 12.0% |
| Pharmacy | <i>Does not meet the threshold for safe disclosure</i> | |

¹ As stated in *From 'lifting the whole people' to learning 'to lift each other up': Final Report for the Office of the Provost*, "it should be noted that self-identification is a complex issue due to the Indian Act and the history of the federal government defining who is Aboriginal and who is not. For different reasons many Aboriginal students choose not to self-identify which means that the numbers of Aboriginal students at the UofA could be higher" (p. 7).

² Office of the Registrar, *Annual Report on Undergraduate Enrolment 2018/19* (Edmonton: University of Alberta, 2019), 30.

| | | |
|---------|----|------|
| Science | 90 | 1.4% |
|---------|----|------|

Together, the following statistics and data provide a demographic snapshot of Aboriginal students at the University of Alberta. As stated above, this report acts as a consolidation of reports, statistics, and other documentation that relate to Aboriginal students. The following are points of interest that are intended to, collectively, provide a situation analysis on the generalized Aboriginal undergraduate population.

Demographics

In comparison to the general undergraduate student population, the Aboriginal student population trended significantly older.³ This is in contrast to the national Aboriginal population in which the Aboriginal population is younger than the non-Aboriginal population [32.1 years vs. 40.9 years].⁴ The Aboriginal student population had similar gender ratios to the general population.

Aboriginal students are nearly four (4) times more likely to be parents.⁵ According to a survey conducted by the Students' Union, Aboriginal students-who-parent were more likely to select the gender identity of 'non-binary or other' (28.6% vs. 9.1% male vs. 11.2% female).⁶

In investigating Aboriginal housing trends as a result of the ARRC Recommendations, the *2018 Undergraduate Survey Report* found that:

³ Jonathan Olfert and Stephanie Hammond-Thrasher, *2018 Undergraduate Survey Report* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Students' Union, 2019), 21, <https://www.su.ualberta.ca/media/uploads/1143/IdentityMatters2June2019.pdf>.

⁴ "Aboriginal Peoples in Canada: Key Results from the 2016 Census," Statistics Canada, updated October 25, 2017, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/171025/dq171025a-eng.htm>.

⁵ Alisha Bhakri et al., *Identity Matters 2: Ancestral Diversity & Aboriginality* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Students' Union, 2019), 13, <https://www.su.ualberta.ca/media/uploads/1143/IdentityMatters2June2019.pdf>.

⁶ Olfert and Hammond-Thrasher, *2018 Undergraduate*, 13.

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FNMI/Indigenous students tend to be older; are more likely to live with [a] partner/spouse, children, or extended family; are less likely to live with parents or guardians at any age; and are more likely to live alone off campus.

and

FNMI/Indigenous students [...] appear to face a significant risk of being evicted or forced from their residence. This result is consistent with the ARRC Recommendations, which note that culturally sensitive housing opportunities are a priority for FNMI/Indigenous students. It is also concerning in light of the high proportion of FNMI/Indigenous Students who parent.

Financial Security

Not including third-party/First Nations, Metis, or Inuit sponsorship, 64% of Aboriginal students received financial aid during the 2017/18 academic year.⁷ However, financial support issued to Aboriginal students are not consistent with Aboriginal enrolment rates:

Of the \$3.6M in financial supports issued to Indigenous students, 66 per cent (\$2.4M) was awarded to students who self-declared as Metis [53% of Aboriginal student pop.], followed by Status First Nations at 24 per cent (\$879,722) [37% of Aboriginal student pop.].⁸

Although Aboriginal financial supports have increased over the last 2 years, so have emergency loans.⁹ This may be indicative of recent statistics which show that Aboriginal student *may* face a higher risk of food insecurity.¹⁰ This is further compacted by the fact that, as stated above, Aboriginal students face a disproportionate risk of being evicted

⁷ Office of the Registrar, *Annual Report on Undergraduate Student Financial Support 2017/18* (Edmonton: University of Alberta, 2018), 19.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ According to the *2018 Undergraduate Survey report*, “16% of FNMI/Indigenous students skip meals once or twice a week due to the cost of food, compared to 11% of non-Indigenous students” (p. 72).

or forced from their residence. Together, this is troubling, especially in light of the high proportion of Aboriginal students-who parent.

In terms of Students' Union-specific employment, the *2018 Undergraduate Survey Report* found that:

Other population of interest [i.e., LGBTQ2S+, POC, women, etc.] are very strongly represented within the SU, but Aboriginal students appear slightly underrepresented. In keeping with ARRC's recommendation [...] we see a need for stronger Indigenous recruitment.¹¹

Involvement in Governance

Aboriginal students are significantly less likely than other students to hold leadership roles, despite the fact that Aboriginal students tend to have a great interest in involvement/leadership.¹² Troublingly, this is actualized by the fact that, since its founding in 1908, there has not been an Aboriginal person on the Students' Union Executive Committee. Moreover, Aboriginal students are severely underrepresented on Students' Council, with available information suggesting that the 2018-2019 Students' Council saw the most Aboriginal councillors in one year (3 Aboriginal Councillors).

The fact that Aboriginal students are more likely to be students-who-parent presents significant challenges to engagement in governance. Aboriginal students are more likely to cite family commitments as a primary obstacle to involvement than non-Aboriginal students (23% vs. 17%). Although steps have been taken to attempt to alleviate this burden - ARRC's recommendation for a students-who-parent Political Policy and Executive Compensation Review Committee's recommendation to create an Executive childcare subsidy - more needs to be done on the basis of equity to support Aboriginal student involvement in leadership and governance. In terms of the Students' Union, unless more is done to tackle the structural racism and systemic barriers inherent in leadership positions, the 111 history of Aboriginal exclusion from the Executive Committee will persist.

¹¹ Olfert and Hammond-Thrasher, *2018 Undergraduate*, 77.

¹² Ilisha Bhakri et al., *Identity Matters* 2, 1-2.

In terms of general campus involvement and leadership, Aboriginal women are less likely than Aboriginal men to get involved or consider a leadership role.¹³ Interestingly, however, Aboriginal women are more likely than Aboriginal men to hold a leadership role.¹⁴

Lastly, research by the Students' Union shows that Aboriginal students report the need for Aboriginal-specific mentorship programs and programming.

Health and Wellness

Research by Nelson and Wilson show that:

Mental health practices as they currently exist [in the mainstream] are rooted in a colonial system and therefore do not adequately take the perspectives of their Indigenous clients into account. This in turn results in culturally inappropriate services that are inadequate in responding to clients' needs.¹⁵

Realizing the distinct history of Aboriginal Peoples (i.e., colonialism, residential schools, intergenerational trauma) and the importance many place on culture, the ARRC recommended mental wellness services directed towards Aboriginal students embody cultural safety.¹⁶ This preliminary understanding was reinforced through Aboriginal student engagement, in which students told the ARRC about the importance of Aboriginal-specific and culturally-based wellness services.

¹³ Ibid., 15.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Sarah E. Nelson and Kathi Wilson, "The Mental Health of Indigenous Peoples in Canada: A Critical Review of Research," *Social Science & Medicine* 176 (2017): 97, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2017.01.021>

¹⁶ Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Committee, *Aboriginal Relations & Reconciliation Committee (ARRC) Recommendations* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Students' Union, 2019), 7.

In light of the fact that Aboriginal students have been identified by the University of Alberta as needing additional mental health support,¹⁷ more research is needed about the University of Alberta-specific needs of Aboriginal students in the context of mental wellness.

3. Conclusion

This report has been submitted to Students' Council based on a request for more information about Aboriginal students at the University of Alberta. This report provides an overgeneralized overview of Aboriginal students based on a number of documents from both the Students' Union and University administration.

If you have any questions regarding the contents of this report, please don't hesitate to contact me or attend ARRC.

Thank you,

Nathan Sunday, Chair
(submitted electronically)

¹⁷ University of Alberta, *Student Mental Health at the University of Alberta: An Overview* (Edmonton: University of Alberta, 2015), 17, <https://cloudfront.ualberta.ca/-/media/ualberta/office-of-the-provost-and-vice-president/vice-provost-and-dean-of-students/documents/reports/mentalhealthreport-overviewoct262015.pdf>