What We Heard...

ARRC Town Hall
September 27, 2018
Outline

- Overview of Town Hall.
- Who Attended.
- Feedback Received.
- Questions.
Overview of Town Hall
The event acted as the last engagement push regarding the recommendations.

The recommendations were condensed and presented in four (4) categories:

1. Students’ Council;
2. Advocacy;
3. Education; and
4. Operational.

A “reconciliation wall” was enacted at the front of the room and asked students the question, “what does reconciliation mean to you?”
Students’ Council

The recommendations of ARRC surrounding Students’ Council include:

- The creation of a task force dealing with representation and diversity on Students’ Council. This task force should be delegated the authority to review the current model of Students’ Council-in relations to Council and student feedback, as well as other university models-and make recommendations on it.
- Increase transparency in regards to its work and advocacy for students.
- Expand the current Students’ Union Truth and Reconciliation Political Policy.
- Host Council-wide town halls semi-regularly.
Advocacy

The recommendations of ARRC surrounding advocacy include:

- Increasing access to child care;
- Implementing Indigenous knowledge in the classroom;
- Building the Maskwa House of Learning;
- Engage with First Nations and First Nations communities;
- Ensuring Aboriginal Students across North Campus, Augustana, and Campus St. Jean have access to culturally-relevant services; and
- Aboriginal-specific academic advising positions.
The recommendations of ARRC surrounding education include:

- High level management in the Students’ Union (including executives) receive anti-oppression training; and
- Create more opportunities for undergraduate students to learn about Aboriginal Peoples.
Operational

The recommendations of ARRC surrounding operational include:

- The Students’ Union shall conduct an internal organization review focused on providing recommendations on future reconciliatory efforts;
- Hire elders and traditional knowledge keepers;
- The creation of an internal Department of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation;
- Incorporate Indigenous knowledge into undergraduate orientation events;
- Provide employment opportunities for Aboriginal students and people-of-colour;
- Create Aboriginal-specific Students’ Union awards;
- Increase the prevalence of Aboriginal art within the Students’ Union collection;
- Create a mural within SUB depicting the treaty relationship; and
- Create a stride-like program which focuses on race, Aboriginality, and ethnicity.
Who Attended?
An estimated seventy (70) individuals participated, including:

- Undergraduate students
- Masters students
- University of Alberta faculty and staff;
- Students’ Union employees; and
- Members of Students’ Council.

Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people participated.

145 pieces of feedback (excluding the reconciliation wall) were received.
Feedback Received
General Feedback

- Participants enjoyed being involved and engaged by Students’ Council.
- Cheryl Makokis provided great insight through stories and teachings.
- No comments were negative regarding the Students’ Union’s attempt to incorporate reconciliation.
- All feedback was constructive and help better solidify the position of ARRC.
Students’ Council Feedback

- In regards to creating a task force to delve into the issue of representation and diversity: “Is it possible to make a task force without members of Council? Like no Councillors on the Committee.”
  - “Worried about a slippery slope.”
  - “How do we prioritize Indigenous voices on this task force?”
- “Transparency is one thing, engagement in Council advocacy amongst students is another.”
  - “In what ways can the SU do this?”
- In regards to Council-wide Town Halls, “What does this have to do with ARRC?”
  - “What is the intent of future Town Halls?”
Advocacy Feedback

- “Native Studies course requirement for all.”

- “Allowing children to come to class, especially breastfed babies.”

- Engage Metis & Inuit communities/organizations.

- In regards to having culturally relevant services across the University (including Campus St. Jean): “This is soooo important! Why can’t we have a fire going when we have ceremony?”
Education Feedback

- In regards to SU management receiving anti-oppression training: “All people within SU should have to take this! AND complete the Indigenous Canada MOOC!”

- In regards to creating opportunities for undergraduates to learn about Aboriginal Peoples: “What does this actually look like? Tangible examples would be great.”
  - “Does this include supporting students? Like to hold these things?”
  - “…to learn from Aboriginal Peoples.”
  - “Events, ceremonies, classes.”
Operational Feedback (1)

- In reference to an internal organization review: “In partnership with Aboriginal Student Council and Native Studies Students’ Association.”
  - “Engage other groups, not relying solely on FNs. Community recommendations.”
- In reference to hiring elders and traditional knowledge keepers: “Any youth? Community members of FNMI communities?”
- In reference to incorporating Indigenous knowledge into undergraduate orientation events: “Into all undergrad/grad programs!”
Operational Feedback (2)

- In reference to providing employment opportunities for Aboriginal students and people-of-colour: “So does this mean giving advantage?”
  - “Specific amount? Rational?”
- In reference to creating Aboriginal-specific Students’ Union awards: “I like this!”
- In reference to the SU increasing the prevalence of Aboriginal art within its collection: “More art around campus would greatly be beneficial! :)
- In reference to creating a stride-like program focusing on Aboriginality and race: “Yes to this! SU is hella ‘colour blind’.”
Reconciliation Wall

- “Coming together”
- “Grandmother/Grandfather teachings”
- “Wahkohtowin”
- “Understanding”
- “Learning and listening”
Common Themes

- More recommendations need to be crafted regarding students who parent.
- We are on the right track regarding the recommendations, with all participants in support of reconciliation within the SU.
- Education for all students is important to dispel myths and bring us closer.
- The incorporation of Indigenous knowledge is important in all facets of life.
“Children are so important, we need to do this heavy work so our future generations are safe and successful.”
Questions?