



Meeting Notes

MEETING OF THE ABORIGINAL COUNCIL OF QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY (ACQU)

Monday, February 5, 2018, 6:30-8:30pm, Richardson Hall, Room 340

Present

Benoit-Antoine Bacon	Provost & V-P (Academic)
Marlene Brant-Castellano	Co-Chair & Council Elder
Carol Ann Budd	Alumna, Community Representative
Laurel Claus-Johnson	Katarowki Grandmother's Council
Leslie Flynn	Vice Dean, Education (Faculty of Health Sciences)
Shannon Halley	Education Student Society Representative
Sarah Hanson	Co-President, Queen's Native Students Association
Kanohsyonne (Janice Hill)	Director, Office of Indigenous Initiatives, Council Secretary
Melanie Howard	Director, Aboriginal Access to Engineering
mireille lapointe	Ardoch Algonquin First Nation
Jason LeBlanc	Tungasvvingat Inuit
Amanda Kilabuk	Tungasvvingat Inuit
Lindsay Morcom	Director, Aboriginal Teacher Education Program
Teri Shearer	Deputy Provost (Academic Operations & Inclusion)
Natasha Stirrett	Society of Graduate & Professional Students & Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement Representative
Ann Tierney	Co-Chair and Vice-Provost and Dean of Student Affairs
Tara Wilson	Co-President, Queen's Native Students Association
Kandice Baptiste	Director, Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre
Dwight Bero Jr.	Akwesasne Mohawk Board of Education

Observers

Mishiikenh (Vernon Altman)	Elder-in-Residence and Cultural Counsellor, Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre
Carlyn McQueen	Coordinator, Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic)
Ellie Sadinsky	Executive Director, Office of the Vice-Provost and Dean, Student Affairs

Guests

Brenda Brouwer	Vice-Provost and Dean, School of Graduate Studies
Marta Straznicky	Associate Dean, School of Graduate Studies

The Aboriginal Caucus of Council met prior to the Council meeting.

1. Opening Prayer

- Mishiikenh (Vernon Altman) shared Opening Words from the Anishinaabe tradition.

2. Co-Chairs' Remarks

- Ann Tierney, Vice-Provost and Dean of Student Affairs, provided an update on the expansion of Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre. Construction will begin in early spring and it is anticipated that renovations will be completed by August 2018. Various stakeholders have been consulted on the design of the new space, which will incorporate both Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee traditions.
- Ann welcomed Kandice Baptiste, the new Director of Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre, to the meeting. Kandice most recently worked as Manager, Indigenous Initiatives, at Wilfrid Laurier University, where her responsibilities included managing the Indigenous Student Centre and its staff at the Brantford campus. Ann had the chance to work with Kandice when she was a senior project coordinator at the Council of Ontario Universities in Toronto, where she guided the development of the "Future Further" campaign.
- Marlene Brant-Castellano advised Council that Aboriginal Caucus elected Carol Ann Budd as the incoming ACQU Community Co-Chair. Carol Ann will shadow Marlene for the next three months before assuming the role of co-chair.
- It was noted that the two candidates for community co-chair were exemplary in their service to Queen's and to local community organizations. As the ACQU executive team has a high volume of work, Marlene noted that candidate Laurel Claus-Johnson may be called upon to lend her skills to the team.
- Aboriginal Caucus had a detailed discussion regarding improving research practices when working with Indigenous communities. It was noted that at the leadership level, there is an increasing awareness that Indigenous communities need to be partners and beneficiaries of the research, and that research must address needs identified by the community.
- Marlene noted that many Queen's researchers have expressed the desire to learn how to conduct respectful and collaborative community-based research, students want to be trained on ethical research practices, and universities are recognizing that need to invest the time and resources to ensure best practices are followed.
- The Ad Hoc Research Collaboration with Indigenous Communities Working Group is planning a daylong event focused on practical strategies for building mutually

respectful research partnerships with Indigenous communities. The session will build on the highly successful workshop held in October that attracted more than 80 participants.

3. Adoption of Agenda

- The agenda was adopted as circulated.

4. Report from Provost

- Provost Benoit-Antoine Bacon noted that good progress is being made on implementing the TRC Task Force recommendations, and that steps are being taken to create lasting change on campus.
- Irène Bujara has retired from her position as University Advisor on Equity and Human Rights as of January 31, 2018. In lieu of a celebration, Irène requested that the university make a donation to the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health in honor of Leo Yerxa, an Ojibwe artist who gave generously of his time and talent to Queen's and the Office's many projects for over 25 years, and who passed away in September 2017.
- Stephanie Simpson, who previously served as the Director of the Human Rights Office, has accepted the appointment of Executive Director (Human Rights and Equity Offices) and University Advisor on Equity and Human Rights. In this role, Stephanie will play a key role in implementing diversity and inclusion initiatives, and guiding the university on legislative compliance with respect to human rights, accessibility, and equity.
- The Principal has signed Queen's Strategic Mandate Agreement with the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development. There are five aspects to the agreement: student experience, research, teaching, equity and access, and innovation and partnerships. An important piece of the agreement is that it outlines the university's commitment to serving Indigenous students, including providing comprehensive and culturally tailored support services; increasing enrolment among Indigenous students through targeted recruitment activities, outreach programming and alternate admissions pathways; and offering programs that focus on Indigenous content.
- Kanonhsyonne Janice Hill delivered a presentation on the implementation the TRC Task Force recommendations and highlighted a number of key initiatives outlined in the progress report provided to Council.

5. Office of Indigenous Initiatives Update: Indigenous Pathways to Education

- Kanonhsyonne Janice Hill provided an update on the Pathways for Indigenous Learners Circle initiative, which is funded by the Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT) and is made up of 17 partner institutions, including colleges, universities, and Aboriginal institutes.

- The aim of the collective is to develop bridging and pathway initiatives to support the mobilization of Indigenous post-secondary learners across the sector (i.e. diploma to degree, certificate to diploma, degree to degree, etc.)
- Participating universities, colleges, and Aboriginal Institutes will also ensure they have ‘wrap-around’ support services to assist in the seamless transition of Indigenous learners, such as financial support, academic advising, access to Elders, housing assistance, etc.
- The collective has led to the establishment of several partnerships among Ontario institutions, and Queen’s is in discussions with the University of Sudbury, George Brown College, and Mohawk College to explore potential partnerships. All partnerships will be formalized through articulation agreements, which will outline the transfer of credits between programs and support services to be provided.
- Queen’s Office of Indigenous Initiatives and the Centre for Policy and Research in Indigenous Learning at Confederation College will host a workshop at Queen’s on March 7, 2018, for faculty and staff from institutions involved in the Pathways Collective. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about the work that the collective has completed to date and engage in exploring potential partnerships and collaborations within their institutions.

6. Faculty & Community Presentations

a. Katarokwi Grandmothers' Council

- Laurel Claus-Johnson presented an overview of the work of the Katarokwi Grandmothers' Council.
- The Council began three years ago as a group of Indigenous, and eventually non-Indigenous, women to provide guidance and cultural ceremonies for parents and youth in the community.
- The Council is made up of members from various backgrounds, beliefs and religions, and is open to all. Their mandate is to support Indigenous cultures and “returning to our ways” in terms of community support, participating in ceremonial practices, and social gatherings.
- The Council typically holds four ceremonies a year, which are scheduled around the seasonal changes. These ceremonies and gatherings are designed to help provide community and support for urban Indigenous families.

b. School of Graduate Studies

- Brenda Brouwer, Vice-Provost and Dean, School of Graduate Studies (SGS) and Marta Straznicky, Associate Dean (SGS) delivered a presentation on the ongoing efforts to increase Indigenous enrolment in graduate studies, and support inclusivity and community engagement.
- Recent initiatives include taking steps to ensure equitable access to graduate studies at

Queen's, orientation activities for Indigenous graduate students and their families, enhancing support resources like the Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement (SAGE) Nest, workshop offerings, and strategies to support and showcase research by Indigenous students or focused on Indigenous communities.

- SGS is also working to enhance awareness of Indigenous histories and knowledge systems through intercultural awareness training and program offerings.
- An important priority for SGS is to enhance awareness of what equitable research means in the context of research with Indigenous communities.
- It was noted that student and faculty researchers must take steps to understand the needs of individual communities, the importance of relationship building, and using appropriate and collaborative research methods that acknowledge different ways of knowing.
- Council members discussed the need for research to go beyond collaboration and to be co-developed with Indigenous communities from the ground up. For this to be successful, there also needs to be increased capacity in communities to help with this work. Working in partnership by, for example, having members of the community assist in the collection of data, increases participation and improves outcomes.
- Brenda advised that she would like to continue exploring these ideas with members of Council who are interested.

7. Graduate Research with Indigenous Communities

- Marlene continued the discussion on the work underway within the Queen's community to better understand how to conduct collaborative research, noting that research programs should be driven by community identified needs.
- It was noted that the national research councils are grappling with these questions and exploring how to address these changes.
- An important function of the Ad Hoc Committee on Research Collaboration with Indigenous Communities is to raise awareness about the need for researchers to think about their position within the Canadian research enterprise as it affects Indigenous people, and to ask what they can do to ensure an equitable, engaged, and collaborative approach.
- It was noted that this initiative may also lead to an improvement in research culture overall, in addition to Indigenous focused research.

8. Appointment Process for ACQU Co-Chairs

- Marlene summarized the proposed ACQU co-chair appointment process, as outlined in the overview provided in the agenda package.
- It was noted that the Council should explore the need for a nominating committee to support the co-chair election process.
- The appointment process will come to ACQU for formal approval at the April 30 meeting.

9. Terminology Discussion

- Kanonhsyonne Janice Hill advised that she has had requests for input on the use of terminology such as Indigenous and Aboriginal, and if one term should be made standard across the university.
- She noted that this conversation has taken place at the provincial Reference Group on Aboriginal Education and individuals had varying opinions on the subject.
- The committee discussed some of the complexities of using one term over another, and various opinions were raised.
- As there are many aspects to take into consideration, the Office of Indigenous Initiatives was asked to prepare a briefing note on the subject for the next agenda package to be discussed by the Aboriginal Caucus and Council.

10. ACQU Annual Report to Senate

- Ann and Marlene provided an overview of the ACQU annual report, noting that it is meant to summarize Council's activities throughout the year, as well as highlight news stories on Indigenous initiatives, faculty, staff and students.
- Ann asked that any revisions to the report be submitted to the Office of Indigenous Initiatives by February 8.

Stakeholder and Student Reports

- Melanie Howard, Director, Aboriginal Access to Engineering (AAE), noted that Queen's engineering outreach team received the Actua Experience Award for Indigenous Youth in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The team was recognized for their work in the community to increase Indigenous student engagement in STEM fields. Actua is a Canadian STEM youth outreach network representing 35 university and college based members.
- In addition, the Actua Network recently received \$10M from the Government of Canada's new CanCode Program. The program is meant to support youth engagement in coding and ensure young people are equipped with the digital skills required for modern employment. Queen's AAE program will receive \$230,000 of this funding, which will help significantly in expanding outreach initiatives.

Closing Prayer/Adjournment

- Kanonhsyonne Janice Hill welcomed Dwight Bero, Post-Secondary Manager, Akwesasne Mohawk Board of Education, and Amanda Kilabuk, Manager of Education and Employment, Tungasvvingat Inuit, as the newest members of Council.
- Mishiikenh (Vernon Altman) delivered Closing Words from the Anishinaabe tradition.