



Aboriginal Council of Queen's University

2017 Annual Report

Introduction

The Aboriginal Council of Queen's University (ACQU) provides advice to the university and is mandated to be involved in all decisions affecting Aboriginal programs and services at Queen's.

In 2017, Council continued to be engaged in the work of the university's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Task Force, and several members attended the March campus event marking the release of the task force report. Council was also consulted on how to position the value of self-identification to students, how to integrate territorial acknowledgement at campus events and gatherings, and on the university's approach to Indigenous research.

Council normally meets three times per year. The Council's [website](#) includes information about the Council's mandate, [membership](#), and activities, including [meeting summaries](#). There were three meetings of Council in 2017. What follows are highlights from these meetings.

January 23, 2017 Aboriginal Caucus and Council meeting, Queen's campus

Council Co-Chair Marlene Brant Castellano led a meeting of Council's Aboriginal Caucus prior to the full Council meeting.

At Council, Provost Benoit-Antoine Bacon noted the ongoing work of the TRC Task Force, and new initiatives at Queen's that align with TRC recommendations, including the development of two Indigenous languages certificates (Call to Action 16): Indigenous Languages (Mohawk, Inuktitut and Ojibway), and Mohawk language and culture.

The Provost informed Council that the Principal has established an implementation committee to review past reports on racism, inclusion and diversity, identify barriers to implementing past recommendations, and the steps needed to remove these barriers at the university. He noted that while the work of the TRC Task Force is closely connected, the two initiatives should not be "lumped together".

Council received a presentation from Queen's National Scholar Dr. Norman Vorano. Dr. Vorano is assistant professor in the Department of Art History and Art Conservation, and curator of Indigenous art at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre. Dr. Vorano spoke about his research on Cape Dorset prints, an online exhibition of the Canadian Museum of History in Ottawa, and about the more positive role that museums can play in the lives of Indigenous peoples using technology.

Dr. Vorano also spoke of the exhibition he curated at the Agnes, *Picturing Arctic Modernity Baffin Island*, which ran from January to April 2017. The exhibit included Inuit pencil and paper sketches from 1964 that recorded traditional knowledge before encroaching Southern influences transformed their way of life. Dr. Vorano then added video and audio commentary that he collected from some of those very same artists, their descendants and communities more than 50 years after the drawings were made.



Queen's National Scholar Norman Vorano discusses the North Baffin drawings with guests at Queen's Agnes Etherington Art Centre. In September 2017, Dr. Vorano was one of five Canadian scholars to receive a prestigious Pierre Elliot Trudeau Foundation Fellowship. This award will allow him to complete the second phase of the project, which is to work with the communities to build a culturally-appropriate reciprocal network that links this collection, and possibly other Arctic collections from

museums around the world, to their communities of origin. The fellowship is one of the most competitive awards available to humanities and social science scholars in Canada.

Council also discussed how to position a new self-identification mechanism being developed in Queen's student information system (SOLUS), with funding from the provincial government's Targeted Initiatives Fund.

Until now, the only opportunity to self-identify was open to undergraduate students applying through the Ontario University Application Centre. Queen's Division of Student Affairs hired Lauren Winkler (ArtSci'17, JD'20) in summer 2016 to undertake research, conduct an environmental scan, and



consult with stakeholders, on and off campus, to determine an appropriate mechanism and text to provide all Queen's students with the ability to self-identify at any time during their studies, and change their information at any time. Ms. Winkler sought Council's views on the draft text, and on questions related to the promotion of the mechanism in preparation for its launch in May 2017.

Release of the TRC Task Force Report

On March 21 2017, Queen's marked the release of the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission Task Force Final Report](#) with a celebration at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre.



The event, hosted by Principal Daniel Woolf, brought together Queen's and Kingston community members, as well as Indigenous partners, including members of the ACQU. In his remarks, the Principal announced the creation of an Office of Indigenous Initiatives that will facilitate and coordinate university-wide initiatives in support of the TRC Task Force's recommendations.

May 1, 2017 Aboriginal Caucus and Council meeting, Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory

Council's Aboriginal Caucus met prior to the Council meeting.

At Council, the Provost gratefully acknowledged the significant role of Aboriginal Council in building the path to the university's TRC Task Force and Final Report. He noted progress made to date to advance the Indigenous presence and Indigenous learning at Queen's with much more to come to enhance the visibility of the Indigenous community across campus. The Provost said diversity and inclusivity has been a theme that has defined the year for the university, with the completion of the TRC Task Force's work, and the report of the Principal's Implementation Committee on Racism, Diversity and Inclusion, released in April 2017. He said this focus has opened many doors and possibilities for the future. He noted the appointment of Deputy Provost Teri Shearer as senior lead for equity and diversity at Queen's, who will have responsibility for the Office of Indigenous Initiatives.

TRC Task Force Co-Chairs Jill Scott and Mark Green spoke to Council of the "fruitful" tension that exists in efforts to take immediate action on the task force's recommendations and doing this well. They noted planning is underway in all units, and implementation support and

guidance will be available. They said everyone at the university has a responsibility to support the implementation of the recommendations.

Council received a presentation from Dr. Dylan Robinson, Canada Research Chair, Indigenous Arts, on his research into the history of contemporary Indigenous public art across North America, questioning how Indigenous rights and settler colonialism are embodied and spatialized in public space.

Dr. Lindsay Morcom, director of the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program, advised Council that she will be travelling with three student in Summer 2017 to the University of Western Australia for the Matariki Indigenous Student Mobility program. Queen's is a member of the Matariki Network, a group of seven research intensive universities around the world. Council discussed how the university could enhance the promotion of this opportunity to eligible students, and also requested that Dr. Morcom report back on the trip with recommendations for enhancing Queen's participation in the program.

Co-Chair Marlene Brant Castellano reported to Council on the Aboriginal Caucus' discussion of education and training related to the undertaking of Indigenous research. Caucus advice is that every person with decision-making responsibility in the research process (students, ethics boards, research services etc) be offered training and education to build trust and provide an orientation to the unique demands of Indigenous research, the language and approach. It was determined that a working committee, in partnership with the School of Graduate Studies, and connected to Council's Indigenous Knowledge, Curriculum and Research Working Group could be established. Membership was discussed and a proposal will be developed for discussion in the fall.

Council members provided guidance on an approach to language for territorial acknowledgements at campus events and activities, and discussed the merits of having one recommended statement, while encouraging individuals to be flexible and tailor their words to be inclusive of those present, and respond to the context of the event.

Co-Chairs Brant Castellano and Ann Tierney sought and received approval from Council that the nominating committee consider and fill member vacancies among both the university and community constituencies.

Kanohsyonne (Janice Hill) appointed Director of Indigenous Initiatives at Queen's

On September 22, 2017, the university announced Kanohsyonne (Janice Hill) as the inaugural Director of the new Office of Indigenous Initiatives.

“I congratulate Jan on this new role, and I look forward to the opportunities for growth and reconciliation we are setting in motion,” said Principal and Vice-Chancellor Daniel Woolf. “This appointment recognizes her deep and long-standing commitment to promoting Indigenous cultures and traditions, including her efforts at Queen’s. Her student-centred approach and passion for teaching and learning are an example to us all.”



Ms. Hill has served as the Director of the Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre since 2010. She has been actively involved in facilitating Indigenous initiatives throughout the university, including coordinating the revitalization of the Aboriginal Council and serving as its secretary, supporting the development of the Indigenous Studies Minor, and serving as an integral member of Queen’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission Task Force. Ms. Hill is also deeply engaged in Indigenous education through many different provincial and national organizations. Learn more about Ms. Hill in [this Gazette profile](#).

October 10, 2017 Aboriginal Caucus and Council meeting, Queen’s Campus

The Council’s Aboriginal Caucus, led by Council Co-Chair Marlene Brant Castellano, met prior to the full Council meeting.

Council Co-Chairs Marlene Brant Castellano and Ann Tierney introduced the new roster of members for 2017-18. They also presented the nominating committee’s recommendations for the staggering of university community members over time, and a presentation schedule to provide opportunities for university and community representatives to talk about priorities, programs, challenges, and ideas for collaborative initiatives.

Co-Chair Brant Castellano advised Council that this would be her last year serving on Council. The nominating committee recommends that both co-chair positions operate as follows: Incomign Co-Chair (1 year); Co-Chair (2 years), and Past Co-Chair (1 year) to support continuity and provide guidance. Once all Council member acceptances are finalized, the Caucus will be engaged to select the incoming Co-Chair; the university senior administration will do the same for the university position.

In his remarks, Provost Bacon led Council’s congratulations to Kanonhsyonne (Janice Hill) on her appointment as Director of the Office of Indigenous Initiatives, and said that he and Deputy Provost (Academic Operations and Inclusion) Teri Shearer are looking forward to working with her, and learning from her in the years ahead.

He reported that first-year self-identified Indigenous applications and offers continue to rise, and first-year enrolment has remained relatively stable. He highlighted an increase in faculty

appointments, a total of 36 in 2017, including the arrival of the two Queen's National Scholars that he mentioned to Council in January, who will strengthen Queen's scholarship in Indigenous Studies:



Dr. Michael Doxtater is an award-winning documentarian and scholar of international stature, who has joined the departments of Languages, Literatures and Cultures, and Global Development Studies. A member of the Haudenosaunee Nation, and fluent in Kanyen'keha (Mohawk), Dr. Doxtater plans to develop a Centre of Excellence Dedicated to Aboriginal Recovery (CEDAR) that would place Queen's at the forefront in the growing field of applied, land-based pedagogies.

Dr. Isabelle St-Armand is a QNS in Aboriginal and Migrant Literatures; she is appointed to the departments of French Studies and Languages, Literatures and Cultures in the Faculty of Arts and Science. She will enhance the scholarship of Aboriginal Francoophone Literature, and provide a strong link to Aboriginal Anglophone Literature. She will also contribute significantly to the university's new graduate program in Transcultural and Linguistics Studies



The Provost announced that the Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre is doubling in size, [expanding to the house next door](#) to its current location at 146 Barrie Street.



The university has engaged Two Row Architect, a firm based in Six Nations that has worked on many post-secondary campuses to design renovations to both buildings. Consultations with students, staff, faculty, and community members took place over the summer to identify values, goals, and aspirations for the new facility. These include learning, inclusivity, the presence of craft, the importance of food, connection to the earth, and the integration of natural materials, natural light, and views.

“As enrolment among Indigenous students increases at Queen’s, we recognize that Four Directions has outgrown its space,” says Ann Tierney, Vice-Provost and Dean (Student Affairs), and Acting Co-Chair of Council. “In line with recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Task Force, we are excited to be creating a new, larger ‘home away from home’ for students, with more amenities and staff, as well as programming and community-building opportunities.”

The current plan is for one building to be used for gatherings and activities, including feasts and cultural programming, while the other will be offices, where students will meet one-on-one with staff, and student study spaces including a first-floor library. The project, which is primarily funded by the Division of Student Affairs, is anticipated to be complete in September 2018.

The university is installing a [plinth](#) detailing the history of the territory upon which Queen’s sits.



The Provost acknowledged the work of Council’s Cultural Awareness and Programming Working Group in the development of this important project. He also noted the continued rise in conversations and gatherings across campus about Indigenous histories and experiences.

Deputy Provost Teri Shearer also acknowledged the breadth of activities underway, including Jan's leadership for Queen's participation in the provincially-funded *Pathways for Indigenous Learners: Collaborating across Aboriginal Institutes, Colleges and University* to develop bridging and pathways programming and wraparound support services. She also noted high enrolment for the new Intercultural Awareness Certificate program developed by the Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre and Queen's University International Centre in Student Affairs, that responds to a TRC Task Force recommendation.



Faculties, schools and units have been asked to submit five-year TRC implementation plans to Deputy Provost Shearer in December. An implementation update will remain a standing item on Council meeting agendas.

ATEP Director Lindsay Morcom gave Council a presentation about the trip she took over the summer with three students, to the University of Western Australia as part of the Matariki Indigenous Student Mobility program.



Dr. Morcom suggested that Queen's and the local community would have much to offer visitors and Matariki network members from around the world.



Council member Jason LeBlanc, Executive Director of Tungasuvvingait Inuit (TI), presented to council on the mandate and scope of his organization's work.

TI is an Inuit-specific, provincial service provider that provides social support, cultural activities, counselling and crisis intervention as a one-stop resource centre to meet the rapidly growing, complex and evolving needs of Inuit in Ontario.

Co-Chair Brant Castellano updated Council on the work of the Committee on Research Collaboration that was starting with the upcoming [Indigenous Research Collaboration Seminar](#) being held in conjunction with the 19th Annual Symposium on Indigenous Knowledge hosted by Four Directions.



The workshop included a keynote by Queen's honorary degree recipient Alex McComber (above) on community-university partnerships. Participation and feedback from the workshop will provide guidance to the planning committee for future initiatives.

2018 Meetings: The first two 2018 Council meeting dates are January 22, 2018 at Queen's and April 30, 2018 at Tyendinaga.

2017 Queen's Gazette news stories
featuring Indigenous students, faculty, staff, initiatives and events

[New support for Indigenous students near and far](#), December 18, 2017

[Building momentum](#), December 18, 2017

[Community-based Aboriginal Teacher Education Program expands to full-time model](#), December 14, 2017



[Life Sciences graduate becomes Canada's first Inuk heart surgeon](#), December 5, 2017

[Learning about Indigenous law](#), November 10 2017

[A growing 'home away from home' for Indigenous students](#), November 2 2017

[Students accessing Indigenous self-identification mechanism](#),
November 1, 2017

[A focus on Indigenous research collaboration](#), October 31 2017

[A call to end corporal punishment](#), October 30 2017



[First Queen's Remembers plinth unveiled](#), October 16 2017

[Chancellor announces bursary for Indigenous students](#), October 12, 2017

[Orange Shirt Day returns to Queen's](#), September 28, 2017

[First Director of Indigenous Initiatives appointed](#), September 22 2017

[Indigenous academics share knowledge at Matariki conference](#), September 21, 2017

[Indigenous art to appear in Law atrium](#), September 20, 2017

[Queen's National Scholar wins prestigious Trudeau fellowship](#), September 19, 2017

[Twenty students form inaugural Indigenous and Allies living and learning community](#), August 28, 2017

[Fostering intercultural skills and knowledge](#), August 24, 2017

[Queen's Reads takes on The Break](#), July 31, 2017
[Queen's student joins Canada 150 sea expedition](#), July 21, 2017
[Gift creates award for Indigenous law students](#), July 26, 2017
[Making it easier to self-identify](#), July 7, 2017



[Connecting with Grandmother moon](#), July 6, 2017
[Blazing a trail in Aboriginal studies](#), June 23 2017

[Indigenous perspectives: National Aboriginal Day, Canada 150](#), June 21, 2017
[Two 2017 Queen's National Scholars announced](#), June 21, 2017
[Renewable energy and reconciliation](#), May 17, 2017
[Law Library acquires Aboriginal texts](#), May 5, 2017



[Getting reconciliation right](#), May 4, 2017

[Indspire Award winner embraces personal journey](#), April 20, 2017
[Law student encourages deeper understanding of treaty histories](#), March 23, 2017
[TRC report brings communities together to change course](#), March 22, 2017
[Queen's, Indigenous communities to celebrate important milestone](#), March 13, 2017
[Raising Indigenous awareness](#), March 10, 2017



Queen's campus is situated on traditional Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee territory

www.queensu.ca/aboriginalcouncil