



April 2013

ABORIGINAL COUNCIL of QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY

The Aboriginal Council of Queen's University (ACQU) was established in 1992, in conjunction with the Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy introduced by the Ministry of Education and Training (now the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities (MTCU)). This document updates and integrates the ACQU's 2002 Terms of Reference, a 2006 action plan, a 2011 revision to the ACQU's membership, the Ministry's 2011 Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework, similar Council documents from other Ontario universities, as well as Queen's 2011 Academic Plan and 2012 Aboriginal education policy objectives.

Terms of Reference

I. Purpose

The purpose of the ACQU is to ensure that for generations hereafter, Aboriginal peoples will have access to higher education at Queen's University, and that the institution will be responsive to the broader needs of the Aboriginal peoples. Aboriginal peoples have distinctive educational needs. Queen's University, the ACQU and the Aboriginal communities are dedicated to working in partnership to enrich the educational experience for everyone.

The ACQU is dedicated to ensuring that its mandate is upheld with the greatest respect for all parties involved. Decisions of the ACQU are made by consensus.

II. Mandate

The ACQU exists "to ensure that Aboriginal people are consistently and regularly engaged in decision making within the institution".¹ The ACQU shall be involved in all decisions affecting Aboriginal programs and services at Queen's University. The ACQU has a university-wide mandate and is the principal source for advice, assessment and guidance to the Board of Trustee and the Senate with respect to Aboriginal programs and services, as well as supports for Aboriginal students. At the same time, the legitimate interests of the institution must be secured in respect of the authority it has over academic programs and the appointment of employees and approval of budgets.

¹ [Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework, MTCU, 2011](#), p 40.

In keeping with this mandate and consistent with Senate's usual practice, Senate will refer matters concerning Aboriginal programs to the ACQU for review. All Aboriginal programs that are presented to Senate would normally have been reviewed by the ACQU.

The ACQU has a collective responsibility to represent the needs and interests of the Aboriginal community. More specifically, the ACQU is established to:

1. Foster an environment in which Aboriginal values are acknowledged and respected;
2. Provide advice on educational needs and interests of Aboriginal peoples and communities in which Aboriginal people live;
3. Identify priorities for strategies, programs and services to increase the recruitment, admission, retention, and graduation of Aboriginal students;
4. Assist in the development of procedures for the promotion of the university's programs and services to future Aboriginal students and communities;
5. Work in partnership to develop programs to meet the post-secondary educational needs of Aboriginal students, including undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs;
6. Assess and recommend ways in which courses of study may be offered off campus in Aboriginal communities;
7. Work in partnership with the university to assist in the development and administration of support services for Aboriginal students, which should include counseling, mentoring, access to elders and the development and promotion of scholarships, bursaries and awards;
8. Encourage and make recommendations on the recruitment, development, and retention of Aboriginal faculty members and staff concerned with Aboriginal programs and services; and make known the commitment of Queen's University to employment and pay equity;
9. Seek, monitor and evaluate funding for new and existing Aboriginal programs, courses and services, and give advice relating to funding proposals that address general and specific Aboriginal post-secondary education programs;
10. Review data on the recruitment, enrolment, retention and progression of Aboriginal students;
11. Provide input on annual budget allocations for Aboriginal-specific programs and services in order to make recommendations for long-term programs;
12. Work in partnership for the design and development of Aboriginal programs and services, as projected, for delivery by Queen's University;
13. Review Queen's University's implementation of ACQU recommendations;

14. Prepare an annual report of its activities to be presented through the Principal or delegate to the Senate and the Board of Trustees, and make this report widely available. This report will be tabled early each calendar year for the previous calendar year.

III. Membership

The ACQU is to be composed of representatives from Aboriginal communities and organizations in Ontario, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal student representatives, senior university administrators, faculty and staff.

Given that the function of the ACQU encompasses education, policy, program, leadership, curriculum development and student support, its composition is designed to include representatives who can add meaningfully to the dialogue on issues being addressed. Further, it is important that the ACQU includes in its membership those who can act as agents of change to ensure that decisions come to fruition.

The ACQU membership will have at least 51% representation from the Aboriginal communities. This may also include the Aboriginal student representatives from the Queen's University community, if required. Institutional representatives will be appointed in a number not to exceed 49% of the total membership of the ACQU. A quorum shall consist of a majority of members, at least half of whom must be Aboriginal members.

The ACQU shall be composed of:

- Queen's University senior administration representatives (4)
- Queen's University community representatives (5)
- Queen's University student representatives (5)
- Aboriginal community representatives (10)

- Secretary (ex-officio) (non-voting)

Queen's University senior administration representatives

- Queen's University Principal or designate
- Provost & V-P (Academic) or designate
- Two additional senior administrators who can address the identified priorities of the university and the ACQU. These administrators can rotate each year.

Queen's University community representatives (Faculty & Staff)

A total of five seats will be dedicated to faculty and staff members who may be involved in the development and delivery of academic programs and/or services of potential interest and/or targeted to Aboriginal students. The specific faculties, schools or departments represented may rotate to accommodate changes and initiatives pertinent to the work of the ACQU.

Queen's University student representatives

A complement of five student representatives will be sought from the following:

- Queen's Native Student Association (QNSA)
- Society of Graduate and Professional Students (SGPS)
- Alma Mater Society (AMS)
- Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement (SAGE)
- Aboriginal student at-large

Aboriginal students may be considered as external Aboriginal community members to achieve 51% Aboriginal community representation or quorum on ACQU, if required.

Aboriginal community representatives

- Elder (1)
- National/Provincial/Territorial Aboriginal organizations (2-3), such as the Metis Nation of Ontario, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, National Association of Friendship Centres etc.
- Local Aboriginal community (urban & rural) (6-7)

These representatives would ideally reflect the local and area Aboriginal community and could rotate depending on availability. They could be representatives of Bands, Aboriginal community organizations and Aboriginal members-at-large. One community representative should be a Queen's alumnus/alumna, if possible.

ACQU members shall select a university co-chair and a community co-chair from within the membership.

Aboriginal student and community members of the ACQU will constitute an Aboriginal caucus that may meet prior to ACQU meetings. The caucus will be chaired by the Aboriginal co-chair of the ACQU.

The provincial policy framework requires that "representatives from Aboriginal communities/organizations have direct access to the board of governors and the senate."² This can be done "by having the president serve as a member of the Aboriginal Education Council."³ At Queen's, this is achieved through the ACQU's senior administrative representatives, who include the Principal or designate, the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) or designate and the other senior administrators or their designates.

ACQU Nominating Committee

An ACQU nominating committee, comprised of three ACQU university members and three ACQU Aboriginal community members, will solicit the campus and external communities to fill vacancies in the ACQU each spring.

² [Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework, MTCU, 2011](#), p 40.

³ Ibid.

New or renewed appointments will be made for 1 or 2 year terms to maintain some continuity within the membership of the ACQU from year to year. All appointments are renewable for a second term.

Appointments will be made by letter of invitation from the Principal, based on the recommendations of the nominating committee, as endorsed by the ACQU.

ACQU Meetings

The ACQU normally meets three times per calendar year.

Faculty, staff and students of Queen's University and Aboriginal community members with an interest in Aboriginal students and education are welcome to attend ACQU meetings.

Any request for time on the ACQU agenda should be made in advance of the meeting to the secretary or either of the co-chairs.

Specific faculty or staff members may be invited to meetings occasionally when their participation and expertise may be needed for information and/or advice in relation to issues under discussion.

Endorsed by ACQU, April 15, 2013