



Aboriginal Council of Queen's University

2012 Report to Senate

March 2013

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The Aboriginal Council of Queen's University (ACQU) was established in 1992. It is mandated to be involved in all decisions affecting Aboriginal programs and services at Queen's and to provide advice to the university. The Council works to ensure that the institution is responsive to the broader needs of Aboriginal peoples.

The Council meets three times per year. This report summarizes and highlights the Council's 2012 activities at its meetings in March, April and October. The Council's [website](#) includes information about the Council's mandate, [membership](#) and activities, including meeting summaries.

March 27 meeting

Janice Hill, Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre Director, and representatives from the Faculties of Education and Engineering and Applied Science and the School of Policy Studies provided updates and progress reports on their Aboriginal programs, highlighting changes over the past fiscal year that looked at ways to co-create a university environment that is responsive to the learning needs of all Aboriginal students.

Alan Harrison, Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic), expressed the university's commitment to enhancing the experience of Aboriginal students at Queen's, increasing their numbers and supporting curriculum development and additional programs and research to foster Aboriginal education at the university. He noted that both the Academic Plan and the Strategic Research Plan reflect this commitment.

Council discussed the upcoming [recognition of Aboriginal students who would be graduating at the spring convocation](#), and determined that this practice would be repeated at subsequent convocations.

April 30 meeting

The Council's Aboriginal Caucus determined that [Marlene Brant Castellano](#) would serve as Council co-chair.

Council approved the university's submission to the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) as part of the province's Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Action Plan. The submission details Queen's initiatives in support of Aboriginal students and learning, as well as how provincial funding has been allocated and spent.

Council worked on a set of [policy objectives](#) that were developed from the Council's terms of reference, the 2011 [Vision-Gathering](#) and the University's Academic Plan. The objectives are informing the mandates and work of three working groups of Council:

- [Working Group on Aboriginal Student Access and Support](#);
- [Working Group on Indigenous Cultural Awareness and Programming](#);
- [Working Group on Indigenous Knowledge, Curriculum and Research](#).

The Working Group on Indigenous Knowledge, Curriculum and Research will be consulted on a proposal for an Indigenous Studies minor.

Council members provided updates on recent activities of:

- the Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre;
- the Faculty of Education's Aboriginal Teacher Education Program and Master of Education in Aboriginal and World Indigenous Educational Studies Program; and
- the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science's Aboriginal Access to Engineering Program.

November 12 meeting

The chairs of the ACQU Working Groups provided updates on their activities:

Aboriginal Student Access and Support

- Personal Statements of Experience of all self-identified Aboriginal applicants are being read to ensure appropriate guidance and support is provided throughout the application process;
- Enrolment statistics were provided relating to the numbers of self-identified Aboriginal students applying to Queen's. Applications, offers and acceptances increased over 2011: Applications were up 3%, offers were up 25% and acceptances were up 26%. Outreach to students who are offered admission will be expanded to encourage acceptance.

Indigenous Cultural Awareness and Programming

- The group is engaged in identifying all ongoing cultural activities to raise awareness as well as to identify any gaps in programming;
- The group has started to develop a certificate program for cultural awareness. There is already a Cultural Safety training session available through Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre.

Indigenous Knowledge, Curriculum and Research

- There are 14 people on the working group that met five times to discuss the Indigenous Studies Minor proposal, which will be going through a three-phase university approval process for launch in Fall 2013.

The proposal was unanimously endorsed by Council.

Ms Irene Bujara, Director of the Equity and Human Rights Offices, gave a presentation about Employment Equity at Queen's with a focus on Aboriginal participation.

The 2012/2013 MTCU Allocation was endorsed by Council.

In future, the council's Aboriginal Caucus will meet before each full Council meeting.