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‘GII-IKIDONAANIWAN’ ‘IT HAS BEEN SAID’

Queen’s University
Indigenous Identity Project

Final Report

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Dedication

Our work, which has manifested this report, is dedicated to Indigenous students at Queen's; many who may wonder how this situation could happen, and to those who come along in the future and may struggle with finding a sense of belonging in a world that has been so deeply impacted by colonization.

Thank You

First Peoples Group wishes to extend our gratitude to the leadership of the Office of Indigenous Initiatives. We recognize and honour their decorum and dignity, particularly in being at the front line of this extremely tough issue.



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Overview

Like many places of higher learning across Canada, Queen's University is reviewing and re-evaluating its policies, procedures and practices related to Indigenous identity, including its hiring practices, and engagement with Indigenous peoples.

First Peoples Group (FPG) was contracted in the fall of 2021 to help guide conversations concerning Indigenous identity in light of recent public discussions and information released surrounding the identity of several individuals teaching at Queen's. This paper entitled "Investigation into false claims to Indigenous identity at Queen's University" will be referred to as 'the document'.

While many will have differing views around the nature of such a document, over 100 Indigenous academics from across Canada along with hundreds more Indigenous community members and allies came together to issue a public statement calling upon Queen's commit to a process to establish ethical hiring guidelines that affirm First Nations, Métis and Inuit legal orders and sovereignty.

Our work engaged rightsholders, stakeholders, interest groups, faculty, alumni, senior Queen's staff, individuals, members from the Kingston urban Indigenous community, students and more importantly, elected leaders from sovereign nations on whose traditional territory Queen's University is located. These references can be found in Appendix 1.



Executive Summary

It has been clearly said by those engaged that Queen's needs to take strong, transparent and solid steps towards ensuring that in all future hiring, a process that includes a thorough and detailed assessment of all claims of Indigenous identity be put in place.

It has also been strongly said that Queen's must also address the emotional, mental, physical and spiritual toll this matter has taken on students, faculty and staff. We have heard and witnessed in-person that Indigenous people are deeply disappointed, hurt, and insulted - many are embarrassed to be associated with Queen's. Furthermore, we have heard the most serious concern that Indigenous ways of knowing, learning and teaching are not being witnessed and this is failing both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

This report analyzes what has been said, and we leave it to the leadership of Queen's to act on our recommendations and expectations. Some have said that the Queen's legacy is at risk, however we believe that if Queen's is bold and takes the necessary steps that are required, it can become a leader in reconciliation and righting relations with Indigenous peoples.

This report will provide recommendations that will help plot a process for the University to move forward in a good way. This process will be at the heart of systemic change that all places of higher learning across Canada will be tasked with implementing.

We have made seven (7) recommendations framed by the seven Grandfather Teachings; love, truth, humility, respect, courage, wisdom and honesty. We have also taken into consideration the principles of the Two Row Wampum Belt; peace, friendship and forever.

Each recommendation is significant and interweaves both what we have heard and these traditional teachings.

We count on the administration at Queen's as well as those who will be tasked with developing the new processes required to implement our recommendations, and to abide by these teachings and principles.



What Was Done

In consultation with the Office of Indigenous Initiatives, FPG developed an outreach and engagement plan to ensure we would hear from a wide range of participants. Group sessions and individual sessions began in November 2021 and concluded towards the end of May 2022. These conversations were held with participants listed in Appendix 1.

To ensure consistency in our approach, regardless of the group or individuals, FPG followed the same process for all sessions. We ensured that safe spaces were provided to garner suggestions and ideas from participants around how to improve the hiring process along with any policies or guidelines for faculty positions that require Indigenous knowledge and experience.

We began all sessions acknowledging the challenging nature of the issue and letting participants know that if they do not feel comfortable in participating in a group setting, that a private session could be arranged. Most of our sessions were opened with an invocation, either from an Elder or FPG team member to bring our minds together in a good way.

Participants were welcomed and informed that all comments and contributions made during this session are not for attribution. It was clearly communicated that notes the FPG team were taking were internal and for our purposes only, to refer to when drafting the final report and the recommendations phase of this initiative.

Dialogue Questions

The majority of sessions ran between one and two hours with some extending beyond. The following five questions were asked:

- ◆ Should there be explicit requirements, and/or a requirement for including validating documents regarding an applicant's Indigenous identity/status in the recruitment process?
- ◆ How would a hiring committee go about confirming or validating that these requirements have indeed been met by the applicant?
- ◆ Should these requirements/criteria apply to all faculty positions at Queen's that are meant to be held by Indigenous people?
- ◆ If new requirements are enacted, what would be a reasonable course of action for those faculty members who do not meet them?
- ◆ Are you aware of any other universities that have created policies and processes related to confirming Indigenous identity that are seen to be effective?



Due to the sensitive nature of this issue, we had to adjust our methodology and introduce additional, individual or small group engagement sessions.

Several sessions (both small group and individual) were held with people who felt targeted at Queen's and some were with people who wanted to speak privately as they were unsure of how their perspectives would be interpreted by others in a group setting.

Participants were also given the option of speaking to any other related issue they wished to discuss.

In this regard, our recommendations do not directly address each question. Our recommendations are based on an overall analysis of all that was said.





What Was Said

In addition to commenting on the five questions, participants had much to say about all aspects of identity issues particularly as they relate to citizenship, territory, Canada's colonial history, protocols and the importance of respecting nation to nation agreements. What follows is a short analysis of these issues followed by our seven recommendations.

Indigenous Identity and Citizenship Reclaiming, Claiming, Inventing and Shifting

While some of the questions and opinions around Indigenous identity are contentious our work has found that for almost all Indigenous nations and peoples, identity applied through citizenship is never difficult to discern.

Citizenship is at the heart of this matter. We heard from many participants that there used to be a time when no one wanted to be Indigenous. Clearly this has changed, and some participants attributed this to research funding, etc. that may be allotted specifically for Indigenous scholars as well as the prospect of employment including teaching and tenured positions at Queen's.

What hasn't changed, though, is the thinking around 'who' claims you, versus who you claim. Just exactly who is Indigenous forms an integral part of this report. In addition, the concept of citizenship forms and will inform a key part of our work. And perhaps the most controversial part of our work is to clarify the definition of what the term 'community' actually means in this instance.

It is an undeniable fact that there exists in Canada three peoples whose nations are vast and diverse: First Nations, the Métis Nation and the Inuit. It is also true that many Indigenous peoples have had their roots broken, perhaps many times, due to colonial and racist policies including the Indian

Act, the Indian Residential School legacy, Half-Breed Scrip Commissions, forced Inuit relocation and the Sixties Scoop.

Where does this leave those who cannot provide the acceptable forms of identity and are seeking to claim or re-claim their connection to their nation (those who are still 'researching') versus those who have 'reconnected' with their respective families, communities and nations through the restorative work that must be led by First Nation, Métis and Inuit, versus those who are simply inventing and/or shifting their claims of identity?

For First Nations citizens, those that cannot demonstrate citizenship in their nations, must be able to convey their kinship ties and their life story that clearly evidences the struggle to restore family and community relations that have been impacted by colonialism.

Métis who descend from the historic Métis Nation are not simply people of mixed ancestry but rather a distinct people with a historical homeland and a territory. People who are positioning themselves as 'Métis' and cannot prove they are members of one of the accepted Metis governments must be seen as individuals seeking to find their place in the First Nation or Inuit community from which they may descend.



To prove their Inuit status, Inuit across their homeland are issued either letters or beneficiary cards by organizations tied to Inuit land claims and/or Inuit owned and controlled development corporations, both of which are supported by all three territorial governments.

While some people asked the question 'why is it applicable only that Indigenous peoples have to prove their Indigeneity?' the answer we heard is obvious: as long as there are people who claim something that they have no right to claim, there needs to be consequences for this type of behaviour. This is not a recent social phenomenon but rather behaviour that First Nations, Métis and Inuit will no longer tolerate or allow.

Every nation has the right to define for themselves who is a citizen of their nation. For Indigenous peoples, this right is enshrined within the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It is also an important concept discussed by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

Thus, recognition of an individual as a citizen of an Indigenous nation (e.g. Métis, Inuit, Mi'kmaq, Cree, Mohawk) must come from the nation themselves. When others (e.g. non-Indigenous individuals, academic institutions, urban communities) involve themselves in this issue in the sense of recognizing who they think is or is not Indigenous, they are furthering systemic racism and supporting Indigenous erasure.

Indigeneity is more than ancestry. Case law and the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia state the criteria to be a citizen of an Indigenous nation requires both:

- ◆ an ancestral connection, and;
- ◆ a current day connection to the nation.

For Indigenous peoples in Canada, there are circumstances where a person may have been disconnected due to colonial practices like the Sixties Scoop or residential schools, however a claim to have an ancestor several hundred years ago that was Indigenous is not an acceptable measure of Indigenesness. We heard strongly that at the very least, kinship ties should be recent and extend no further than a Grandmother or Grandfather and that stories and family lore that include a long-lost ancestor from another time and place simply have no place.

We recognize that this indeed places the burden of proof on the Indigenous individual, which is yet another colonial hardship; however, we are presently navigating a reality whereby some people are attempting to manufacture their own 'Indigenous nations' based on things like family lore and distorting ancestral connections. We want to be clear in that this process is not grounded in the spirit of 'encumbering' or 'policing'; rather, it is about restoring, preserving or perhaps establishing for the first time, standards to ensure the integrity of Indigenous spaces within colonial institutions.



What Defines Citizenship?

We heard loud and clear from many people, especially Knowledge Keepers and Elders, that traditional protocols are of prime importance. In the past when Indigenous people visited other territories, there were mechanisms that were used to connect families and kin. While they are currently missing at Queen's, these mechanisms still exist and with the direction and support from any institution, it is possible to put in place a universal, culturally informed process to validate one's claim of identity.

Despite what some people think, just what constitutes an Indigenous community is not up for debate. No authority exists for anyone from a community that is not connected to a legal and legitimate First Nation, Metis or Inuit community to bestow identity to anyone to belong to something that is questionable in terms of the concept of nationhood and citizenship. Should a family member choose to adopt anyone into their family, the adopted person does not automatically acquire the rights of the nation and granted citizenship but rather they are welcomed as 'kin' of an individual family.

This question of legitimacy of nation and community will be the most serious challenge for Queen's to assess and act on. For the past decade or so, Queen's, like many other institutions, has been somewhat inattentive to what was happening across Canada as the concepts and thoughts of nation to nation, identity and the rights of First Nations, Metis and Inuit were emerging.

It is clear to us though that there was no intent nor bad faith on the part of Queen's, but rather the opposite. Indigenous staff at the Office of Indigenous Initiatives have been at the forefront doing the hard work understanding and navigating the many cultural incongruencies between the construct of an old institution and Indigenous ways of knowing and learning. This good faith and foundational work will bode well as Queen's and the Indigenous nations on whose territory Queen's acknowledges move forward together.





The Urban Indigenous Community in and around Kingston

Like cities all across Canada, Indigenous peoples from all across Canada, the United States as well as international locations now make their homes in places like Kingston. But most of us come from somewhere else.

Over the past twenty years, our work at First Peoples Group with Indigenous communities

across Canada has allowed us to witness that where Friendship Centres do not exist as is the case for Kingston, needed places of belonging have in some cities and towns, developed into supportive centres providing programs, services and places of welcome for anyone moving into towns and cities from their homes.

From the National Association of Friendship Centres' website:

'The National Association of Friendship Centres is a network of over 100 Friendship Centres and Provincial/Territorial Associations, which make up part of the Friendship Centre Movement—Canada's most significant national network of self-determined Indigenous owned and operated civil society community hubs offering programs, services and supports to urban Indigenous people.'

One of the most important protocols Indigenous peoples have abided by for thousands and thousands of years is to respect the fact that when you are not on your territory you are visiting the territory of another nation.

Perhaps the most controversial piece of our work and its raison d'être has been the odd relationship between Queen's University and an entity calling themselves Ardoch First Nation.

Our work is directly related to the individuals named in the document, several who claim to be members of this group. Ardoch is not a First Nation despite it positioning itself as such. It is a legally incorporated not for profit registered in Ontario as Ardoch First Nation Community Services Corporation and this is

also its legal name. Appendix 3 describes the rationale for this issue in detail.

It should be understood that members of any Indigenous community living in a place they do not traditionally come from may choose to call themselves by any name or title.

But we heard passionately that unless they come from the nation on which the territory they are living and further, unless they have been granted the authority by their nation to speak on behalf of and enact and conduct any protocols, ceremonies and laws, they simply are and remain an urban Indigenous organization and cannot grant or imply citizenship equals Indigenous identity or assume any roles including Elders, Councils and related terms.



Identification Process

Creating a process to address the current situation as well as prepare for a new way of implementing the recommendations in this report will be key.

Assuming Queen's accepts the recommendations contained in this report on what is acceptable documentation of one's identity, we heard clearly that a mechanism is needed to assess documentation. We have heard from Traditional Elders who have proposed a process referred to above as a 'universal cultural review process'.

**What is your clan?
Where are you from?
Who is going to take care of you?**

We heard from Knowledge Keepers that these were questions one was asked and were mechanisms that helped us travel to places that were not home. It was all about keeping the nation strong. We also heard that no organization or individual has the ability to decide who belongs to what but rather it is the nation's job to grant citizenship.

While this used to work when all Indigenous societies abided by their own mechanisms, these concepts appear to be abandoned by those who never knew them and abused by those who are in question. 'Learn about everything or you'll get into trouble' the Elders said.

Concepts like colonialism and euro-centrism are now used as an excuse by some as an

attempt to authenticate a collective of individuals versus bona fide legal reasons that Indigenous nations and their peoples and Canada have agreed upon and that history has defined. Related to this, some urban Indigenous members in and around Kingston told us that they view First Nations as products and servants of the federal government.

It does need to be recognized that any singular First Nation, or citizens of these nations do not speak for all. Regarding this particular issue, we have suggested that Queen's University begin a dialogue with the following four First Nations on whose territory overlaps the geographical location upon which Queen's is located; Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, Alderville First Nation, the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan and Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg. We make this suggestion knowing full well that these nations do not speak for all Haudenosaunee nor all Anishinaabe.

It appears and is well documented that Queen's has gone from initially believing individuals who have claimed identity that is now being revealed to be somewhat suspicious to a place of having to be the judge and jury of what - or perhaps more importantly - who makes up First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities.



Responsibilities & Reparations vs. Accountability vis-a-vis Merits and Credentials

One question we were left with after our community engagement is, *'how can the University prioritize applying merit to traditional and ancestral knowledge?'* While Western education places an incredible amount of emphasis on merit, credentials, and accolades, it strikes us as important to reflect on what that means in an Indigenous context.

As Indigenous peoples, we believe that we are all born with inherent gifts, and it is the responsibility of adults to help cultivate and strengthen gifts identified during childhood. We also view our Elders and Knowledge Keepers as our PhDs, our subject-matter experts, our specialists. There must be balance

applied when assessing the qualifications of a candidate, to ensure there is not an over-emphasis placed on Western-influenced merit. We must prioritize Indigenous knowledge as a credential.

To speak to this further, we must also be cognizant of what is being centred as we work to develop new policies and procedures as it relates to Indigenous identity, and with the development of an Indigenous Studies Department. To put it directly, we must centre Indigenous knowledge. We must centre Indigenous reclamation. We must centre and be aware of the historical and ongoing suffering of Indigenous peoples.

While we were engaged in research on the Indigenous Studies program at Queen's, we were struck by the following quote in a welcome video online:

"Indigenous Studies is a program for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people".

What concerns us is this is very telling example of centring the comfort of non-Indigenous students, rather than the centring of Indigenous student wellbeing and knowledge transmission. We wonder, if in other programs of study (Women and Gender Studies, Disability Studies, etc.), if this type of disclaimer is included. If it is not, we must take time to reflect on this and ask, why then, for Indigenous Studies? Of course, everyone, Indigenous, and non-Indigenous can take this program, yet Indigenous Studies needs to include a disclaimer that it is open to non-Indigenous peoples to ensure those of settler

descent can still see themselves represented in a place that is predominantly meant for Indigenous students.

Another area of our research is in relation the annual award for Indigenous Education. We learned that there are two categories: (1) For an Indigenous educator, and (2) a non-Indigenous educator. What concerns us is that this is an effort by Queen's to ensure that non-Indigenous can again, see themselves represented in the little space carved out for Indigenous students.



Now, turning our attention to the topic of accountability, we must ensure that the Deans of the various schools be held accountable for the procedures and policies related to (1) Indigenous Knowledge, (2) Indigenous Identity, and (3) Reconciliation across the University. This accountability structure should be co-developed with the Office of Indigenous Initiatives. Reporting annually on progress made in the three areas mentioned above will create further transparency within the Queen's community.

Lastly, it is not the place of Queen's or any university for that matter, to facilitate a student, staff or faculty member's reconnection or reclamation of Indigenous citizenship. We cannot forget that Queen's is a settler-colonial institution, and as such, there are limitations and boundaries that must be respected. The reparative and restorative work of reconnecting individuals who have been displaced from their respective Indigenous families, communities and nations must be led by First Nations, Metis and Inuit Nations and cultures.

The following question was asked of all participants:

- ◆ If new requirements are enacted, what would be a reasonable course of action for those faculty members who do not meet them?

We heard strongly that people whose claims of identity are unproven or may be unprovable be moved out of positions of influence in any Indigenous course or program or related field of study. Some participants spoke about the need to exercise empathy, while others spoke to the University being accountable to the impact on students, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous. While

it may not be clear what should be done, it is clear that something must be done.

Opinion here ranges from termination to finding alternative assignments at the University for those who have been found to not meet new requirements Queen's puts in place. Some people suggested that those who have identified under the old practice and cannot meet the new process be 'grandfathered'.

While there may be legal or union reasons for doing so, we heard from Knowledge Keeper, Traditional Teachers, Elders and Clan Mothers that the concept of 'grandfathering' is a western concept that does not exist in any First Nation, Métis or Inuit belief system. We are stating so to clearly signal to Queen's one of the many differences between western ways and traditional Indigenous ways.

Across Indigenous Nations, the breaching of one's traditional protocols was taken very seriously. Individuals within Nations were called to carry themselves with a Good Mind, and to misrepresent one's self, demonstrate unhealthy behaviors, or bring shame to a Nation was met with severe consequences.

We know it will be very difficult for the University to apply its way of operating with policies and procedures that in many cases differ greatly from Indigenous ways. Informed by what we have heard, our report will suggest a path and way in which this can be done.

What follows are our seven (7) recommendations. They are framed by the seven Grandfather Teachings; love, truth, humility, respect, courage, wisdom and honesty as well as the principles of the Two Row Wampum Belt; peace, friendship and forever.



We Are Sorry

Recommendation 1 • Love

As an Indigenous owned and operated firm led by our Elders, if we have learned anything over the past twenty years around coming from and working within and with First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities it is the power of hearing the words 'I am very sorry' from those that have misunderstood the ways of being, knowing and living as Indigenous peoples.

It is hoped that beginning their new journey with a statement from Queen's makes room for forgiveness from those that seek it as well as hope from those that are asking for a new way of working together and supporting each other.

We strongly recommend that a process be instituted that will begin with a statement of apology from Queen's as well as healing ceremonies and additional forms of accountability arrived at in discussions with Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, Alderville First Nation, the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan and Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg.





Right Relations

Recommendation 2 • Truth

We at First Peoples Group are optimistic that Queen's has every intent to work in a good way with the Indigenous nations on whose territory it acknowledges. While we have been witness to several ways that may have been interpreted as less than respectful, our engagement has led us to better understand that there has been the absence of a clear process that finds us where we are at this point in time.

We heard very strongly from staff, leadership and from alumni that Queen's wants to do better, and we believe this to be true. How this happens, along with how long it takes to happen will be critical.

We recommend that in order for Queen's to be in right relations and be true to and with Indigenous peoples, all recommendations should be acted upon and a process to do so involving the sovereign First Nations on whose territory Queen's is located be developed and implemented.

Qualifications to Teach Indigenous Studies & Indigenous Education

Perhaps more than any other place of higher learning, Queen's prides itself on and has a history of applying appointments and positions based on merit and qualifications.

It was stated and understood that First Nations, Métis and Inuit who can clearly and without question demonstrate citizenship in their nations may lack the lived experiences to teach about their peoples. Proving citizenship should be just part of the equation when assessing one's experience with ancestral and traditional knowledge.

We heard clearly from participants that those who do not possess both Indigenous citizenship and the lived experiences that would allow them to teach Indigenous studies at any university should not be teaching content best suited for Indigenous candidates with deep-rooted cultural experience and knowledge.

Similarly, we heard that people who are not Indigenous and cannot prove they are should not be teaching Indigenous Studies or Indigenous Education.



Throughout our engagement, we were strongly told that for First Nations, Métis and Inuit, being Indigenous and having lived experiences - and the verification of both - are what Indigenous peoples consider to be the qualifications and merit required to teach anyone about anything Indigenous. It was stated over and over again 'how much clearer can this be and how could this not be understood by anyone?'

We heard that all students at Queen's should be able to take for granted that their teachers are not only capable of passing along their knowledge but also be who they say they claim to be. One graduate student interviewee stated that he had been named at birth in the language of his people, raised in his language and acquired his teachings during his growth and upbringing in his First Nation. Sitting through classes with some of

the teachers named in 'the report' left him 'shaking his head' and wondering what some of the professors were talking about including mixed up stories and Indigenous world views that appeared to be merged, conflated and misconstrued.

Faculty and alumni members FPG interviewed wondered what those who are not Indigenous wind up thinking when they are being taught by people with questionable identity. They were especially worried about the minds of young Indigenous people who are just beginning to live their lives in confidence and pride being misguided and misled by people who are not who they say they are. Furthermore, graduate student interviewees were concerned about the impact of being supervised by someone with questionable identity and how that may impact them as junior scholars in the academy.

Recommendation 3 • Humility

We recommend that only those qualified, who possess Indigenous identity and have lived experience that can be validated as per an approved validation process be considered for any teaching position at Queen's that should be held by Indigenous peoples.

FPG further recommends that if the word Indigenous or Indigenous peoples is in any job posting or position, that careful consideration and application of any future process arrived at be instituted.



Queen's Land Acknowledgement

'We would like to acknowledge that Queen's University is situated on the territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabek'.

While community can be construed as locational, identity is intimately tied to nationhood, Queen's recognizes the two nations on whose territories it sits.

During this engagement, the elected leadership of the four First Nations of these two nations whose territories overlap that this acknowledgement is based were interviewed and consulted; the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, Alderville First Nation, the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan and Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg. All agreed to be a part of a process that included their participation in shaping Queen's future hiring policies, processes and procedures.

Recommendation 4 • Respect

We recommend that Queen's University enter into discussions with the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, Alderville First Nation, the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan and Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg - the legal and recognized sovereign nations on whose territory both Queen's University and the City of Kingston occupies - to determine what roles these nations can and want to play in establishing Queen's new efforts and required processes in bettering relations with the nations on whose territory it sits.





Are You Who You Say You Are?

We heard that at a minimum, Queen's require a validation policy that includes accepted citizenship/membership cards as per the attached PDF from the University of Calgary (Appendix 2). Some participants spoke to processes currently in operation for Indigenous student admissions. Using a practice similar to one used by Indspire for students will not be rigorous enough.

In addition, we heard that references from anyone identifying as Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) at the time their application and who may be unable to provide any proof listed may submit a personal, written story clearly citing relatives and relationships that do not go beyond their grandmother's or grandfather's related to lineage. We also heard that these personal stories can include photos and any other relevant information.

We heard that candidates must also include the following three references:

- ◆ a familial reference,
- ◆ a First Nations, Metis or Inuit citizenship elected leader reference, and
- ◆ a professional reference

Any story about family lore or long-ago relatives should be stated in the form of an affidavit that would be needed to be signed indicating that if anything is false, the employment contract would be invalid.

Further, it was cited that anyone identifying as Indigenous grant Queen's the right to have their claim of Indigenous identity fully and thoroughly investigated, and the applicant understands that all references listed will be contacted and verified to ensure consistency.

We also heard quite strongly that labour unions need to realize and be mindful that their collective agreement with Queen's has been, will be and may be used again by those falsely claiming identity to keep people in positions who should have never been given them in the first place.

It was suggested that there are simply not enough Indigenous folks within the University to sit on every hiring panel of every prospective Indigenous faculty or staff member, which speaks to the capacity of Human Resources. Some suggested Human Resources needing a panel of Indigenous folks to lean on for support, and others suggested a need for further Indigenous-focused human resources training to address the capacity need.



Recommendation 5 • Courage

We recommend that Queen's implement a clear identification policy based upon and as described and outlined in Appendix 2. Tied to this recommendation is the need to establish a cultural review committee that will assess all applications and this committee will be comprised of members appointed by Queen's and the following four nations; Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, Alderville First Nation, the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan and Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg.

Further, we recommend that all faculty who have self-identified be subject to the new validation of identity policies.





Department of Indigenous Studies

In 2021, Queen's University launched its Indigenous Studies program. Presently, the program is housed within the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures, yet it draws upon core introductory courses offered within the School of Global Development Studies. It is our understanding that this program was developed through consultation with both self-identifying Indigenous faculty and non-Indigenous faculty at Queen's University over previous years leading up to the present challenges that the university faces regarding Indigenous identity.

While we understand that it did go through a formal consultation process that sought input from different stakeholders, it was developed prior to the recruitment of both the Queen's National Scholar in Indigenous Studies and the Queen's National Scholar in Anishinaabe Knowledge, Language and Culture. As such, it developed without key input from current Anishinaabe scholars at Queen's or any other Indigenous scholars. The current program appears to be composed namely of courses offered throughout the university that touch upon Indigenous content.

While we understand that this approach may have been a strategic way of bringing together courses that exist in different departments and schools, Queen's needs to recognize that there is a key difference between courses that may touch upon/include Indigenous content and courses delivered from an Indigenous perspective and that centres curriculum generated from within an Indigenous paradigm.



To put it in other terms, while there are certainly courses throughout the university with an analytical focus on 'society', compiling all of these together does not constitute a comprehensive program in sociology.

Queen's needs to respect the existence and autonomy of Indigenous Studies as its own discipline rooted in an important distinct canon of critical Indigenous scholarship.



Recommendation 6 • Wisdom

We recommend that Queen's consider working towards establishing a Department of Indigenous Studies that is parallel in importance and reach as any other department in and among all their faculties.

Additionally, we recommend that this work be led by present and future Indigenous academics who have earned a PhD that collectively come together to nominate a department chair.

Furthermore, we recommend that Queen's implement a strategic hiring initiative that leads to the recruitment of at least four (4) Indigenous Studies faculty members; one from the east, one from the south, one from the west and one from the north.

The Path Forward

Creating a way forward sometimes means being honest and saying goodbye to old ways that have not served us well, especially at a time of such great change.

Nowhere has this been more evident than in the situation that Queen's finds itself in with Indigenous nations, the urban Indigenous community and with its allies. Queen's needs to ensure that it moves past symbolic gestures and implement substantive reforms that will lead to the system changes that required to right relations between all Indigenous peoples and everyone at Queen's.

Recommendation 7 • Honesty

We recommend that Queen's and the legal and sovereign nations on whose territory Queen's sit jointly develop a thorough and detailed process to address and implement all recommendations.

Further, we recommend that once defined, this process be presented publicly for further input and validation.



In Conclusion

Queen's University has everything they need to be in right relations with the Indigenous peoples on whose territory it sits. It has itself and it has the members of the proud nations that have taken care of this territory forever.

It is obvious and true that like many universities, Queen's has not been alone in being inattentive in both seeing and doing anything to predict and prevent the fallout from not ensuring that First Nations, Métis and Inuit protocols are understood and respected.

But Queen's knows now that it is time to act. If implemented and over time, here again are the seven recommendations that hold the promise of creating a clear path through the development of a process that will lead to the systems change that we believe all have said is required.



Zaagi'idiwin

Our first recommendation is about showing love to and for Indigenous peoples in a good way that will open hearts and minds for moving forward.

As stated in the beginning of our report, many people expressed strong emotions about the personal toll this issue has taken on them. This pain needs to be acknowledged for all to move forward. Some have demanded strong actions while some have suggested at the very least, someone needs to say in some way that they are sorry.

We recommend that a new and bold process begin with a statement of apology from Queen's as well as healing ceremonies and additional forms of accountability arrived at in discussions with Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, Alderville First Nation, the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan and Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg.



Debwewin

This is the truth and it forms the basis of our second recommendation.

Based on what we have heard, we have made our recommendations framed by the seven Grandfather Teachings as well as the principles of the Great Law of Peace. In conversation with the elected leadership of nations on whose territory Queen's sit, each elected leader is prepared to work with Queen's in a way that respects the truth of what needs to be done.

We count on the administration at Queen's as well as those appointed from the following nations named in this report (Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, Alderville First Nation, the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan and Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg) to work together to develop the processes required to implement our recommendations and abide by these teachings and principles.

We recommend that in order for Queen's to be in right relations with Indigenous peoples, all recommendations and expectations must be acted upon and a process involving the sovereign First Nations on whose territory Queen's is located be developed and implemented.

Dabasendiziwin

The third recommendation is about humility.

It is long past the time for those who attempt to stretch the truth of their ancestry and/or calling or allyship to humble themselves and simply serve as allies versus attempting to live their lives as Indigenous peoples. We heard strongly that to do otherwise is to show the ultimate disrespect: disrespect to the ancestors that people are trying to claim as theirs that aren't, and disrespect to their own actual ancestors who are not Indigenous.

We recommend that only those qualified, who possess Indigenous identity and have lived experience that can be validated as per an approved validation process be considered for any teaching position at Queen's that should be held by Indigenous peoples.

FPG further recommends that if the word Indigenous or Indigenous peoples is in any job posting or position, that careful consideration and application of any future process arrived at be instituted.



Manaaji'idiwin

Our fourth recommendation is about respect.

Our report means no dishonour to citizens who live in and around Kingston but do not come from or have historic and familial ties to sovereign First Nations on whose territory both Kingston and Queen's sits. It is about respecting the age-old protocol of understanding that while you are not on your territory you are a visitor on the territory of another nation.

First Peoples Group calls on all visitors to be honourable allies and respect the legal and sovereign nations who have looked after their lands for thousands and thousands of years.

We recommend that Queen's University enter into discussions with the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, Alderville First Nation, the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan and Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg to determine what roles these nations can and want to play in establishing Queen's new efforts and required processes in bettering relations with the nations on whose territory it sits.

Zoongide'ewin

Our fifth recommendation is about courage.

Queen's University must demonstrate courage in implementing an identification policy and other related changes as cited in this report that will allow it to move in the direction of truly becoming a leader in Indigenous education.

While some may find this recommendation to be the most controversial, we heard that Queen's must be courageous and signal loud and clear that positive change in all areas of Indigenous relationships are underway.

We recommend that Queen's implement a clear identification policy as described and outlined in the attached PDF. Tied to this recommendation is the need to establish a cultural review committee that will assess all applications and this committee will be comprised of members appointed by Queen's and the following four nations; Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, Alderville First Nation, the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan and Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg.

Further, we recommend that all faculty who have self-identified be subject to the new validation of identity policies.



Nibwaakaawin

Our sixth recommendation speaks to the collective wisdom of Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Some have questioned whether or not there are enough qualified First Nations, Métis or Inuit academics, scholars and leaders to take their place at Queen's and help it on its way forward. We believe that across Canada that there exists the collective wisdom to bring together the best and the brightest Indigenous scholars to create an opportunity for Queen's to become the leader in this modern era of Indigenous knowledge.

We recommend that Queen's establish a Department of Indigenous Studies that is parallel in importance and reach as any other department in and among all their faculties. Additionally, we recommend that this work be led by present and future Indigenous academics who have earned a PhD and that collectively come together to nominate a department chair. Furthermore, we recommend that Queen's implement a strategic hiring initiative that leads to the recruitment of at least four (4) Indigenous Studies faculty members.

Gwayakwaadiziwin

Our seventh and final recommendation is about honesty.

Queen's University needs to be honest with itself, honest with Indigenous nations, honest with the urban Indigenous community and with honest with its allies. It needs to ensure that it moves past symbolic gestures and implement substantive reforms that will lead to the system changes that required to right relations between all Indigenous peoples and everyone at Queen's.

What is required is a process that clearly acknowledges the legal and sovereign nations as well as makes room for the colonial impacts that present themselves as conflicts around ways of being and ways of knowing. Striking a balance between the way an older institution like Queen's operates and Indigenous ways will take time. This will be at the heart of creating a process that will guide Queen's on its path forward.

We recommend that Queen's and the legal and sovereign nations on whose territory Queen's sit jointly develop a thorough and detailed process to address and implement all recommendations.

Further, we recommend that once defined, this process be presented publicly for further input and validation.



Last Words

We at First Peoples Group believe we have presented our recommendations in a way that honours the spirit and intent of the Two Row Wampum.

“Together we will travel in Friendship and in Peace Forever; as long as the grass is green, as long as the water runs downhill, as long as the sun rises in the East and sets in the West, and as long as our Mother Earth will last.” (Onondaga Nation)

Kaswentha (Mohawk word for Two Row Wampum Belt) tells the story of the original agreement between the Haudenosaunee and the Dutch. What we come to learn from this agreement is that as nations living together on Turtle Island, we can, and should work to respect the ways of one another, through the principles of peace, friendship, and forever. We can apply these principles to the above recommendations in the following ways:

PEACE

We are reminded of the Haudenosaunee teachings of the importance of carrying a Good Mind. We must understand that members of the Queen's community have been hurt and continue to hurt as a result of the questioning of Indigenous identity. We call on Queen's leadership to take action on supporting individuals in their pursuit of personal inner peace and peace as an overall community.

FRIENDSHIP

As Indigenous Nations work to reclaim traditional protocols with relation to 'membership' and 'citizenship', it will be important for Queen's leadership to respect and affirm these efforts and revisit policies and procedures that may be in place at the University to ensure they are reflective of what Indigenous Nations and cultures are implementing.

FOREVER

The work of establishing and maintaining positive and meaningful relationships with Indigenous Nations is ongoing and requires constant renewal and commitment. We call on Queen's leadership to prioritize the long-term planning for maintaining positive relations with Indigenous Nations and cultures.



We hope our work is viewed as an important opportunity to gain wisdom from Elders and to apply the perspectives we have heard and analyzed that will guide Queen's as it moves forward.

Tho Niiwenna:ke That Is All





APPENDIX 1 • GROUPS/INDIVIDUALS ENGAGED BY FPG (PDF)

APPENDIX 2 • UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY (PDF)

APPENDIX 3 • FIRST NATION GOVERNMENTS, CITIZENSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP JURISDICTION

Background

Royal Proclamation of 1763

In Canada, the relationship between the Crown and First Nation/Tribal Governments was driven primarily by the Royal Proclamation of 1763; of particular importance for the recognition of First Nations is the following passage: "It is just and reasonable to our interest and the security of our Colonies, that the several Nations or Tribes of Indians with whom we are connected, and who live under our Protection should not be molested nor disturbed in the Possession of such parts of our Dominions and Territories as not having not ceded to or purchased by Us, are reserved to them..." which established the concept of a Nation to Nation relationship.

Constitution Act, 1982

Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 explicitly recognizes and affirms the existing Aboriginal and Treaty Rights of the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada and indicates that the term Aboriginal peoples of Canada includes the First Nation, Inuit and Metis of Canada. There is no reference to Corporations.

Indian Act - Band Recognition, Registration and Band membership

Under the Indian Act, Section 2(1)(c) provides for the Crown recognition of a Band by the Governor in Council to be a Band...". Further, Section 2 (1) provides the for the maintenance of a List of Persons who are recognized as Indians which is maintained under section 8 by a First Nation Band or in the Department of Indigenous Services Canada. In 2016, there were 618 First Nation Bands recognized in Canada and are maintained in the Band List by Crown (Indigenous Services Canada).

Further, Section 17(1) provides Ministerial authority for the creation/recognition of new First Nations through amalgamation or constitute new bands/new Band Lists from an existing Band List or from the Indian Registrar (division), if requested to do so by persons proposing to form the new Band.

The current Crown recognized First Nation Bands List does not include nor identify the Ardoch First Nation Community Services Corporation. In fact the leadership of the Ardoch Community Services Corporation appreciates the Crown's non-recognition of their legal status through their inability to self-identify and present their Organization/Corporation as a Band and their past requests to



Indigenous Services Canada for recognition as a Band under the Indian Act which the Crown has not accepted. In addition, it is uncertain whether individuals who are involved with the Ardoch Services Corporation are recognized as Indians in the Registry List maintained by the Crown nor whether they are members of Crown recognized Bands such as the nearby Algonquins of Pikwakanagan (Golden Lake) First Nation or other Algonquin Bands.

Federal and Provincial Corporations

By definition, a Corporation is an artificial person or legal entity created by or the authority of Federal Provincials Laws. It is not a Government nor has legislative powers to determine citizenship nor Band membership. Courts have also rejected that Corporations created under federal and provincial legislation have an “ Indian” legal character. Rather, Corporations are distinct with recognition created under different federal or provincial legislation as opposed to Crown recognized First Nations Bands specifically created under the Indian Act. Furthermore, the Assembly of First Nations, Tribal Councils and other Indigenous Services organizations are not aboriginal nor treaty rights bearing entities.

United States of America

The Bureau of Indian Affairs definition provision of an Indian person states that: “to be eligible... an individual must be 1/4 or more degree Indian blood and be a member of a Federally recognized tribe. In other words, individuals who claim tribal ancestry from a Tribe from the United t, must have 1/4 Indian Ancestry and be a member of a Federally recognized Tribe. Many Tribal Governments have their own Tribal Citizenship.



Ardoch First Nation Community Services Organization Inc.

The Ardoch First Nation Community Services Organization Inc. (AFNSC) is a non-for-profit corporation with Letters Patent issued under the Ontario Corporations Act.

The AFNSC would not be recognized under the reference of “Nations or Tribes” in Royal Proclamation of 1763.

The AFNSC is not a Crown recognized Band since it is not listed under the official recognized Band List as defined under the Indian Act definition and managed by Indigenous Services Canada. Only the Federal Crown has exclusive constitutional authority under the British North America Act Section 91(24) responsibility for Indians and lands reserved for Indians specifically in the recognition and creation of Bands and the registration and recognition of individuals as Indians undertake Indian Act.

Secondly, the organization has de facto recognized their status as a provincial corporation and non-recognition as a First Nation Band through past request to the Federal Crown (Indigenous Services Canada) for recognition as an Indian Act Band.

Provincial First Nation Bands do not exist nor do they do have any sovereign aboriginal right to confer or grant membership/citizenship. Recognition is constitutionally reserved for Federally Crown recognized Indian Bands/First Nation Governments (not provincial corporations) by the Governor-in-Council as first proclaimed in the Royal Proclamation of 1763 which continues to the present in Canada.

The federal Crown recognized First Nation Governments have retained their sovereign authority to determine their citizenship/membership under their First Nation Citizenship/Membership Law. Corporations such as service organizations have no such authority. Any such expression by a provincial non-for-profit corporation is at minimum misrepresentation. It is questionable whether an assertion from such a non-federally recognized group would have the legal authority to do so.

Lastly, Queens University certainly has no jurisdiction nor authority to confirm any such recognition which is constitutionally reserved for the Governor-in-Council and Federal legislation.



Meetings Conducted on Indigenous Identity at Queen's University

Since January 2022, First Peoples Group has hosted multiple meetings with students, staff, faculty, stakeholders, community members, Elders, and others both within and beyond the Queen's University community to discuss the issue of Indigenous identity at the University. Additionally, while community can be construed as locational, identity is intimately tied to nationhood, Queen's recognizes the two nations on whose territories it sits. During this engagement, the elected leadership of the four First Nations of these two nations whose territories overlap that this acknowledgement is based were interviewed and consulted; the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, Alderville First Nation, the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan and Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg.

First Peoples Group in collaboration and conversation with the Office of Indigenous Initiatives at Queen's University compiled a list of individuals and groups which were to be contacted with to establish outreach sessions to hear their perspectives and thoughts on the issue of Indigenous identity. This included Indigenous staff, Indigenous students, Indigenous faculty, Indigenous alumni, the Indigenous caucus, the Reference Group on Aboriginal Education (RGAE) – Council of Ontario Universities, Kingston Indigenous Languages Nest (KILN), the Elders Advisory Circle, as well as meeting with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous senior leadership at Queen's. Virtual sessions were conducted with detailed note-taking done by First Peoples Group to ensure each and every perspective, thought, comment, idea, and suggestion was taken into account when writing the final report and recommendations.

Furthermore, due to concerns of speaking up in group settings, the opportunity was given for individuals to have one-on-one sessions with a member of First Peoples Group. Over 40 individual sessions were conducted throughout January–June, 2022.





Proof of FNMI Identity Types of Documentation

Cate Hanington, Program Coordinator
The Native Centre

Status First Nations Documentation

- Government-Issued Certificate of Indian Status (Status Card)

New Card (more security features) Older Cards (still acceptable*)

Source: Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC)
<http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100032424/1100100032428>

*Provides temporary proof if the "valid to" date has passed. Students are encouraged to order a new card and submit the new copy to update their file.

Status First Nations Documentation

- Letter from First Nations Community

The letter should:

- Be on letterhead;
- Include the Band Registration /Treaty Number*
- Be signed by a Band Administrator

*First Nations/ Band names, including name changes, are recorded in INAC's Indian Registration Systems (IRS) database and any letter should be checked to verify that the First Nation/Band is a government-registered First Nation

Métis Documentation

- Métis cards issued by a member province of the Métis National Council of Canada, which includes:

Métis cards from these provinces will include the logos above. The definition of Métis from the Metis National Council only includes these provinces as well as parts of the NWT and the northern US: "The Métis emerged as a distinct people or nation in the historic Northwest during the course of the 18th and 19th centuries. This area is known as the "historic Métis Nation Homeland," which includes the 3 Prairie Provinces and extends into Ontario, British Columbia, the Northwest Territories and the northern United States."

Source: <http://www.metisnation.ca/index.php/who-are-the-metis/citizenship>

Métis Documentation

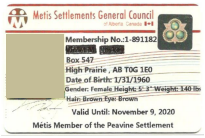
- Information on obtaining Métis status

Even if a person's Métis ancestry is in another province (or they have a card from another province), application for membership can be made to the Métis Nation in the province which the person resides; therefore, if a student is going to be residing in Alberta for any length of time, he/she can apply for Métis status through the Métis Nation of Alberta.


The MNA requires a long-form birth certificate, certified genealogy and any other supporting documents, such as Métis Land Scrip Records, a Métis card from another province and census records that identify ancestors as Métis.

Métis Documentation

- Less common Métis documents
There are several Métis settlements located across the Northern part of Alberta. (The Métis of Alberta signed a Métis Lands Settlement Accord in 1990, preserving the land rights.) These settlements are:
 - Buffalo Lake
 - East Prairie
 - Elizabeth Lake
 - Fishing Lake
 - Gift Lake
 - Kikino
 - Paddle Prairie
 - Peavine




Northwest Territory Métis Nation



The above logo (or variation of) will appear on documentation from members of the NWT Métis Nation.


A letter or card issued by one of these settlements can also provide proof of Métis status.



Logo for the Métis Settlements General Council. This logo (or variation of) should appear on documents.

Inuit Documentation

- While there are usually fewer than 10 self-declared Inuit students studying at the UofC, it is worth mentioning that Inuit are not eligible for a Certificate of Indian Status through INAC. Most common forms of documentation come in the form of a letter from a government organization such as Inuvialuit Regional Corporation or Nunatsiavut in Labrador, the latter of which also issues a card. There are also various Inuit Beneficiary cards issued through organizations such as Nunavut Trust and these can also serve as proof of Inuit status.
- As with letters provided by First Nations communities, letters should be on letterhead, include a registration number and be signed by a government, corporate or community official.
- Most post-secondary support programs for Inuit people are administered through the Governments of the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut.




Non-Status First Nations Documentation

While there are broader definitions, INAC describes "Non-Status Indians" as "people who identify themselves as First Nations but who are not entitled to registration on the Indian Register pursuant to the Indian Act. Some may however be members of a First Nation band." Source: <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100014433/1100100014437> Some people lost their status because of intermarriage, adoption and enfranchisement. INAC has introduced several bills (e.g., Bill C-31 and C-3) to deal with discrimination that led to loss of status. Some students may be eligible to apply for status under these Bills.

- Non-Status First Nations people who belong to a Band or First Nation, can provide a letter from the Band/First Nation similar to that provided for a person who has Status, which will be on letterhead and signed by a Band Administrator.
- A certified genealogy accompanied by any supporting documents and long-form birth certificate can also be used, as with students who have temporary proof.


The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) and its affiliated provincial organizations are working to represent the interests of some Métis and Non-Status people, particularly those in urban areas and the Maritime provinces, where getting status may be difficult. Please note that these organizations do not sell memberships, but may be able to provide letters.



Temporary Proof Documentation

- If a student does not have a status card, the following may be provided as temporary proof of FNMI status:
 - A copy of the student's long-form birth certificate accompanied by a copy of one or both parents' (or close relative's) status card(s)
 - Proof that an application to INAC or the MNA is in progress. This is normally in the form of a letter from one of these organizations.
 - A certified genealogy (pedigree chart) starting with the student and going back three to four generations and identifying ancestors who had/have FNMI status. This can be accompanied by any other supporting documents that identify race, such as census records, church records, birth and death certificates.

The best proof is the same documentation that would be required if the student were applying to INAC or the MNA for her/his Status Card – and students should be strongly encouraged to apply to the appropriate organization.



The Cards to Watch Out For

- Those that have obviously been tampered with, which is why INAC and the Métis Council of Canada has moved to new cards with added security features.
- Organizations that sell memberships (and there are many) often using Métis in their title. Some are affiliated and run by one person, who created them in Ontario and the Maritimes, since people of mixed ancestry from parts of Ontario and the Maritime provinces are not eligible for Métis Status through the Métis National Council of Canada.
- Some organizations have similar names to legitimate organizations. For example, there is one called the Canadian Métis Council and one called the Canadian Federation of Aboriginal People, who has this on their website: www.national-aboriginal-government-office.ca
- Some cards can look like legitimate cards with similar looks and names.

