



Guidelines: Indigenization, Decolonization, Responding to the TRC Calls to Action in Academic Programs and Curricula

“There is a significant expectation from Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities alike that the University of Alberta takes up its role in Indigenous-focused work and reconciliation.”¹

The shifting requirements for Indigenous Initiatives are centered not only in community expectation; universities are facing the imperative of addressing Indigenous initiatives in Indigenous focused research, teaching and community engagement. These have arisen from post-secondary accreditation bodies, national funding agencies, research council frameworks, professional associations, governments, new requirements for Indigenous-engaged ethical research, and corporate partners requiring robust EDI frameworks. Within disciplines, those advocating for greater awareness of diverse worldviews, perspectives and silenced narratives cite the value of this work in enriching academic knowledge and rigour but also in upending the dominant paradigm that centers Eurocentric worldviews, peoples and practices to the exclusion of others. These discourses examine and question the ways that universities have contributed to the harms of colonization and how we might approach structural changes within a decolonization framework.²

During early stages of academic program development and/or changes to existing program curricula, proponents should consider in what ways are the programs:

Program / Discipline Considerations (e.g. content) in Relation to Indigenization³

- Questioning the logic/dominant paradigm⁴ that underlies the discipline
- Considering the historical context of the discipline and potential silenced narratives
- Including different worldviews within the discipline
- Including ethnographic perspectives within the discipline
- Examining ways that the discipline has contributed to colonization and how the program and unit can approach decolonization
- Relationships of the discipline to land and place
- In what way(s) are literature from Indigenous authors; including Indigenous communities, knowledge systems, and languages; or utilizing Indigenous literature reviews, included in the Program?
- Addressing the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action](#)
- Are there any discipline-specific Calls to Action and if so, what is being done to address them?
- How has the program addressed initiatives within [institutional strategic plans](#) ([University of Alberta Strategic Plan](#), [Strategic Plan for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity](#), [Braiding Past, Present and Future: University of Alberta Indigenous Strategic Plan](#))

¹ [Braiding Past, Present and Future: University of Alberta Indigenous Strategic Plan as found at: https://www.ualberta.ca/media-library/indigenous-excellence/indigenous-strategic-plan/indigenous-strategic-plan.pdf](#) (Page 29)

² [Braiding Past, Present and Future: University of Alberta Indigenous Strategic Plan as found at: https://www.ualberta.ca/media-library/indigenous-excellence/indigenous-strategic-plan/indigenous-strategic-plan.pdf](#) (Page 29)

³ [Braiding Past, Present and Future: University of Alberta Indigenous Strategic Plan as found at: https://www.ualberta.ca/media-library/indigenous-excellence/indigenous-strategic-plan/indigenous-strategic-plan.pdf](#)

⁴ [Braiding Past, Present and Future: University of Alberta Indigenous Strategic Plan as found at: https://www.ualberta.ca/media-library/indigenous-excellence/indigenous-strategic-plan/indigenous-strategic-plan.pdf](#) (Page 29)



Indigenous Faculty, Staff, and Student Engagement/Indigenous Community Engagement in Programs

- In what ways are Indigenous peoples currently participating within the program and discipline?
- What are the historical enrolments of Indigenous students in the programs and are there any outreach programs to attract Indigenous students to the programs? If the graduate program has low enrolment of Indigenous students, has consideration been given as to how the program can build in pathways?
- Are there any specific supports for Indigenous students in the program, and support and encourage Indigenous Faculty and staff complement?
- Is there engagement with Indigenous peoples, communities, or lands external to the University within the program?

Spaces that Welcome Indigenous Faculty, Staff, Students and Community Members

- Do meetings and gatherings begin with a territorial acknowledgement, and is that acknowledgement tailored to the purpose and content of the meeting?
- Do course outlines contain a territorial acknowledgement?
- Has a list of available spaces that can accommodate smudging in the unit been compiled?

Resources

- [Braiding Past, Present and Future: University of Alberta Indigenous Strategic Plan](#)
- [Faculty of Native Studies' "Indigenous Canada: Looking Forward, Looking Back" Massive Open Online Course \(MOOC\)](#)
- [Office of the Vice-Provost \(Indigenous Programming and Research\): Indigenous Initiatives](#)
- [Indigenizing Curriculum - Resource Folder](#)
- [CTL's Indigenizing and Decolonizing Teaching and Learning](#)
- [CTL's Territorial Acknowledgements: Going Beyond the Script](#)
- [Ceremonial \(Smudging\) Guidelines](#)
- [Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action](#)