

Advancing Reconciliation and Indigenization at Canadian Universities

Universities Canada's 2022 Survey on Indigenous Education



Canadian universities recognize the important role of education in advancing reconciliation. Closing the education gap for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis students is an urgent and critical issue for Canada, and our universities are committed to doing their part to removing barriers that Indigenous students face in accessing and succeeding in university studies.

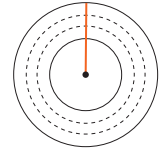
Meaningful inclusion of Indigenous students within Canadian universities requires Indigenization throughout the academy and sustained efforts to advance reconciliation. Canadian universities are providing on-campus services and supports to Indigenous students, building partnerships with Indigenous communities, updating programming and curricula, incorporating and embedding Indigenous Knowledges, and increasing representation in leadership positions and throughout the university.

Important progress has been made, but Canadian universities understand the gaps that remain and acknowledge the need for ongoing work.

Ongoing Commitment by Canadian Universities

Advancing reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and creating more opportunities at universities for Indigenous students are core priorities for our member institutions and our organization.

In April 2023, Universities Canada's members adopted our Commitments to Truth and Reconciliation. Serving to renew Universities Canada's 2015 Principles on Indigenous Education, these new commitments have been updated to reflect the evolving context of truth and reconciliation in Canada and seek to deepen the commitment of Canadian universities to supporting university education for Indigenous students and advancing reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.



Answering the Calls

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action made several appeals directly to universities to incorporate Indigenous histories, cultures, and realities into curricula. Since 2015, Canadian universities have made continued progress towards meeting the Calls to Action relating to post-secondary institutions.



- Close to **90%** of institutions have a strategic plan for advancing reconciliation or have a plan in development and over **50%** of universities have a public strategy or action plan specifically to respond to the Calls to Action.



90%

- Nearly **90%** of universities with law schools have already or are in the process of updating curricula to require all law students to take a course on Indigenous Peoples and the law (responding to Call to Action 28).

80%

- Over **80%** of universities with social work programs are incorporating the history and impacts of residential schools into curricula (responding to Call to Action 1.iii, iv.)

Canadian universities are making progress towards answering these calls and embrace their ongoing responsibility to educate all students in a way that advances reconciliation in Canada. In addition to implementing public strategies and action plans that respond to the Calls to Action, universities are updating curricula across diverse program areas.

96%

- **96%** of institutions offer training and resources for non-Indigenous students, faculty, staff and leadership to support their responsibility to work towards reconciliation.

Learning Opportunities and Programs

Complementing the curricula and programming changes outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, Canadian universities are updating curricula, creating new programs, and adapting the way learning happens to better support Indigenous students.

Nearly half of universities have an Indigenous course requirement for at least some of their programs and faculties.

73%

- **73%** of institutions have programs that include an Indigenous specialization or focus or are specifically designed for Indigenous students. These include unique programs in Indigenous health, Indigenous social work, and teaching Indigenous languages.

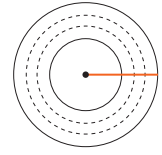
More than 240 courses covering more than 30 Indigenous languages are available at Canadian universities. Courses are being developed jointly with Indigenous communities and organizations

Leveraging local expertise and supporting students to learn from their own communities, some Canadian universities are offering community-based learning options. Over **50%** of universities are offering some community-based learning programs for Indigenous students and in consultation with Elders.



Community-based learning programs for Indigenous students

OVER 50%



Supporting Indigenous Students

The majority of institutions are providing supports specifically for Indigenous students in the form of financial assistance, services, or on-campus activities. Universities offer many dedicated services and supports for Indigenous learners to improve access, retention, and student success.



- Over **90%** of universities offer financial aid specifically earmarked for Indigenous students



- Over **80%** of universities offer academic and general counselling to Indigenous students

Most universities also offer on-campus activities to support Indigenous learners, including social and cultural events, Elder engagement, and gathering spaces.

Indigenous Knowledges

Steps are being taken to embed Indigenous Knowledges into university structures, governance, teaching, learning, and research. The integration of Indigenous Knowledges and worldviews throughout universities and curricula is a critical component of Indigenizing universities.



- Over **50%** of institutions have changed part of their governance structures or processes to incorporate Indigenous practices or decision-making processes.



- Nearly **90%** of institutions are working to integrate Indigenous Knowledges and teaching methods into classrooms on campus.

Representation in Leadership

Increased representation of Indigenous Peoples throughout universities and in diverse positions of leadership is necessary to support the success of future and current Indigenous students.

Nearly every university is working to increase Indigenous representation within governance or leadership structures.



- **90%** of institutions are working to increase Indigenous representation among faculty and staff and improve retention.

Community Engagement

The majority of universities have a partnership with Indigenous communities, organizations, or Indigenous post-secondary institutions.

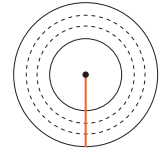


- **72%** of universities have a partnership with a First Nation, Métis, or Inuit community on whose territory their campuses are located, and **61%** of institutions have a formal agreement.



- **59%** of institutions offer land-based or experiential learning opportunities specifically for Indigenous students or in partnership with Indigenous communities.

As Canadian universities conduct research with Indigenous Peoples and communities, work is being undertaken to ensure ethical, respectful, and community-led research. **Three quarters** of institutions have, or are currently developing, research and community engagement plans to ensure ethical research with Indigenous Peoples and communities, and **97%** of institutions are taking actions to incorporate Indigenous Knowledges, methods and protocols into research practices and projects.



About Universities Canada

Universities Canada is the voice of Canadian universities, at home and abroad. We are a membership organization providing university presidents with a unified voice for higher education, research and innovation. Universities Canada advances the mission of our member institutions to transform lives, strengthen communities and find solutions to the most pressing challenges facing our world.

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About Universities Canada's 2022 Survey on Institutional Services for Indigenous Students and Reconciliation

Universities Canada's Survey on Institutional Services for Indigenous Students and Reconciliation is done regularly with our member institutions. The survey provides Universities Canada and the sector with data to better understand the work of universities to advance reconciliation and Indigenous education and respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

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Canada.**

