




TEL +1 778 782 3925  
 FAX +1 778 782 5876  
 sfu.ca/vpacademic

Simon Fraser University  
 Strand Hall 3100  
 8888 University Drive  
 Burnaby BC  
 Canada V5A 1S6

## MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION: Senate	TEL
FROM: Peter Keller, Vice-President, Academic and Provost, and Chair, SCUP	
RE: External Review of the Department of First Nations Studies (SCUP 18-02)	
DATE: January 12, 2018	TIME

At its January 10, 2018 meeting, SCUP reviewed and approved the Action Plan for the Department of First Nations Studies that resulted from its External Review.

The Educational Goals Assessment Plan was reviewed and is attached for the information of Senate.

**Motion:**

That Senate approve the Action Plan for the Department of First Nations Studies that resulted from its External Review.

c: D. Reder  
 J. Pulkingham



8888 University Drive, Burnaby, BC  
Canada V5A 1S6

TEL: 778.782.4636  
FAX: 778.782.5876

avpcio@sfu.ca  
www.sfu.ca/vpacademic

**MEMORANDUM**

**ATTENTION** Peter Keller, Chair, SCUP  
**DATE** December 18, 2017  
**FROM** Wade Parkhouse, Vice-Provost and  
Associate Vice-President, Academic  
**PAGES** 1/1  
**RE:** Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences: External Review of the Department of  
First Nation Studies

Attached are the External Review Report and the Action Plan for the Department of First Nation Studies. The Educational Goals Assessment Plan is included, for information only, with the Action Plan.

Excerpt from the External Review Report:

*“Our team found the level of scholarly faculty production to be impressive, the dedication of all members of the department to the mission of the department and the university to be exceptional, and the dedication of all to the community-engagement values held both by the department and university to be exemplary.”*

Following the site visit, the Report of the External Review Team\* for the Department of First Nation Studies was submitted in May 2017. The Reviewers made a number of recommendations based on the Terms of Reference that were provided to them. Subsequently, a meeting was held with the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, the Chair of the Department of First Nation Studies and the Director of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance (VPA) to consider the recommendations. An Action Plan was prepared taking into consideration the discussion at the meeting and the External Review Report. The Action Plan has been endorsed by the Department and the Dean.

**Motion:**

**That SCUP approve and recommend to Senate the Action Plan for the Department of First Nation Studies that resulted from its external review.**

**\*External Review Team:**

Kathryn Shanley, University of Montana (Chair of Review Team)  
Jesse Archibald-Barber, First Nations University of Canada  
Alison Gill (internal), Simon Fraser University

**Attachments:**

1. External Review Report (May 2017)
2. Department of First Nation Studies Action Plan
3. Department of First Nation Studies Educational Goals Assessment Plan

cc Jane Pulkingham, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences  
Deanna Reder, Chair, Department of First Nation Studies

External Review Committee Report  
First Nations Department, Simon Fraser University  
Prepared by Dr. Kathryn W. Shanley, University of Montana  
May 2017

**Executive Summary:**

The story of the growth toward and the eventual creation of the First Nations Studies Department at Simon Fraser University, as outlined in the departmental self-study and elsewhere, impressively speaks to the commitment of many individuals over the past almost thirty years—people who have kept a vision alive of First Nations students’ and communities’ empowerment and need for equitable educational attainment. Building pathways toward equity for Canada’s First Nations people requires such long-term commitment, given the devastating toll colonialism has taken on Canadian Indigenous peoples, and the current educational gaps and social disparities that exist. Wrongs need to be made right if Canada hopes to move toward a future that includes all its citizens equally. Simon Fraser University is to be congratulated on its efforts over those decades, as is Eldon Yellowhorn, who began his career at SFU as a student and became the FNST Department’s first chair. Current FNST faculty and staff carry forward the vision passed on by those who came before them, both their elders and their mentors. That said, First Nations Studies now lags in its forward momentum due to serious understaffing and under-resourcing in efforts to meet the need for growth and development. A re-invigorated vision on the part of SFU’s administration and a dedication of resources toward the department’s growth are sorely needed. I believe you all know that, so what I hope to outline below is a careful assessment of achievements and challenges in the FNST Department, and our recommendations for moving forward.

Developing a leading post-secondary Indigenous educational program requires a great level of support, enthusiasm, and respect toward faculty, staff, and students. Ideally, First Nations Studies departments significantly promote and preserve First Nations traditions and ways of knowing, both in the academy and the community. At the same time, FNST plays a key role in developing new Indigenous leadership as well as non-Indigenous allies and leaders. Informed and culturally aware educators are needed at all levels of the educational pipeline. This work is both specific and expansive, engaging the areas of knowledge of the land and resources, wildlife and environment, health and community wellness, history and philosophies, languages and literatures, performance and oral traditions, arts and media, business and finance, and science and education. Such educational endeavors must follow a movement away from the assimilationist policies of the past, toward decolonization in the present, and Indigenous sovereignty in the future—all policies need to reflect that reconciliation movement, as the TRC 94 Calls to Action detail. Institutions such as Simon Fraser University must look across the board at the efforts toward reconciliation on their campus and must create metrics to assess and track gains being made—over the next three years toward the end of creating “a more accessible, responsive, and productive University environment for Aboriginal community members over the long term” (FNST Self Study 1).

Supporting a First Nations Studies department is also one of the most effective ways to implement a strong commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action. This work must go beyond words to become direct action toward structural change in the university, as all faculty, staff, and students will need to participate actively in realizing these

goals. If Indigenization is to be valued, then these goals must become a central part of the university's mandate, and this includes supporting a robust First Nations Studies department, in addition to the various Aboriginal support units, offices, and programs.

As an outside review team (with one internal member), we received the charge to evaluate the current strengths of and challenges faced by the First Nations Studies Department and to make recommendations accordingly, first, of things requiring immediate attention and, second, of other challenges FNST faces, and last, of future possibilities for growth. The team members were Dr. Alison Gill (SFU Geography), Dr. Jesse Archibald-Barber (First Nations University of Canada, Regina), and Kathryn Shanley (University of Montana, Missoula, Native American Studies); Dr. Shanley served as author of this report.

By way of establishing the terminology used within and basic ideas undergirding this report, I begin with a description of First Nations Studies, under its many designations: First Nations Studies, Native American Studies, Indigenous Studies, American Indian Studies, Alaska Native Studies, etc. First Nation Studies is a field-based discipline that uses Indigenous knowledges, traditions, histories, and methodologies as a beginning or focal point and does so in ways that reflect the lived experiences of First Nations, Aboriginal, Inuit, "Indian," and Métis peoples. Inasmuch as Indigenous studies (my preferred term) is able to present scholarship from Indigenous perspectives within Western institutions, the principles guiding the educational endeavor involve relationship, respect, responsibility, and reciprocity with Indigenous communities, institutions, individuals, and bodies of knowledge—as those rubrics have been delineated and defined by Shawn Wilson, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, and other Indigenous theorists. In addition to its contributions to global bodies of knowledge, Indigenous studies as a field prepares individuals to work effectively with Indigenous individuals, organizations, governments, industry, and communities.

#### **1. The quality of the unit's program:**

Without a doubt, the FNST Department at SFU excels at achieving its goals and fulfilling its mission, inasmuch as the limited number of faculty and inadequate space and resources allow. Our team found the level of scholarly faculty production to be impressive, the dedication of all members of the department to the mission of the department and the university to be exceptional, and the dedication of all to the community-engagement values held both by the department and the university to be exemplary.

The FNST degree requirements fit well within the field standards of offering disciplinary breadth (history, anthropology/archeology, government [political science], law, literature, art, ethnobotany, environmental studies, gender studies, linguistics). In regard to the structure of the curriculum, FNST shapes itself primarily around a foundation of history, archeology, law, literature (discourse), languages, and culture studies—all put together in a sensible way. One suggestion might be that the curriculum could benefit from creating a core course offering of an introduction to Indigenous art; such a course might include a museum studies component as a comparative ways of seeing.

Educational goals of the unit along with assessment measures were set by the faculty in a retreat in 2016, as stated in their self-study report, and will be fully in place AY 19. They are in the process of linking individual assignments with skill-set and knowledge-base acquisition, after having identified specific courses within which particular learning objectives will be addressed. Students were surveyed as a means of getting a general picture of their sense of achieving the learning objectives, and although the numbers are far from conclusive, the relatively small number surveyed were more impacted by the knowledge received than by the skill sets. The FNST faculty clearly engage the curriculum as a whole educational experience that empowers students to analyze critically, write well, think ethically, and theorize effectively. The department might consider requiring an exit interview for their majors to deepen their assessment efforts.

Reading over the information about the department's facilitation of joint majors, certificates, cooperative learning, and First Nations Community Academic Outreach Education (FNEP)—not to mention maintaining cross-listed courses and working with graduate students—one finds it difficult to imagine how the unit gets all of that done. Indeed, while the faculty and staff members are consummate in the delivery and administration of the department's programs, there are some clear signs of strain on its capacity.

According to some students with whom we met, enrollment issues plague the department in that students may have to wait over a year to get into courses they need or want to take. Faculty loads can be helped somewhat by fewer course preparations per year, if they were able to offer more sections on in-demand courses.

With the review of the FNST Department and other university-wide initiatives, Simon Fraser University is poised to take the critical steps needed to become a leader in Indigenous postsecondary education both regionally and across Canada. As noted in the FASS 5-year Academic Plan (2013-2018), the growth of bachelor-level degree-granting colleges in the region poses challenges in terms of competing for students, not to mention many other current and future financial challenges; nonetheless, the FNST Department at SFU has a longstanding and solid history in First Nations Studies that sets it apart. That said, building and maintaining the right brand should be in keeping with the strategic growth areas identified by the FNST faculty, and, inasmuch as is possible to provide adequate breadth of knowledge/skills, the department should remain vigilant in avoiding the temptation to "be all things to all people."

Indigenous peoples' visions and needs—along with wrongs to be made right—should remain a high priority, as they are now. FNST faculty and staff are to be applauded for their steady eye to shaping development around those values, remaining true to a mandate of Indigenous empowerment through education. The department's self-study report captures the FNST philosophical underpinnings well when it says: "A better understanding about this [Indigenous] segment of Canadian society depends on the university and the broader community receiving the latest data and the most accurate interpretation. We activate this ambition by concentrating on areas where we have substantial expertise and the skill sets to produce new knowledge. A major feature of

First Nations Studies is the blending of the academic program with the *community-oriented* research strategies alluded to in the phrase ‘engaging the world.’”

## 2. **The Quality of faculty research:**

The First Nations Department faculty impressively, yet unassumingly, seek to fulfill Simon Fraser University’s bifocal strategic vision “to be a world leader in knowledge mobilization, building on a strong foundation of fundamental research” and “to be Canada’s most community-engaged university.” During our visit, students spoke enthusiastically about the quality of the academic atmosphere and respectfully of faculty research accomplishments, and it is evident each member of the faculty engages with communities in Indigenous-informed ways and with valuable educational products and productions.

The valuable work Dr. Marianne Ignace does with Native language retention, revitalization, and dissemination stands as a model for envisioning a range of activities to address pressing concerns about endangered language. Nothing could be more essential to the survival of the deepest Indigenous knowledges. Her use of traditional stories to teach math shows the brilliance and depth of her commitment to give back to communities what they have lost, in a form and method that moves them forward with inspiration, increased self-esteem, and Indigenous understandings. The grants Dr. Ignace has secured to do her work is truly impressive, especially for her seven-year study to guide endangered language work into the twenty-first century.

The two faculty with anthropological / archeology training, Dr. Eldon Yellowhorn and Dr. Rudy Reimer, contribute to local and global knowledge in contrastive, yet equally valuable ways. Dr. Yellowhorn assists Indigenous communities with their recording of histories of place, and utilizes his photography skills to work in multi-media in documenting information important to the communities. Dr. Reimer, the newest member of the faculty, also works within his home community and has collaborated with television productions to disseminate Indigenous knowledge. I link these two faculty members, because they form a cluster of two lines who complement one another in powerful ways, even though they are in the same unit. Such clusters provide a profile of expertise--a character profile—for an institution or department. Such affinities carry extraordinary potential for showing an Indigenous intellectual “personality” grouping and might be compared to such movements as the Harlem Renaissance, post-modernist scholar/critics at institutions such as Berkeley, Yale, and Columbia (Stanley Fish, et al), the market economists at University of Chicago (Milton Friedman, et al), etc., or the French post-structuralist feminists at Columbia University and the Sorbonne (Julia Kristeva, et al). I can imagine the grandiosity of such analogous pairings might bring smiles to the faces of a few, but let me add that no such movement has occurred yet in Indigenous Studies higher education, except for a short-lived gathering at the University of Arizona in the 1980s (Deloria, Momaday, Silko, et al). Do not hesitate to think big.

The department is fortunate to have among their number a practicing artist, Dr. annie ross, who frequently involves others in process, production, and artifact; for example, her partnership with Squamish weavers that resulted in the weavings displayed on campus in

the Saywell Atrium. She also conducts interviews as a way of recording Indigenous community voices. One student went out of her way to praise Dr. Ross as someone who “cares for those around her” and to declare that she “makes a life-changing difference to a student like myself, who is grappling with ideas in wishing to become a better witness to the lives of others.”

We did not have access to quality student evaluations to make similar observations of other faculty members’ influence and impact as pedagogues, mentors, and role models, but we did receive similar feedback on Dr. Yellowhorn’s valuable contribution to student growth and development.

Dr. Deanna Reder has been involved in recovering “lost” or overlooked literatures. Through an impressive SSHRC research grant, Dr. Reder is involved in a project to digitize Canadian Native literatures in many platforms. Her reputation as an important figure in Indigenous literary criticism and theory grows each year. Her research has been thoroughly woven into the core courses and the cross-listed courses in such a way that her work provides a model for seeing both abstract and applied knowledge at work.

Obviously, so much more could be said about the excellence of the FNST faculty and their accomplishment and continuing research agendas. I will simply say that their work taken as a whole impressively covers a field with multi- and cross-disciplinary approaches to scholarship, pedagogy, and community-engagement. Kudos to them all. I will happily and proudly serve in such a unit and with such exceptional colleagues.

### **3. Unit members participation in the administration of the Unit:**

Eldon Yellowhorn performs his service as chair with dedication and focus. The kind of collaborations FNST faculty are called upon to engage in on campus and in community requires administrative duties, formal and informal. As is noted throughout the self-study report, FNST faculty are stretched to the limit in terms of the services they provide to the university community, including all work within the unit to assure its efficient functioning.

It must be noted that during our visit, some FNST people spoke to us about others within the university as regarding FNST to be substandard. Such thinking seems to follow along the lines of an old argument about how inclusion of non-Western ways of knowing represents a lowering of standards. I would have been surprised if I had not heard that, since such backward thinking still exists in all universities, unfortunately. Although we found the remarks difficult to assess and place in context, they ought to be shared so that awareness about the possibilities of such treatment is increased. The combination of being undervalued and overworked presents serious challenges, and gender pressures on women faculty may further intensify the strain. We observed some of that as well. Moreover, as the TRC calls to action become increasingly realized, the push-back may also increase, “Why are we doing this? Why can First Nations peoples put this behind them,” etc.

**4. The Unit's workplace environment is conducive to the attainment of their objectives:**

Although our opportunities to observe the workplace environment as it functions on a day-to-day basis were limited, we can say with confidence that from all indications the administrative support staff in the First Nations Studies Department perform their duties and responsibilities well and devote themselves avidly to the goals of the department. At the same time, they seek to meet the needs of students and respond to communities outside the university. The department administrator perhaps gets spread too thin at times, such that as the department grows additional staff to assist with student advising will be needed.

The physical space, however, is woefully inadequate. All of the FNST courses meet in one particular room, and the department lacks a gathering space other than the atrium, which is shared with the entire university, causing noise and distraction not conducive to a comfortable and focused learning experience.

**5. Future Plans of the Unit are appropriate and manageable:**

The First Nations Studies Department looks to how, on the one hand, they can increase their undergraduate program to include a First Nations Studies requirement for all SFU students, and on the other hand to grow a graduate degree program with an established curriculum. Both require an increase in faculty.

**6. Issues of Specific Interest:**

**6.1 Capability to serve the academic needs of graduate students (supervision and courses)**

The FNST faculty currently serves graduate students through an interdisciplinary independent studies Master's (SAR) option, and those students who avail themselves of that degree path appear to find the curricular, research, and writing experience of their study to be of high quality. Students and faculty, however, express the desire for the department to grow a graduate-level FNST curriculum that is more in keeping with Indigenous Studies methodologies and theories than is the current Western-focused curriculum. The key reason for their hope for a FNST graduate degree has to do with the curricular offerings that fit within the First Nations Studies (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) perspective. Graduate students told the review committee that, in particular, Indigenous communities need specialists in health, justice, sociology, and political economy.

One of the students who found the discussion session with our committee too short wrote to us to make certain her ideas would be more fully expressed. In her letter she emphasizes how her work directly ties to the TRC and how several department faculty provide the expertise and support crucially necessary for her to do her work; their professional and personal commitment to the mandates of the



TRC empowers her. She states, “This department, while small, is outstanding, and I am lucky to be one of many non-Indigenous students who has been embraced, cared for, and inspired by those in FNST.”

## **6.2 Assess the department’s current complement of undergraduate courses and identify strategies that would fill any gaps.**

In general, the FNST Department’s courses add valuable intellectual and skill-set knowledge to the university offerings for all students in the contemporary world, given the TRC directives, and also fit within a wide variety of majors, e.g., history, archeology, English and world literary studies, education, law, communications, and health and social sciences study. In that way, FNST greatly enhances the general education offers of SFU.

Obviously, a major in FNST provides the above-mentioned breadth and also prepares students to pursue graduate or professional degrees. The more Indigenous Studies focus the courses contain, the more likely they will bring with them a new set of questions built around Indigenous cultural perspectives, ontologies, epistemologies, and pedagogies.

Students also expressed a desire for more tutorial level classes as opposed to large classes; they spoke of a desire for more “conversive” engagement with their instructors and peers, because the material often requires emotional processing as well as intellectual. Moreover, students complain that they often have to wait over a year to take a class they need, because there are too few professors to offer classes in a consistent rotation; one stated that she did not take the minor, because she could not get into the classes she needed in a timely fashion.

On the 100-level, lateral expansion of the “Introduction to First Nations Studies” might include specific topics in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit cultural and historical studies. Coursework that stresses *traditional* First Nations governance, religious practice, education, economics, social order, art, and politics looks quite different from similar subjects taught through Western paradigms where Aboriginal knowledge often plays out through “deficiency models” perspectives. However, this is precisely why a fully supported and developed first-year course program is essential to the contemporary university community. Other possible areas of curricular growth might include comparative global Indigenous perspectives; community-based participatory research methodologies (if this isn’t covered in other methodologies courses); First Nations media; and Indigenous science.

Throughout our visit, the topic of FNST’s potential offering of a required course for SFU students in their general education roster surfaced as both a way to increase the university’s mission regarding the TRC report and to expose FNST as a field to potential majors. Courses in First Nations Studies do indeed have the potential to re-orient students regarding their received knowledge about Canada’s

history and to re-examine many people's underlying assumptions about the lives of Indigenous peoples, past and present. A two course sequence could be shaped to offer general education requirement choices and important curricula for FNST majors: the first devoted to the study of the residential schools experience, and a second focused on the Truth and Reconciliation history itself. Such courses would increase the "Sharing of information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history" (Call To Action 63ii) and "Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect" (63iii).

**6.3 Suggest a strategy for the Department to build a long-term, sustainable, community-engaged research and teaching program, that answers calls to action of the federal Truth and Reconciliation Commission.**

Offering a graduate degree program creates the most effective opportunities for building a strong Indigenous educational pipeline, because graduate students taught and mentored by FNST faculty in turn become teachers and mentors for undergraduates. Research exponentially increases and thereby enriches both the knowledge base of experts and aspiring experts in the field of First Nations Studies and the potential for community outreach (co-activism) so needed to strengthen Indigenous community infrastructures and leadership. Research and teaching engagement with communities can more easily be shaped and developed from the grassroots levels, but community-based, participatory research takes more time, not to mention the expectation of long-term involvement of the researchers in the community.

Many of the current FNST faculty are active in community-engaged pedagogy and research, and they give every indication that they will continue those commitments into the future. With the critical need for more community language programs, and the growth in popularity of new media and educational productions, increasing the capacity of faculty and enrolling more graduate students would greatly enhance the FNST department's and SFU's ongoing work toward answering the TRC's Calls to Action.

**6.4 Opportunities and challenges faced by the Department in the light of institutional indigenization initiatives, identify the most important and appropriate areas for Department involvement.**

Faculty overload, perhaps for any First Nations Studies Department, is the number one problem the FNST Department faculty struggle with, and it involves the number and variety of service demands placed on the faculty. FNST faculty must respond to requests for collaboration, consultation, and contribution from other units on campus, within the community, and from the students. These requests, which Indigenous professors willingly engage in as an essential part of their research and service, nonetheless place a level of demand beyond most other faculty duties and service. Further FNST involvement in Indigenization

initiatives, which is essential to the success of those initiatives, will require support from SFU to help build the department's capacity.

With increased support, FNST faculty can assist SFU in becoming a leading institution for Indigenization initiatives. To this point, the TRC's Call to Action item 11 "call[s] upon the federal government to provide adequate funding to end the backlog of First Nations students seeking a post-secondary education." FNST could play a more central role in realizing this item, as collaborators for assessing the educational pipeline issues related to admissions, recruitment, retention, funding, and financial literacy of the First Nations student population.

#### **6.5 Recommend strategies for ensuring the quality and indigenous perspectives of all courses, including cross-listed courses.**

Although I respect the spirit of this request for strategies to diversify curricular knowledge, a thorough answer seems somewhat impossible, given our limited time on campus and our rather focused attention on the FNST unit itself. I would say, nonetheless, that many ideas come to mind that might be useful to consider. Quite frankly, I find the "indigenizing the academy" concept daunting, though exciting, to envision. The prospect of summer institutes for SFU faculty, focused on a range of themes would be a place to begin. Begin also with the department's closest allies and branch out strategically to the most essential units requiring (and who are receptive to) diversifying their curricula. Outside funding can be sought to provide the seed money necessary to begin.

Ultimately, new faculty orientations, workshops with the Administrative cabinet, and other specially designed gatherings could be used to increase cross-cultural understanding and raise the conscious awareness of Indigenous history, cultural knowledge and differences, and Indigenous contemporary (particularly educational) issues. Presenters could be from the FNST Department or especially identified speakers.

Seek increased cross-listing with the Art, Gender Studies, English, and Environmental Studies programs.

Providing opportunities and rewards for team-teaching that enables FNST faculty to work directly with colleagues from other units to infuse knowledge could be strategically developed to target the most important fields first—law, political science, economics, etc.—and expanded as resources allow. A robust, well-planned-out, ongoing speaker series that would give professors time to build assignments into their courses that relate to the speaker's expertise could be powerfully effective, and faculty seminars could be part of the distinguished speaker's itinerary. Frequent performances by Indigenous artists and visits by community elders would enhance the sense of presence of Indigenous people as a way of enriching campus life at the same time as it would make First Nations students feel more at home.

Getting the entire campus onboard with curricular transformation might require more basic academic efforts. If Canada is like the U.S. in its ambivalence toward anything that seems “affirmative action” oriented, efforts to make inclusion strategies sensible would be in order. For example, Dartmouth University Professor of Medieval Studies, Michelle R. Warren, ended a presentation at the Medieval Academy of America conference, entitled “Diversity in Every Course, Cross-cultural Encounters in Every Classroom,” with the idea that “Inclusion strategies are integral to scholarly excellence.”

<http://dx.doi.org/10.17613/M6VT1J>

Along similar lines, I often say in the workshops that I do that our “Indian Education for All” mandate from the Montana 1972 Constitution to teach every student about American Indian history and culture is simply critical thinking at its best. A philosophical determination to see TRC excellence in pedagogy and research might require a raising of the discourse level at every meeting. At the risk of seeming pedantic, may I offer that Warren directs people to two important texts: Therese Huston, *Teaching What You Don't Know*, and Patricia Giren, Biren (Ratnesh) A. Nagda, and Ximena Zúniga, *Dialogue Across Difference: Practice, Theory, and Research*. Such basic texts can reinforce the idea to faculty across the campus that inclusion is essential and doable with support and effort. I’m not sure if faculty members at SFU need to begin at such beginnings before tackling Indigenous subject inclusion, but I would venture to say that my colleagues at the University of Montana in many areas certainly do need basic conversations.

#### **6.6 Consider what strategy and/or resources would be required to meet the demand for faculty service as the face of Indigenous engagement and representation.**

For better or for worse, the Chair of the FNST Department becomes a key go-to person for any variety of requests, questions, collaborations, and contacts. In a small department the service involved in such public service can add up to a serious drain in research time and energy. That pattern cannot easily be turned around, but I would suggest a number of actions: 1) that SFU develop a “point-person system” within each college. That person’s role would be dissemination of information to the larger community and; 2) that a comprehensive analysis be done (and updates maintained by designated staff) of all SFU informational materials, especially websites, to assure that the public and the campus community have a broad understanding of Indigenous program information, key personnel, and other system overview information. The face of the university needs to reflect respect for and understanding of their own campus’s Indigenous presence and systematic inclusion. While all of this may go without saying, I offer the suggestions for validation of current practices, if nothing else.

#### **Recommendations:**

**Over the next five to six years, increase faculty lines to ten full-time equivalents, with an immediate hiring of two people in tenure-track lines, both of whom would be fully located within FNST. We recommend the hiring of two faculty at the same time as a means both of taking an immediate service burden off the current faculty and of providing a peer-level support structure. The next two hires would be what are known as “cluster hires,” appointments shared with other departments, depending on the curricular and research strategies determined by FNST, and strategically designed to link within the university around key areas.**

**Rationale:**

- 1) In order for FNST to function more fully as a department, the unit needs a minimum of five new faculty lines—three of whom should have their locus of tenure solely within the unit: First, so they can internally fulfill the department’s administrative duties and responsibilities, including comprising FNST faculty tenure/promotion review committees and filling in curricula and other responsibilities behind colleagues’ research leaves and sabbaticals. Second, a more adequate complement can together shape the field/discipline focus of FNST more fully within the matrix of contemporary Indigenous theory and methodology. Although what they accomplish now as a collective truly impresses us, they actually need more time to build community among themselves. The department’s deeply committed allies and supporters fill administrative gaps, and the new hires should in no way alter their valuable place and roles within the unit. As it currently stands, however, FNST functions as somewhat of a second-class citizen in the university due to its being so critically under-capacity.
- 2) The increased number of faculty relieve the excessive service load required of FNST faculty. There are too few faculty to do too much, and at that they fall short of functioning as departments ought to function, or as the self-study states, “simply running to stand still.” The service load faculty experience can lead to a burn-out that threatens the career accomplishments of individuals, the functioning of the unit, and the overarching mission of the department in its intersection with the institution at large.
- 3) In order to contribute adequately and effectively to the institutional mission of addressing the Truth and Reconciliation calls to action. A cluster of two hires with joint appointments could potentially provide research and pedagogical foci to the campus integration of the calls to action.
- 4) To move away from overuse of sessionals, who are currently delivering one-third of the teaching is a missed opportunity on many levels.
- 5) To avail themselves of important research, teaching, and community-engagement opportunities to bring real value to students, the University and wider communities.

**Provide FNST with increased suitable space for instruction and gathering.**

**Rationale:**

The department needs to have a space that facilitates community-building; enhances public presence in terms of speakers, performer, and Indigenous elders and leaders; and provides undistracted classroom instruction and departmental conference space.

### **Develop a graduate degree program.**

#### **Rationale:**

- 1) Some faculty note a lack of graduate students to offer assistance on research projects, and that the corresponding inability to offer graduate training can also have a negative impact on the ability to qualify for certain funding streams (though cross-departmental and interdisciplinary work can mitigate this).
- 2) As discussed above, a graduate studies degree program provides a vital link in the pipeline that can potentially increase student retention, research acquisition, pedagogical opportunities, community-engagement, and enriched curricula.

### **Assist FNST in studying the feasibility of a FNST general education requirement for the university.**

#### **Rationale:**

The numbers question in a university the size of SFU would have to be answered, if FNST were to structure a general education course for all students; many entities would have to be involved in the planning, and the administration would have to assist in the effort. The last thing you would want to do is doom the FNST Department with an all-consuming service obligation.

### **Create postdoc positions, perhaps through the Aboriginal Initiative Fund.**

#### **Rationale:**

New Ph.Ds uniquely fill the role of mentors and infuse cutting edge material and theories into ongoing discussions among faculty who have settled more into their respective foci.

#### **Conclusion:**

Rather than reiterate what has been recommended above, I would like to add, speaking as someone who is actively involved in her university's prioritization process (modeled after the frameworks set out by Robert Dickeson), that expanding FNST as recommended comes at a cost to others, I'm sure. I believe the changes outlined are called for within Simon Fraser University's mission, and that rather than "additive" or part of a "wish list," expanding FNST represents a powerful and exciting structural transformations in the future of the institution as a whole. In order to offer stronger recommendations regarding implementation, however, we would need to see the larger Indigenous matrix into which FNST fits—a task for the department itself and others at SFU.

I speak for the team when I say we were grateful for the opportunity to explore possibilities with you all, to offer what we have, and to join our optimism and hope with yours that FNST will continue on in excellence and begin to blossom and thrive. *Pinamiya*, thank you, for inviting us among you.

#### Works Cited

- Dickeson, R. C. (2010) *Prioritizing Academic Programs and Services: Reallocating Resources to Achieve Strategic Balance*. Indianapolis, IN: Josey-Bass Publishers (Wiley).
- Giren, P., and B. (Ratnesh) A. Nagda, and X. Zúniga. (2013) *Dialogue Across Difference: Practice, Theory, and Research*.
- Gordon, C. E.; J. P. White. (2014) "Indigenous Educational Attainment in Canada." *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*. 5 (3).
- Huston, T.. (2012) *Teaching What You Don't Know*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Second Edition.
- Phillips, S. D., et al. (2015) *Faculty Cluster Hiring for Diversity and Institutional Climate*. Urban Universities for Health.
- Smith, L. T. (2002) *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books.
- Wilson, S.. (2009) *Research as Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*. Winnipeg, MB: Fernwood Publishing Co.



## EXTERNAL REVIEW – ACTION PLAN

### **Section 1 – To be completed by the Responsible Unit Person e.g. Chair or Director**

Unit under review First Nations Studies	Date of Review Site visit March 22-23, 2017	Responsible Unit person, Eldon Yellowhorn, Chair	Faculty Dean Jane Pulkingham, Dean of FASS
--	--	---	---

**Note:** It is **not** expected that every recommendation made by the Review Team be covered by this Action Plan. The major thrusts of the Report should be identified and some consolidation of the recommendations may be possible while other recommendations of lesser importance may be excluded.

Should an additional response from be warranted it should be attached as a separate document.

### **1. PROGRAMMING**

○ Action/s (description what is going to be done):

**1.1.1 Undergraduate:**

- Given that First Nations Studies exists only as an undergraduate programme the review committee lauded the faculty for their efforts and encouraged us to continue doing what we have done well. They also recommended that as we grow the programme we should take special notice of the reconciliation movement and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action in our curriculum. We will do so by identifying and acting on those Calls to Action that we can effectively engage.
- The review committee acknowledged the University's commitment to indigenization and that First Nations Studies could play a leadership role but that the department should avoid the temptation to "be all things to all people." We will be vigilant about this but remain accessible for consultations; we acknowledge that service teaching in First Nations Studies calls for collaboration between our department and those departments wherein we have, or will have, joint majors or confer credits for certificates. We will explore the feasibility of new courses that can advance this project. For example, we could recommend creating one general course for all students that would be different than the one for our majors.
- The review committee recognized that our educational goals engage the curriculum as a whole educational experience, and that we should implement an exit interview for majors to enhance our assessment efforts. We will do so in consultation with the TLC.

**1.1.2 Graduate:**

- The review committee recommended that we develop a graduate degree programme that will augment our ability to produce the next generation of academics. Our faculty feel strongly that we can be leaders in training young scholars to conduct original research so they can contribute to advancing the discipline of First Nations Studies. We are enthusiastic about the potential such development holds and will seek to launch a graduate programme in the 2020/2021 academic year.



- **The review committee recommended that we create post-doc positions to complement the research programme of the faculty. We will do so when resources permit. We encourage faculty to consider post-doc positions in their grant applications to assist in their research programmes and to give young scholars experience in conducting original research.**

- **Resource implications (if any):**

- **The undergraduate programme in First Nations Studies relies too heavily on temporary instructors and the antidote will require continuing faculty. The review committee urged us to hire immediately two tenure-stream faculty appointed full time to the department and, over the next five to six years, increase faculty lines to ten full-time equivalents. We agree wholeheartedly and will seek to do so when resources permit as a way to move forward with developing the Department. Our current top priority is in Aboriginal people and public policy; this will provide some of the necessary resources to alleviate the personnel shortage. Our next choice is a focus on Aboriginal people in the history of western Canada.**
- **The proposed faculty additions would obviously require resources, e.g. office space.**
- **If we expand the curriculum and the number of courses offered each semester we will require resources to implement the programme. Herein we consider instructional space as key as we have only one classroom dedicated to our department.**
- **We cannot estimate resource implications for our potential graduate programme until we develop a detailed proposal. The availability of resources will inform our choices in this process.**
- **First Nations Studies would be a resource for the Faculty as the goal of indigenizing the curriculum proceeds.**

### **1.3 Expected completion date/s:**

#### **Undergraduate**

- **Dedicating teaching resources to our programme will entail two faculty appointed full time to FNS in the 2018/19 academic year. Thereafter, two additional faculty will be added in the 2019/2020 academic year and one more faculty in the 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 academic years to bring us to a total of ten FTE.**
- **First Nations Studies is keenly aware that the TRC's Calls to Action be included in our programme and invoking them is an on-going project.**
- **Indigenizing the curriculum is a key aspect of the courses we currently teach and will be embedded in all future courses.**
- **Educational goals for First Nations Studies and programme assessment procedures will be fully implemented in the 2019/2020 academic year.**

#### **Graduate**

- **Our Department previously explored the likelihood of establishing a graduate programme, but taking into account faculty on leave and new hires, launching it in 2020/21 academic year will allow us the opportunity to design the curriculum and ensure**

that a full contingent of faculty can participate.

## **2. RESEARCH**

### **2.1 Action/s (what is going to be done):**

- The review committee recommended that we create a position so post-doctoral researchers can work in our department.

### **2.2 Resource implications (if any):**

- We will encourage faculty to include a post-doctoral fellowship position in their application for research grants.

### **2.3 Expected completion date/s:**

- This is an on-going issue that will be contingent on faculty members including such positions when applying for research grants.

## **3. ADMINISTRATION**

### **3.1 Action/s(what is going to be done) :**

- The review committee noted that we are unable to fill all departmental committees with our current faculty contingent. We will continue to recruit members from the broader campus community until we have the personnel in our department to fill all our committees.
- The review committee noted the excessive service load required of our faculty and cautioned against potential burn out. New faculty to relieve the service demands.

### **3.2 Resource implications (If any):**

- New faculty hires.

**3.3 Expected completion date/s:**

- We acknowledge this to be an issue in our department but this will be alleviated once we have new faculty hires.

**4. WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

**4.1 Action/s (what is going to be done):**

- As the reviewers noted, "while the faculty and staff members are consumate in the delivery and administration of the department's programs, there are some clear signs of strain on its capacity." Specifically, they point to enrollment issues with in-demand courses, such as the ethnobotany course (FNST332), that are difficult to enroll in because of the limited class size. Their recommendation is to offer more sections for these in-demand courses.
- The reviewers expressed concern that the department is stretched to the limit due to the services they provide to the university and broader community.
- .....

**4.2 Resource implications (if any):**

- Growing the programme with new faculty hires will contribute to easing these factors, but they will mean dedicating office space to our department for new faculty and administrative support staff. We are cognizant that space continues to be a contentious issue.

**4.3 Expected completion date/s:**

- We accept that hiring two new faculty in 2018/19 will help to alleviate these limitation.

**5. .... (OTHER)**

**5.1 Action/s:**

- .....
- .....
- .....

**5.2 Resource implications (if any):**

**5.3 Expected completion date/s:**

The above action plan has been considered by the Unit under review and has been discussed and agreed to by the Dean.

<p><b>Unit Leader (signed)</b> <i>Eldon Yellowhorn</i> <b>Name: Eldon Yellowhorn      Title: Chair, Department of First Nations Studies.</b></p>	<p><b>Date</b> .....July 20, 2017....</p>
--	---

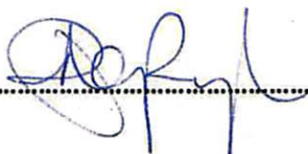
I met with Dr. Eldon Yellowhorn, Chair of the Department of First Nations Studies July 24 2017 with Glynn Nicholls (Office of the VPA) to discuss the external review prepared by Professor K. W. Shanley (University of Montana) and Associate Professor Jesse Archibald Barber (First Nations University of Canada).

Our office has given close consideration to the external review and to the detailed response from the Department of First Nations Studies. The external reviewers have produced a very thoughtful assessment, capturing the strengths found in the Department, identifying opportunities for new initiatives building on the department's strengths, as well as some challenges.

As the attached Action Plan outlines, the Department plans to pursue several important recommendations. At the undergraduate level, these range from increasing course section offerings for specific high demand courses, to more general plans to build (grow) the undergraduate program with curricular changes reflecting key Calls to Action flowing from the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, while being careful about how the unit provides leadership and service teaching in the context of the University's commitment to indigenization. The department does not currently have a graduate program, but following up on a key recommendation, plans to launch a graduate program in three years-time in order to assist in efforts to build the next generation of indigenous academics.

The external reviewers identify significant working environment issues, evident in all areas of activity, but especially in relation to teaching, service and administration. At core the challenge is three-fold: very small faculty complement (3.5 FTE) combined with disproportionate demand on faculty time to serve on institution-wide committees or engage in institutional initiatives, and time-intensive community/collaborative research practices. The unit is requesting significant faculty renewal (six continuing faculty appointments) over the next five-year period in order to be able to undertake the needed programmatic changes (in particular graduate programming), as well as to be able to reduce the strain and burnout by increasing capacity at the unit level to undertake departmental and institution-wide administration and service. The office of the Dean will endeavour to support future faculty hiring in the unit as identified above, while balancing renewal needs in FASS as a whole over the next three to five-year period. Interim progress on the latter front is underway with the approval of three term appointments (assistant professor and teaching) over the next few years.

Faculty Dean

  
.....

Date

  
.....

# Dept. of First Nations Studies Undergraduate Program Educational Goals Action Plan

## 1. Introduction

The Department of First Nations Studies has identified six general Program Educational Goals at the undergraduate level; these goals are outlined in Section 2.1. Our primary aim is to ensure that students graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree in First Nations Studies from Simon Fraser University have a strong foundation in the knowledge of the discipline, along with essential skills in research, analysis, and communication that will enable them to flourish after graduation.

The following sections outline our program goals and an action plan for enacting these goals. A key component of this action plan will be a comprehensive inventory of our core undergraduate courses, which will serve not only to ensure that our global program goals are being met, but also to facilitate the formulation of course-level educational goals by 2021, which is Year Four in this Seven Year process.

## 2. Educational Goals

The following goals were formulated as part of the Department of First Nations Studies self-study document prepared for the departmental external review in 2016/17.

Undergraduate students, upon graduation with a B.A. with a Major in First Nations Studies will be able to:

1. discuss, in detail, the histories and cultures of Indigenous peoples of North America, from their own perspectives;
2. identify, analyze and assess contemporary critical issues facing Indigenous people, and critique assumptions about Indigenous people in texts and media;
3. use modern library/archival research and retrieval methods to access information about specific topics related to First Nations;
4. effectively communicate research and knowledge, orally, in writing and through various forms of arts and media;
5. understand and conduct the ethical processes and communication of research, including Indigenous ethics and protocols;
6. articulate the impacts of institutions behind colonization, including residential schools, the reserve system, the Indian Act and the legacy of legal and political decisions regarding Indigenous peoples.

The Faculty of First Nations Studies defined this statement of educational goals during a retreat in December 2016. Subsequently, we mapped these goals in our current course offerings. Table A offers a partial impression of the ways these educational goals are directly promoted through the curriculum.

*Table A: Mapping Educational Goals to the FNS Curriculum*

Overall Goal and Specific Concepts	Courses (FNST)
<b>1. History and Culture</b>	
a. Material culture studies	212, 222, 301, 324, 376, 383, 447, 353W, 403
b. Legal history	101, 201W, 212, 301, 40, 433, 462
c. Oral history	101, 201W, 222, 212, 222, 301, 402W, 403 324, 363, 376, 383, 433, 462, 447
d. Aboriginal rights & title	101, 212, 301, 324, 363, 433, 462, 401



## Dept. of First Nations Studies Undergraduate Program Educational Goals Action Plan

<b>2. Critical Issues</b>	
a. Stereotyping/Racial Profiling	101, 110W, 201W, 212, 327, 329, 360 402W
b. Resource sharing	212, 222, 301, 353W, 401
c. State confrontations	101, 110W, 201W, 212, 327, 329, 360 402W, 324, 363, 383, 433, 462, 353W, 401
d. Environment	101, 212, 222, 30, 324, 363, 376, 383, 433, 462, 447, 403
e. Cultural sovereignty	101, 110W, 201W, 212, 327, 329, 360 402W, 324, 363, 376, 383, 433, 462, 447, 353W, 401, 403
<b>3. Research Techniques</b>	
a. Archival & library	110W, 201W, 212, 301, 327, 329, 360 402W, 324, 363, 433, 462, 353W
b. Data storage	301
c. Studio methods	324, 363, 376, 383,
d. Video recording	301, 433, 462
e. Journals	212, 222, 324, 363, 376, 383, 433, 462, 447
<b>4. Communication</b>	
a. Orality & literacy	101, 110W, 201W, 212, 222, 301, 402W, 327, 329, 360, 324, 363, 376, 383, 433, 462, 447, 353W
b. Literary studies	101, 301, 110W, 201W, 402W, 329, 360, 324, 363, 433, 462
c. Graphic arts	101, 212, 360, 402W
d. Videography	212, 301, 433, 462
<b>5. Ethics</b>	
a. Protocols	101, 301, 403, 462, 110W, 201W, 402W, 327, 329, 360, 324, 363, 376, 383, 433, 462, 447, 353W
<b>6. Law, Policy, Colonial Institutions</b>	
a. TRC & residential schools	101, 301, 110W, 201W, 402W, 327, 433, 462
b. Indian Act	101, 201W, 212, 222, 301, 401, 324, 433, 462
c. Constitution Act	101, 201W, 222, 301, 401, 433, 462

### 3. Action Plan and Timeline

As part of the external review process, the Department of First Nations Studies has identified program-level Educational Goals (Learning Outcomes) and an assessment plan. This report reflects the initial stages of a multi-step process that will take several years and involve input from all faculty in the Department of First Nations Studies.

Following the approval of Educational Goals, we are required to map our educational goals to individual courses and to design an assessment plan, refine our current assessment tools, and collect data (student work and surveys) to allow an analysis of the success of these educational goals. The following deadlines apply in the implementation and assessment of Educational Goals:

## Dept. of First Nations Studies Undergraduate Program Educational Goals Action Plan

-Progress Report: In year 4 units are expected to produce a Progress Report for internal use and reporting to SFU administration. As part of this document units are expected to report on the assessment of all Educational Goals. For FNST, this will occur between Fall 2020 and Fall 2021.

- Unit Self-Study: Between May and August 2023, which is Year 6, First Nations Studies must produce a Unit Self-Study which is circulated to External Reviewers before their site visits. Assessment of Educational Goals should be included in the Unit Self Study (see Sections 3.2a & b in Senate Guidelines for External Reviews of Academic Units).
- Unit Action Plan: After reviewing the External Review Report, units are expected to produce a Unit Action Plan to address the recommendations from reviewers to plan for the next cycle.

The following timeline recognizes and embodies the iterative nature of the process, following the “Define/Collect/Analyze/Action” cycle proposed by the VPA office and it is modeled on the generic timetable provided by the TLC’s Educational Goals website.

*Table B: Timeline*

Year 1	Sept 2017-Aug 2018	Define	Initial articulation of course level Ed Goals through syllabi analysis in monthly seminars; ongoing assignment analysis
Year 2	Sept 2018- Aug 2019	Collect	Gather multiple model assignments over 3 terms; interview graduates in June 2019
Year 3	Sept 2019- Aug 2020	Analyze	Compare student feedback from 2017 with the interviews from 2019, examine model assignments, and in consultation with instructors, refine and revise course level Ed Goals/ recommend change to the curriculum.
Year 4	Sept 2020- Aug 2021	Action & Define	Produce Progress Report. Tentative Date for implementation of a Master’s Degree in FNS; initial articulation of course level Ed Goals in MA through monthly seminars
Year 5	Sept 2021- Aug 2022	Collect	Gather multiple model assignments for both programs over 3 terms; interview graduates for both the undergrad and grad program
Year 6	Sept 2022- Aug 2023	Analyze	Evaluate data/ recommend changes to curriculum; revise goals. Prepare Self-Study for external review
Year 7	Sept 2023- Aug 2024		External Review



## Dept. of First Nations Studies Undergraduate Program Educational Goals Action Plan

### 4. Strategies for Data Collection and Analysis:

#### *a. Syllabi analysis*

Detailed course outlines describe the content and objectives of each course offered by the Department. While there are standard Educational Goals for each course, there are differences in syllabi in each iteration taught by the same instructor as he or she adapts the curriculum to the new year and also differences between instructors who bring their own innovations to each course. FNS will begin by scheduling a meeting with instructors of the same core courses to review various syllabi and articulate together the educational goals of each course. Of particular interest in the context of educational goals are those courses that all students must complete.

#### *b. Assignment analysis*

As well as mapping the educational goals onto the curriculum (Table A), the Department has begun to compile a detailed list of the assignments used in each course to evaluate student progress and assign grades. These assignments are designed to capture how well the student has mastered the material in each course, and by mapping specific educational goals related to each assignment, we will be able to build our insights into how the educational goals are being promoted and the balance between them. This project will include further data in the Year 4 Project Report, due by August 2021, but we share below a number of examples from early analysis to illustrate the concept. (In the following boxes, an X marks an assignment that relates to/measures progress towards the educational goal. “A” denotes an assignment and “E” an exam.)

<b>FNST 101</b>	<b>A1</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>A3</b>	<b>E1</b>	<b>E2</b>
history/culture	X	X	X	X	X
critical issues	X	X	X	X	X
research techniques	X	X	X	X	X
communication	X	X	X	X	X
ethics	X		X	X	X
law/policy/colonial institutions	X	X	X	X	X

<b>FNST 212</b>	<b>A1</b>	<b>A2</b>
history/culture	X	
critical issues		X
research techniques	X	
communication	X	
ethics		
law/policy/colonial institutions	X	

<b>FNST 222</b>	<b>A1</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>A3</b>	<b>E1</b>
history/culture			X	X
critical issues			X	
research techniques		X		
communication	X			
ethics				
law/policy/colonial institutions				X

**Dept. of First Nations Studies Undergraduate Program Educational Goals Action Plan**

<b>FNST 301</b>	<b>A1</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>A3</b>
history/culture		X	
critical issues		X	
research techniques			X
communication		X	
ethics		X	
law/policy/colonial institutions	X		

<b>FNST 110W B</b>	<b>A1</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>A3</b>
history/culture			X
critical issues	X	X	X
research techniques			
communication	X	X	X
ethics	X	X	X
law/policy/colonial institutions			X

<b>FNST 329</b>	<b>A1</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>A3</b>
history/culture	X	X	X
critical issues	X	X	X
research techniques			X
communication	X	X	X
ethics	X		X
law/policy/colonial institutions	X		X

<b>FNST 327-4</b>	<b>A1</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>E1</b>	<b>A3</b>	<b>A4</b>
history/culture	X		X	X	X
critical issues	X	X	X	X	X
research techniques				X	X
communication	X		X	X	X
ethics		X		X	X
law/policy/colonial institutions	X	X	X	X	X

<b>FNST 201W B</b>	<b>E1</b>	<b>E2</b>	<b>A1</b>	<b>A2</b>
history/culture	X	X	X	X
critical issues	X	X	X	X
research techniques		X		
communication	X	X	X	X
ethics	X	X	X	X
law/policy/colonial institutions	X	X	X	X

<b>FNST 402W</b>	<b>A1</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>A3</b>
history/culture	X	X	X
critical issues	X	X	X
research techniques		X	X
communication	X	X	X
ethics		X	X
law/policy/colonial institutions		X	X

## Dept. of First Nations Studies Undergraduate Program Educational Goals Action Plan

FNST/ ENGL 360	A1	A2	E1
history/culture	X	X	X
critical issues	X	X	X
research techniques		X	
communication	X	X	X
ethics		X	
law/policy/colonial institutions			

### *c. Writing samples and other evidence*

The Department will collect assignments completed at the highest level from all core courses in the 2018/19 year—although assignments from all courses and from previous years can also be included—as a way to demonstrate work done at an A level. All of this will be done with the permission of students. Upon full collection in August 2019, FNS will call a special meeting for faculty to discuss the goals of each course as evidenced in the sample and discuss any concerns with the achievements of our entire student body. At this point instructors can articulate what makes these assignments successful and discuss the reasons behind this excellent work (whether it be the talent, initiative, creativity, and effort of the students, the clear rubrics for each assignment, the time and resources available to support the production of the work, etc.). Instructors can then recommend amendments to course instruction, policy, or university resources that could help support students to complete work at an improved level.

### *d. Direct student feedback*

This following survey will be duplicated in Spring 2019 and compared with this survey, completed by our student body in February 2017. This initial survey is small and so the data should not be given excessive weight, but remains worth noting. The large majority of respondents (11) were fairly or well advanced in their studies (more than 90 units completed).

Students were asked whether their knowledge in the broad areas identified under our educational goals had been improved by their engagement in First Nations Studies:

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Neutral</i>
The histories and cultures of Indigenous peoples of North America	15		
The critical contemporary issues facing Indigenous people	14		
The ethical processes and communication of research, including Indigenous ethics and protocols	13	1	1
The impacts of institutions behind colonization (e.g., residential schools)	13		2
The legacy of legal and political decisions regarding Indigenous peoples (the reserve system, the Indian Act)	14		1

Students were asked whether their skills had improved in the following areas:

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Neutral</i>
Critical analysis of social and cultural issues	15		

## Dept. of First Nations Studies Undergraduate Program Educational Goals Action Plan

Identification of assumptions about Indigenous people in texts and media	13		2
Use of modern library/archival research techniques	11	1	3
Oral communication of research and knowledge	11	1	3
Written communication of research and knowledge	13		2
Diverse methods to recast learned knowledge (eg. through interactive work, studio work, etc.)	10	2	3

### 5. Final Notes

It is worth reflecting on the assessment by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, in her October 11, 2017 comments and endorsement of the Action Plan.

the [FNS] Department plans to pursue several important recommendations. At the undergraduate level, these range from increasing course selection offerings for specific high demand courses, to more general plans to build (grow) the undergraduate program with curricular changes reflecting key Calls to Action flowing from the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, while being careful about how the unit provides leadership and service teaching in the context of the University's commitment to indigenization. The department does not currently have a graduate program, but following up on a key recommendation, plans to launch a graduate program in three years-time in order to assist in efforts to build the next generation of Indigenous academics.

The external reviewers identify significant working environment issues, evident in relation to teaching, service and administration. At one the challenge is three-fold: very small faculty complement (3.5 FTE) combined with a disproportionate demand on faculty time to serve on institution-wide committees or engage in institutional initiatives, and time-intensive community/collaborative research practices. The unit is requesting significant faculty renewal.

The Department of First Nations Studies is committed to the Educational Goals process as a way to build additional accountability into its procedures. But we also appreciate that our work is essential for the further Indigenization of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and for the university as a whole. Our ambitions to provide a first-rate undergraduate program and develop a high quality graduate program depends on the commitment of the university to add to our small complement. As was evident in the external review, each faculty member within First Nations Studies is completing remarkable work whether it be at the level of research, teaching, or service. The only way to make it possible to improve any aspect of it is to add to its numbers.