

**FOR RECOMMENDATION**

**PUBLIC**

**OPEN SESSION**

**TO:** Academic Board

**SPONSOR:** Ms Sally Garner, Executive Director, Planning & Budget  
**CONTACT INFO:** 416-978-2819, [sally.garner@utoronto.ca](mailto:sally.garner@utoronto.ca)

**PRESENTER:** As above  
**CONTACT INFO:**

**DATE:** May 11, 2016 for May 30, 2016

**AGENDA ITEM:** 8

**ITEM IDENTIFICATION:**

Faculty of Arts and Science: Proposal to Establish the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives (Extra-Departmental Unit C (EDU: C) as an EDU: B; and to rename the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives as the Centre for Indigenous Studies

**JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:**

Under section 5.3.1 of the terms of reference for the Academic Board, proposals for the establishment, disestablishment or restructuring of academic units are recommended by the Board for approval by the Governing Council

**GOVERNANCE PATH:**

1. Planning and Budget Committee [for recommendation] (May 11, 2016)
- 2. Academic Board [for recommendation] (May 30, 2016)**
3. Executive Committee [for endorsement and forwarding] (June 14, 2016)
4. Governing Council [for approval] (June 23, 2016)

## **PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:**

The proposal was approved by the Faculty of Arts and Science on April 20, 2016. The Specialist, Major and Minor offered by the proposed EDU:B were renamed from Aboriginal Studies to Indigenous Studies by the Humanities Curriculum Committee, Faculty of Arts and Science on February 8, 2016 and the Social Sciences Curriculum Committee, Faculty of Arts and Science on February 12, 2016. The Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives was established as an Extra-Departmental Unit C by the Faculty of Arts and Science Council on October 3, 2006.

## **HIGHLIGHTS:**

This is a proposal to establish the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives, at present EDU: C, as an EDU:B, and to be renamed the Centre for Indigenous Studies within the Faculty of Arts and Science, effective July 1, 2016. The Faculty of Arts and Science is clearly identified as the lead Faculty. It offers the Specialist, Major and Minor in Indigenous Studies.

As outlined in the proposal, the change of status to an EDU:B was recommended by the Report of the Special Rapporteur on Aboriginal Initiatives (December 2015) commissioned by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science. The Centre currently offers undergraduate programs, holds budgetary and tenure-stream cross appointments, and administers research funds. The scope of these academic and research activities are more appropriately aligned with EDU:B status, as outlined in the *Guidelines for Extra-Departmental Units* (2015). As an EDU:B, the proposed Centre will have a Director appointed under the *Policy on Appointment of Academic Administrators*. Under the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (UTQAP), the Dean of Arts and Science will commission a review of the EDU and its programs as outlined in the *Policy for Approval and Review of Academic Programs and Units*.

The proposal has been subject to extensive consultation within the Faculty of Arts and Science. In preparing the Report of the Special Rapporteur consultation occurred with members of the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives, members of the Office of the Dean, members of First Nations House (Student Life), former directors of Centre for Aboriginal Studies and Elders. Consultation was completed with departments with which the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives holds joint appointments (English, Geography, and Political Science).

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The Director of the proposed EDU:B will have responsibility for the overall direction of the Centre and in particular over the budget and recommendations for appointment. The EDU:B will administer research funds. The Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science is ultimately responsible for the administration and budget of the EDU:B and the Director is accountable to the Dean for the financial management of the EDU:B and all of its resources. The existing budget allocation and existing faculty appointments will continue upon approval of EDU:B status.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Be It Recommended to the Governing Council:

1. THAT the proposal to establish the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives (Extra-Departmental Unit C (EDU: C) as an EDU: B, be approved effective July 1, 2016; and
2. THAT that proposal to rename the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives as the Centre for Indigenous Studies, be approved effective July 1, 2016.

**DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:**

- Centre for Aboriginal Studies – Proposal for change in status from EDU:C to EDU:B (March 2016)
- Recommendation for a change in name of the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives to the Centre for Indigenous Studies (December 2015, revised March 2016).

**Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives  
Proposal for change in status from EDU:C to EDU:B  
March 2016**

**Prepared by Keren Rice, Interim Director, Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives**

The Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives in the Faculty of Arts & Science requests that it be reclassified from EDU:C status to EDU:B<sup>1</sup> effective July 1, 2016. This change will reflect the current nature of the Centre's academic activities and align appropriately with the Provost's 2015 Guidelines for Extra-Departmental Units as EDU:Bs may offer degree programs, hold minority budgetary and tenure-stream cross-appointments, and administrate research funds.

**Statement of purpose**

The Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives, established first as Aboriginal Studies in 1994 and then developed as the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives in 2005, delivers an undergraduate program with specialist, major, and minor programs. It also is engaged in research projects and houses SAGE (Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Students) and Ciimaan/Kahuwe'yá/Qajaq, an Indigenous language initiative that supports the University of Toronto community in the study and everyday use of Indigenous languages. In partnership with the Centre for Community Partnerships, it works with a Community Liaison to incorporate community engaged learning into its programs.

**Academic rationale**

The Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives (CAI) offers a vibrant undergraduate program spanning departments and divisions. It is also a research centre, with a particular focus on community-engaged research.

The Aboriginal Studies (ABS) undergraduate program is dedicated to the scholarly study and research of the priorities and aspirations of Indigenous peoples in Canada and throughout the world. An important goal of the program is to provide an opportunity for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students to learn and think about Indigenous knowledges in creative, transformative and critical ways. The program offers courses that engender a rigorous and respectful understanding of Indigenous peoples' languages, knowledges, cultures, histories, politics, arts, intellectual traditions, and research methodologies. A key feature of the program is its respect and promotion of Indigenous knowledges, as evidenced by the commitment to Aboriginal language instruction and courses devoted to the topic of Indigenous knowledge itself. The undergraduate program has been offered since the mid 1990's.

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<sup>1</sup> A proposal for a change in title of this centre to Centre for Indigenous Studies is currently working its way through governance in the Faculty of Arts & Science.

Research projects are also run out of the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives, including Ciimaan/Kahuwe'yá/Qajaq and a CIHR-funded research project on diabetes in urban Aboriginal populations.

The undergraduate programs in CAI are healthy. For the 2015-16 enrolment cycle, enrolments in Aboriginal Studies programs are as follows:

Major	38
Minor	43
Specialist	16
Total	97

Total POST enrolments are given below:

Major	59
Minor	90
Specialist	24
Total	173

Overall course enrolments in 2015-16 in ABS courses are approximately 400.

Aboriginal Studies courses can be used to satisfy requirements in other programs. For instance, several Aboriginal Studies courses can be used to satisfy degree requirements in Anthropology, Canadian Studies, Drama, and Linguistics.

### **Consultation**

An internal review of the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives, commissioned by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts & Science, was conducted in 2015. This review, attached as Appendix B, recommends that the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives be classified as an EDU:B. This proposal supports the recommendation under governance in the following form: the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives be reclassified as an EDU:B, housing the undergraduate Aboriginal Studies program and various research projects.<sup>2</sup> Extensive consultation was done in preparing this review with members of the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives, members of the Office of the Dean, members of First Nations House (Student Life), former directors of CAI, Elders, and interested people across the University of Toronto.

We have consulted with the Office of the Dean in the Faculty of Arts & Science and with the Provost's office. We have also consulted with the departments with which the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives holds joint appointments (English, Geography, Political Science). There was also extensive consultation at the time that the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives was established.

### **Faculty Participation**

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<sup>2</sup> Note that the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives is the umbrella unit; there are not three different units involved, as is implied in the Report of the Special Rapporteur's recommendations on governance.

There are the following types of appointments in the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives. Please see Appendix A for a list of appointments. Note that there is a 100% teaching stream appointment in the Centre. In addition, the Centre has contractually limited appointments; in 2015-16, there is one of these, a 50% appointment.

Continuing budgetary appointment	1 100% teaching stream
Continuing budgetary cross appointments	1 49%, 1 40%, 1 25% tenure stream
budgetary appointment (CLTA, 2015-16)	1 50%
non-budgetary cross appointments (2015-16)	2
sessional appointments (2015-16)	6
status-only appointments	2

The change from EDU:C to EDU:B status does not change the nature of any of these appointments.

### **Structure/Administration**

The Director of the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives is currently responsible for the overall direction of the Centre and has authority over the budget and recommendations for appointments. The Director is also responsible for all operating and restricted funds delegated to the unit, and is responsible and accountable to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science for the financial management of the Centre. The Director determines PTR for continuing faculty and for CLTAs with appointments of longer than one year. Upon approval of the proposal, the Director will be appointed through the *Policy on Administrative Academic Appointments*, as appropriate for Directors of EDU:Bs.

The Director of the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives works closely with the faculty who teach in the Specialist, Major, and Minor programs in Aboriginal Studies as well as with the Director of First Nations House, as appropriate. This group consults about courses to be offered, hiring of sessional faculty and teaching assistants, the overall undergraduate program, and other issues as they arise.

There is a full-time Administrative Coordinator at the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives, who serves as budget officer and is responsible for overall administration of the undergraduate program, for management of the space, and all other non-academic administrative work. The Administrative Coordinator works closely with the Director.

### **Budget**

The Director has responsibility for the overall direction of the Centre and in particular over the budget and recommendations for appointment. The budget includes salaries for faculty and administrative staff, a teaching budget for sessional instructors and teaching assistants in the Aboriginal Studies program, and an

operating budget; see Appendix C for details of the current budget. The Centre also administers some research funds; see the following section on this.

### **Research Funds**

The Centre has administered CIHR funds in the past. It regularly administers funds from MTC to support a support program for Aboriginal graduate students (SAGE – Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Education) and the language initiative. It also administers other small funds that support the language initiative. It has also been a partner on SSHRC letters of intent for partnership grants. Faculty, with approval from their majority department, would be interested in administering their grants through the Centre.

### **Review**

As an EDU:B, the Centre is subject to the Policy for Approval and Review of Academic Programs and Units. [Under the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process \[UTQAP\]](#), the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science will commission a review of the EDU and its programs. As noted earlier, an internal review was commissioned by the Dean in 2014-15 (attached as Appendix B).

The Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives has undergone two previous external reviews, and will be reviewed as other undergraduate programs are. A timeline for the next external review will be established by the Dean of Arts & Science in consultation with the Director.

### **Summary**

The current position of the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives as an EDU:C is anomalous for the following reasons.

An EDU:C may not make or hold any budgetary appointments. CAI has both a budgetary appointments and budgetary cross appointments. The Director is responsible for all aspects of the appointment including workload, promotion, and the annual merit process.

An EDU:C does not offer degree programs. CAI has offered degree programs for over 20 years.

An EDU:C can administer research funds only if agreed to by the Dean in consultation with the Provost. CAI has administered research funds in the past.

## **Appendix A. Instructors, Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives 2015-16**

### Budgetary appointment

Alex McKay, Associate Professor, Teaching Stream  
100%

### Budgetary cross appointments

Rauna Kuokkanen, Associate Professor  
49% CAI, 51% Political Science  
Deborah McGregor, Associate Professor  
40% CAI, 60% Geography and Planning  
Cheryl Suzack, Associate Professor  
25% CAI, 75% English

### Non-continuing appointments

Brenda Wastasecoot, Lecturer, 50%

### Other teaching staff (non-budgetary cross appointments)

David Burman, Pharmacy  
Jill Carter, Assistant Professor (3-year term), Drama, Transitional Year  
Program

### Status-only appointments

Heather Howard  
Deborah Simmons

### Sessional appointments 2015-2016

Dawn Antone  
Gillian Austin  
Julie Buller  
Melanie Jeffrey  
Lee Maracle  
Christine Sy

Other faculty who work closely with the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives include Heidi Bohaker (History), Alana Johns (Linguistics), and Jean-Paul Restoule (OISE).

CAI is also currently searching for an Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream, 49% CAI, 51% Linguistics

CAI has one full-time administrator and a number of other people who work at the Centre. Most of these other people are hired through the MTCU funding that supports the projects noted above.



# Report of the Special Rapporteur on Aboriginal Initiatives in the Faculty of Arts and Science

Final Report  
December 2015

## I. Introduction

Canada's new federal government has committed itself to reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, based on historic treaties and a Nation-to-Nation relationship, and in full acknowledgment of residential schools as one of the most damaging legacies of settler colonialism in our country. Similarly, in August of this year, the Premier of Ontario signed an historic Political Accord with the Chiefs of Ontario and committed the province to building a new relationship with First Nations. As Stephen Toope recently remarked in his capacity as President of the Canadian Federation of Humanities and Social Sciences, "There is a growing sense of urgency across the country on the need for reconciliation between non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal peoples, including the need for significant action within the post-secondary sector."<sup>1</sup> This extraordinary moment in Canada's history offers the University of Toronto a unique opportunity to take strong leadership as an exemplar of reconciliation within the academy.

Within the University, the Faculty of Arts and Science, as the institutional home of the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives (CAI) and the Aboriginal Studies (ABS) program, has demonstrated leadership by commissioning the present study and committing itself to action. Already, responding to preliminary recommendations produced by the consultation process that led to this report, the Faculty has dedicated significant new resources to language revitalization through the creation of a teaching-stream position in Haudenosaunee language. This report encourages further action in the same spirit.

Indigenous studies in the Faculty of Arts and Science are deeply rooted in the Indigenous languages of our region and, more generally, in the connections between Indigenous oral tradition, culture, relationships to the land, and the contemporary challenges and aspirations of Indigenous peoples in Canada and internationally. These themes lie at the heart of the leading-edge research and teaching in contemporary Indigenous studies, and constitute the links between diverse discipline-centered work on Indigenous literature, Indigenous conceptions of knowledge and their relationship to modern science, Indigenous self-determination and self-government, familial and social networks, and contemporary public policy issues concerning Aboriginal peoples. Language and oral tradition are the keys that unlock the complex interactions among these fields of study.

The University of Toronto is the largest and most prestigious university in Canada. Ontario has a larger Indigenous population than any other province, and the City of Toronto has the country's largest urban Indigenous population in the country. Taking these things together, it makes sense that the University of Toronto can and should be an academic leader in the field of Indigenous studies and in creating opportunities for post-secondary education for Indigenous students.

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<sup>1</sup> Federation of the Humanities and Social Sciences, "Reconciliation and the Academy," May 30, 2015, available at <http://www.ideas-idees.ca/media/media-releases/reconciliation-and-academy>.

<sup>2</sup> See Government of Ontario, "Ontario Investing in Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training" (June 25, 2015), available at <https://news.ontario.ca/tcu/en/2015/06/ontario-investing-in-aboriginal->

In many respects, the Arts and Science program in Aboriginal Studies already meets these standards. Its tenure-stream faculty members have exemplary research profiles, and its offerings in Indigenous languages are richer than in any other research university in the country. Its undergraduate program is well-designed, and its student body is engaged and active. Through SAGE (Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement), it provides important supports to Indigenous graduate students in Arts and Science and beyond. CAI, ABS and First Nations House sponsor a rich array of events, including visiting speakers drawn from the leading Indigenous scholars in the country and internationally.

At the same time, the program currently confronts a number of significant challenges. The purpose of this report, which is based on extensive consultations with faculty, staff, students and affiliates of the program, is to highlight the key opportunities and challenges facing CAI/ABS and to recommend some measures by which the Faculty might help to consolidate existing strengths and support the unit in reaching its highest aspirations. This report also offers suggestions about how the Faculty could take leadership to help fulfill the inter-divisional vision of the CAI, increase the visibility of Indigenous peoples and cultures on campus, and solicit support from the provincial and federal governments to enhance Indigenous education at the University of Toronto.

## **II. Consultation process**

This report is based on a series of mostly one-on-one conversations with research- and teaching-stream faculty, sessional instructors, Elders, graduate students, undergraduate students, and staff in CAI/ABS and First Nations House. The conversations took place in the Fall, Winter and Summer of 2014-15. Participants were assured that their individual remarks would be kept confidential, and discussions began with an open-ended question aimed at eliciting participants' views on the program's current strengths and weaknesses as well as their aspirations for its future.

## **III. Opportunities and Challenges**

### ***Teaching faculty***

The current status of ABS teaching faculty presents both challenges and opportunities for the program's future. The ranks of permanent faculty are now quite thin, comprising three research-stream faculty (each of whom is cross-appointed with another unit) and one Senior Lecturer. In recent years, several permanent faculty have left to take up positions in other universities. Two research-stream lines for cross-appointments in the program (currently conceived as shared positions with English and Political Science) have not been filled.

Because of the small number of permanent faculty on the ground, the program has had to rely on sessional instructors for a large percentage of its teaching. These talented instructors are dedicated to the program and its students, but they are constrained in their ability to take leadership for the program as a whole, and their uncertain future in the program generates instability in its teaching program. Among the sessional faculty are several who have invested enormous creative energy in the program and its students over many years, developing innovative courses and community outreach projects. These initiatives are a tremendous resource for our students, but they require significant investments of time, energy, and emotional commitment. It is difficult for colleagues to continue to make such investments in the program without any reciprocal commitment from the University to their status as part of the University community.

The challenge presented by the small number of faculty in the program, however, is also an opportunity. With a significant cluster of permanent faculty positions to fill, the program has rare latitude to renew its overarching research and teaching goals in a holistic way.

### *Leadership and governance*

Aboriginal Studies has enjoyed the devoted leadership of each of its directors, of whom members of the program's community speak with admiration and respect. Across the constituencies with whom I consulted, maintaining stability and continuity in leadership were viewed as important priorities for the program.

A second high priority issue is the unit's classification within the scheme for Extra-Departmental Units. Its current classification as an EDU:C is anomalous, as in fact the program is already operating as an EDU:B, that is, it already holds a minority share in faculty cross-appointments with Departments. Further, it houses a 100-percent position in the Senior Lecturer category. Reclassifying the program as an EDU:B would rationalize its position within the Faculty and render its activities as a teaching unit more legible. Over the longer term, I heard, many colleagues would welcome steps toward establishing the program as an EDU:A, with a capacity to make 100-percent permanent appointments in both the research and the teaching streams. While faculty cross-appointments create beneficial links to mainstream departments, they also divide the energies of faculty within the unit and can generate obstacles for those who would prefer to make ABS their primary intellectual home. Reclassifying the unit as an EDU:A would dovetail with colleagues' aspirations to build a graduate program, beginning with a collaborative program (as in the model of Women and Gender Studies Institute).

Other governance issues that emerged in the consultations included the relationship between the academic program of ABS and the student services work of First Nations House. Several interlocutors expressed the opinion that the relationship between these units and their distinctive functions could benefit from some clarification, and also that there may be unrealized opportunities for collaborative programming at the points where the units' missions intersect.

Relatedly, colleagues recommended the establishment of a student organization for students in the program. The existing Native Students Association (NSA) operates in affiliation with First Nations House and provides invaluable support for Indigenous students at UofT. However, not all of the students in the NSA are ABS students, and there are many ABS students who are not members of NSA. A dedicated student association would enhance the resources available for student-centered programming in ABS.

Finally, a number of interlocutors raised questions about the relationship between CAI and ABS. There is wide support for merging the research and teaching sides of the unit's mission under a single name, and for giving the unit a new name. One constructive proposal is to rename the combined unit the "Centre for Indigenous Studies" (CIS), to rename the undergraduate program "Indigenous Studies," and to rename the CAI as the "Centre for Indigenous Initiatives." Both the Indigenous Studies program and the Centre for Indigenous Initiatives would then fall under the CIS umbrella.

### *Undergraduate program*

Many of my interlocutors spoke with admiration of past directors' work to restructure, streamline and rationalize the undergraduate program. I heard no criticisms of the current program's structure.

Both faculty and students, though, took a much wider view of the program's potential contributions to undergraduate teaching. They expressed their concern that most students at the University learn little or nothing about Aboriginal peoples or the Indigenous history of the land on which we all live and learn. Colleagues felt that the University has an important role to play in addressing the widespread ignorance about Indigenous peoples that is characteristic of our society. The program's small number of faculty makes it unlikely that ABS could, by itself, mount a teaching program to address the urgent need for increased understanding of Indigenous peoples across the university. However, if program faculty were interested and available to serve in a consultative role, it might be feasible to work with colleagues in cognate units to develop a large-enrolment undergraduate course that would be taught collaboratively, on the model of the "Big Ideas" courses that the Faculty of Arts and Sciences has already developed to enable students to fulfill breadth requirements. I encourage the Faculty to commit resources to exploring this possibility, perhaps by striking a small interdisciplinary committee with strong participation from ABS faculty, part of whose mandate would be to identify the ways in which the course would be integrated into the Faculty's undergraduate breadth requirement structure. Once a course were developed, the Faculty could encourage undergraduates to take it by highlighting the course in communications with students about how to meet their breadth requirements.

A second theme in discussions of the undergraduate program was the importance of ensuring that our region's two major language groups – Anishinaabemowin and the Haudenosaunee (Iroquoian) languages – are offered at the introductory and intermediate levels (and preferably also at the advanced level) every year. To date, the program has offered a two-year cycle of Anishinaabemowin, which is possible because of the appointment of a Senior Lecturer with a 100-percent appointment in the program. However, Haudenosaunee language (currently, Oneida) has been offered only at the introductory level by a sessional instructor. My interlocutors were very enthusiastic about the possibility of securing at least a two-year cycle of Haudenosaunee language through a second permanent appointment. Rooting the program in these two languages, in particular, also resonates powerfully with the historical Anishinaabe-Haudenosaunee treaty agreements to share the lands in the eastern Great Lakes region: a tradition widely known as the "Dish with One Spoon." The Faculty should be congratulated for acting swiftly on the recommendation once it emerged in the consultation process last year. The recent posting of a position in Haudenosaunee language is an exciting development for the program.

In addition to classroom instruction, there is a need to enrich language programs through a dedicated language lab, building on the work in the Ciimaan/Kahuwe'yá/Qajaq "language nests." Ideally, this lab would be well-equipped with the physical and technological infrastructure necessary to mount state-of-the-art language teaching programs.

Finally, several people expressed frustration with the classrooms available for ABS teaching. For colleagues whose pedagogy includes Indigenous teaching methodologies, the physical infrastructure available for medium- to large-class teaching is forbidding. One challenge is that the fixed-seat format of most UofT classrooms makes it impossible to use circle teaching methods. Another is that, in every building on campus except for the Borden building, it is impossible to begin classes with a smudge ceremony because of smoke and fire code restrictions. If the Faculty were able to find ways to accommodate these forms of Indigenous pedagogy, it would enrich the learning environment for both instructors and students.

## ***Research and Graduate Training***

In its last academic plan (2010-15), the program expressed its ongoing commitment to building capacity toward a graduate program in Aboriginal Studies, a goal that aligns with the University's broader objective to foster excellence in research across scholarly disciplines. As noted above, the development of a graduate program also dovetails with the unit's aspiration to become an EDU:A with the capacity to make full-time faculty appointments in the research stream. The University's Council on Aboriginal Initiatives provides one forum in which the development of graduate capacity might be discussed, but I recommend that the Faculty of Arts and Science dedicate resources to the development of graduate teaching that links the research commitments of colleagues working on Indigenous issues across the divisions of the University. This work would be entirely in keeping with the original establishment of the CAI as an *inter-divisional* unit housed within Arts and Science.

At present, graduate training in Indigenous studies takes place primarily within disciplinary departments in which appointed faculty have established research interests in the field. What is lacking is an ongoing coordination mechanism to facilitate sustained cross-disciplinary and inter-divisional research exchanges between faculty and graduate students. CAI is the appropriate institutional home for generating and sustaining these exchanges over time, building toward a dedicated graduate program. One way of proceeding could be to stimulate links between SAGE (Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement) and research faculty by creating an ongoing research workshop, led by faculty in ABS but including other faculty who have ongoing research interests in Indigenous studies. The experience of the former Group on Indigenous Governance, which was led by CAI and was active in 2008-2010, might provide a starting point for this work. Among the lessons learned from that experience was that sustaining a research community requires dedicated staff time to support coordination, planning, and communications.

A further strategy for strengthening the research community would be to dedicate funding to an annual research conference, hosted by CAI and driven by its faculty members' research interests. These conferences might seek co-sponsorship by the disciplinary units in which faculty are conducting research on Indigenous issues.

Currently, SAGE is an active group of Indigenous (and some non-Indigenous) graduate students, who meet weekly to forge social bonds and to discuss issues of common interest. SAGE has also been active in organizing visiting speakers. Last year, the slate of speakers for Indigenous Awareness Week featured an all-star cast of young Indigenous scholars from across the country who are working on different dimensions of Indigenous self-determination. SAGE was integrally involved in organizing those events. It also organized a visit from Indigenous scholars and activists from Belize, adding to the transnational dimension to the program's activities. However, there is little sustained interaction between SAGE members and research faculty in the program and in other units. SAGE members expressed a wish for greater contact with faculty researchers and greater access to professional mentoring. A solution might be to institutionalize a link between SAGE and the faculty research group proposed above by building into the job description of the SAGE Coordinator responsibility for serving as a liaison between research faculty, Indigenous graduate students, and graduate students working on Indigenous issues. This responsibility could include scheduling, coordination and communications for an ongoing research workshop for faculty and graduate students across the disciplines.

Finally, strengthening the research capacity of CAI is an additional reason to reclassify the unit as an EDU:B, which would enable it to serve as the institutional host of large research grants. Fostering the

development of funded research (including research opportunities for graduate and postdoctoral students) and building internal capacity to administer research grants should be a priority for the Faculty of Arts and Science and the incoming Director.

### *Space*

Concerns about space are perennial in almost every unit in the University, and ABS is no exception. Most of my interlocutors have mixed feelings about the existing space. On the positive side of the ledger, they appreciate and enjoy the art installations completed during the last major renovation of the space, which are aesthetically pleasing and reflect the region's Indigenous understandings of relationship to the land and its inhabitants. People are also appreciative of the code exemptions that make it possible to hold smudge and other ceremonies in the space, which is essential to the sense of community in the unit. They also value the proximity of First Nations House, both because it links the program to Indigenous students who have chosen other areas of study and because the program is able to use its common room for academic events and ceremonies.

Nonetheless, there are some significant disadvantages to the current space. Although the renovated space is pleasant, it does not meet all the conditions of a culturally appropriate space. For example, there is no access to land that could be used for a traditional medicine garden, which is important for some approaches to teaching. (There is a medicine garden on campus, but it is near Hart House, a long way from the Borden building.) There have been several plans to relocate the program to better facilities, but none has yet come to fruition.

Some of my interlocutors expressed concern over the fact that the current space is at the margins of campus, drawing analogies between this fact and the location of First Nations reserves in remote areas of Canada. Some argued that the current space, and its location on campus, make it difficult to forge links with other divisions in the University in which faculty are doing significant work on Indigenous issues. What would really make the University stand out as a site of excellence in research and teaching in this field, they argued, is a University-wide center for Indigenous studies that would maximize the inter-divisional synergies of work that is already happening on campus. Several pointed to exemplary initiatives at, e.g., Trent University, the University of British Columbia, and the University of Victoria, all of which have devoted space and resources to building a University-wide centre that draws on principles of Indigenous architectural design and links undergraduate, graduate and professional programs with student services for Indigenous students. Although the University of Toronto stands at some distance from realizing such a goal, several colleagues expressed the view that this is the goal toward which we should continue to aspire.

At the same time, it is important to note that other colleagues view the unit's current location at the western end of campus as an advantage because of its proximity to the city's Indigenous community, particularly the Native Canadian Centre on Spadina Avenue. In any case, it is clear that there is a need for leadership in addressing the existing shortcomings of the unit's space and in establishing a process that will generate legitimacy within the community for the final decision concerning the unit's permanent location on campus and its physical infrastructure.

Finally, there are significant concerns about some features of the existing physical plant, including the need for repairs to, *inter alia*, its windows. In addition, the accessible washrooms for the unit are located immediately next to its main entrance, which some find offensive.

## ***Indigenous Visibility across Campus***

The current political climate of reconciliation between Canada's Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples generates both an opportunity and a responsibility for leadership at the University of Toronto. The foregoing recommendations have focused on the steps forward that are available to the Faculty of Arts and Science in renewing Indigenous studies for the rising generation of undergraduate and graduate students, and in strengthening research on Indigenous issues across disciplines.

Arts and Science will play an indispensable role in the University's realization of its potential for excellence in research and teaching in Indigenous studies, for increasing opportunities for Indigenous students to achieve post-secondary degrees, and for fostering greater understanding of Indigenous peoples throughout the University community. Yet reaching these goals is not something that Arts and Science can achieve entirely on its own because of the inter-divisional character of research, teaching, and professional training relevant to the Indigenous peoples of Ontario and Canada. The University has already recognized the inter-divisional character of Indigenous issues through its establishment of the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives as an inter-Faculty enterprise, and again through the creation of the Council on Aboriginal Initiatives. The Faculty of Arts and Science should continue to work with other divisions and with Simcoe Hall to raise the profile of Indigenous peoples in the University's overall mission.

More specifically, the Faculty should press for the increased visibility of Indigenous peoples and cultures on campus. At present, Indigenous cultures are virtually invisible in the University's built environment. The University's plans for revitalizing King's College Circle as a pedestrian space, for example, provide an excellent opportunity to acknowledge Indigenous peoples at the heart of campus.

## ***Indigenous Studies as a Strategic Priority: Opportunities for Provincial and Federal Support***

The current political climate at both the provincial and federal levels is ripe for bold academic initiatives aimed at raising the profile of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous studies at the University of Toronto. In close collaboration with CAI/ABS constituents and with Simcoe Hall, the Faculty could play a leadership role by identifying Indigenous studies as a strategic priority and in leveraging federal and provincial support for new initiatives.

## **IV. Summary recommendations**

### ***A. Stability in leadership and faculty***

- Appoint the incoming Director for a 5-year term to provide continuity;
- Appoint a Lecturer in Haudenosaunee language to enable both of the major Indigenous language groups of the region to be taught annually at the introductory and intermediate levels (two FCEs);
- Fill existing tenure stream lines as soon as possible, with serious consideration given to mid-career appointments (these positions are currently designated as cross-appointments with English and Political Science, though the unit may decide its priorities have changed since those designations were made);
- Establish Lectureships or multi-year CLTA appointments for Indigenous faculty who have contributed to teaching and programming over many years;

- Convert sessional teaching by non-Indigenous instructors into multi-year CLTA appointments in cases where instructors' past contributions have been valuable to the program and fit well with its academic priorities for the next 5-10 years.

### *B. Governance*

- Reclassify the unit as an EDU:B, and take steps toward its reclassification as an EDU:A;
- As an ongoing policy, recognize the *sui generis* position of ABS within the Faculty, and designate a Vice Dean who understands the complexities of the program as responsible for long-term continuity in planning and coordination between ABS and Arts and Science;
- Suggest that the incoming Director of ABS and the Director of First Nations House work together to clarify the relationship between the academic program and student services, to coordinate and/or cosponsor programming that would appeal to both ABS students and Indigenous students in other academic programs, so as to make the most of potential synergies in programming, and to clarify the student services and research agendas served by MTCU funding;
- Rename the unit as the "Centre for Indigenous Studies" (CIS), housing both the Indigenous Studies (IS) undergraduate program and the Centre for Indigenous Initiatives (CII).

### *C. Space*

- Establish a consultation process concerning the unit's permanent space on campus. Consultations should include Elders, Indigenous faculty, students, and First Nations House. The process should include consideration of the possibility and desirability of a centrally located, architecturally appropriate space that would link the University's diverse activities concerning Indigenous communities and cultures under a single roof. Models for such initiatives include Trent University, the University of British Columbia, and the University of Victoria. Desiderata for the unit's permanent home include proximity to First Nations House; space dedicated to language revitalization; adequate office space for faculty and staff; study space for students; classroom space for lectures and seminars, including talks by visiting speakers; and rooms that are easily adapted to circle teaching. Finally, it is important to ensure that the space is designed to permit smudge ceremonies.
- If the Faculty is unable to locate appropriate space within the short-to-medium term, it should dedicate resources to repairing the existing infrastructure, securing priority access to existing flexible classrooms (for circle teaching methodologies), and renovating space within the building to enable larger gatherings for visiting speakers, lectures, and community events than is possible in the existing space.

### *D. Undergraduate Education*

- Establish a committee to develop a large-enrolment collaborative "breadth" course to educate non-Indigenous students about Indigenous peoples and culture in Canada;
- Investigate the possibility of for-credit Summer Language and Culture Institutes in Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee communities, led by UofT faculty. Such programs would deepen students' understanding of the relationship between language, Indigenous culture, and the land, while also deepening the University's relationship with First Nations communities in the region. These programs could be considered as parallels to the "Summer Abroad" courses offered through other programs at the University. They might be developed in partnership with existing



Aboriginal Institutes in the province, such as the Anishnabek Educational Institute or the Six Nations Polytechnic, for which provincial funding might be available.<sup>2</sup>

- In consultation with the Native Students' Association, encourage students in the Aboriginal Studies program to establish a course union.

#### *E. Research Collaboration and Graduate Training*

- Provide resources for the formation of a faculty research group, led by Indigenous faculty within the unit but possibly including faculty working on Indigenous issues in other units. Resources might include funding for an annual scholarly conference and for a designated number of hours of support from the SAGE Coordinator to assist in the organization of the research group's activities. Formalizing a link between the faculty research group and SAGE would provide Indigenous graduate students with enhanced access to faculty mentorship for research and professionalization;
- Explore possibilities for developing a formal graduate program in Indigenous Studies, perhaps initially as a collaborative graduate program.
- Build the unit's capacity to foster and administer funded research programs.

#### *F. Campus Visibility*

- Whether or not a decision is reached to develop an architecturally appropriate building for the Centre and First Nations House near the heart of campus, the Faculty should work closely with Simcoe Hall to promote the greater visibility of Indigenous peoples and cultures on campus. The time is ripe to solicit financial support from both the provincial and federal governments for such initiatives, and the revitalization of King's College Circle presents a rare opportunity to build Indigenous culture into the University's public self-presentation as an express contribution to the national project of reconciliation.

#### *G. Indigenous Studies as a Strategic Priority*

- The Faculty should take advantage of the current political climate by formally identifying Indigenous Studies as a strategic priority and opening conversations between CAI/ABS, the University, and the federal and provincial governments about support for new initiatives in this area.

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<sup>2</sup> See Government of Ontario, "Ontario Investing in Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training" (June 25, 2015), available at <https://news.ontario.ca/tcu/en/2015/06/ontario-investing-in-aboriginal-postsecondary-education-and-training.html>.

## **Recommendation for a change in name of the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives to the Centre for Indigenous Studies (December 2015, revised March 2016)**

The Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives proposes a change in name, to Centre for Indigenous Studies. The Centre offers an undergraduate program (Specialist, Major, Minor), currently called Aboriginal Studies; this would be called Indigenous Studies.

The change in name is highly supported by the Centre on the grounds that the term 'Aboriginal' is no longer the current term in use. When the undergraduate program in Aboriginal Studies was formed in 1994, various consultations were done and the term 'Aboriginal' was deemed the most appropriate. When the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives was established in 2005, there was considerable debate about which term to use, and it was finally agreed to continue to use 'Aboriginal' since, at that time, 'Aboriginal' was used to refer to peoples of Canada and the term being proposed now, 'Indigenous', was international in connotation.

The past ten years have seen a general shift in Canada to the use of the term 'Indigenous.' Universities are switching from names like Aboriginal Studies and Native Studies to Indigenous Studies and newer programs use the term 'Indigenous' (e.g., Trent, McMaster, Queens, University of Saskatchewan, UBC, University of Victoria, McGill University all use 'Indigenous').

Most recently, the new federal government under the leadership of Justin Trudeau renamed Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development to Indigenous and Northern Affairs.

This change in name has been discussed on and off in the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives over the past ten years but no action was taken. Following the change in name at the federal level, the change was discussed at a meeting of the Centre in early December with follow up by email. There was unanimous agreement that the name should be changed. The meeting was attended by instructors, students, and staff, and all were in favour of the change. It was also discussed with the Director of First Nations House (part of Student Life), and he too was supportive of this change.

Any financial resources required to implement the name change will be absorbed within the Centre. The name change will be incorporated in external communications in the course of updating such materials. The name change is proposed to be effective pending university governance approval.

### **Recommendation**

That the change in name from the Centre for Aboriginal Initiatives to the Centre for Indigenous Studies, and as part of this, the change of the undergraduate program from Aboriginal Studies to Indigenous Studies, be approved effective immediately pending approval of University governance. Along with this, change the designator from ABS to INS.