



**FOR INFORMATION**

**PUBLIC**

**OPEN SESSION**

**TO:** Academic Board

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**PRESENTER:** Professor Cheryl Regehr, Acting President  
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**DATE:** May 27, 2016 for May 30, 2016

**AGENDA ITEM:** 15

***ITEM IDENTIFICATION:***

*Statement of Acknowledgement of Traditional Land*

**JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:**

Under Section 5.2.5.(a.) the Terms of Reference of the Academic Board, with regard to Convocations, "...authority concerning decisions on procedures is delegated to a committee of the Chancellor, the President, the Chair of the Academic Board and the Secretary of the Governing Council."

**GOVERNANCE PATH:**

1. Ceremonials Committee [for approval] (May 16, 2016)
2. **Academic Board [for information] (May 30, 2016)**

**PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:**

n/a

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

The Ceremonials Committee, along with a number of senior University officials, met over the course of this past academic year to consider an acknowledgement of indigenous land at convocation and University ceremonies.

The discussions were informed by information that had been provided by Mr. Jonathan Hamilton-Diabo, Director, Aboriginal Student Services, First Nations House, who had engaged on this issue with members of the Elders Circle (Council of Aboriginal Initiatives). Mr. Hamilton-Diabo provided information on examples of Ontario public figures and institutions that have adopted traditional land statements. The group also reviewed detailed information on the

practices of other Canadian universities, in particular those from Ontario. Consultations were also undertaken with scholars in the field.

On May 16, 2016 the Ceremonials Committee approved the following *Statement on Acknowledgement of Traditional Land*:

**I (we) wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.**

The Statement will be used for specific institutional events<sup>1</sup>:

- a. Convocation
- b. Groundbreaking Ceremonies
- c. Building Openings

It will typically form part of the introductory remarks, but can be part of another section as appropriate.

The Statement will be made available to all members of the University community for use at University events as appropriate.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

n/a

**RECOMMENDATION:**

For information.

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<sup>1</sup> Institutional events are those which include as presiding officers the Chancellor, Chair, and/or President.