

**FOR INFORMATION**

**PUBLIC**

**OPEN SESSION**

<b>TO:</b>	Academic Board
<b>SPONSOR: CONTACT INFO:</b>	President Melanie Woodin <a href="mailto:president@utoronto.ca">president@utoronto.ca</a>
<b>PRESENTER: CONTACT INFO:</b>	See sponsor
<b>DATE:</b>	May 21, 2026 for May 28, 2026
<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b>	15

**ITEM IDENTIFICATION:**

Revision to the *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] [E-ballot] (April 2026)
2. **Academic Board [for information] (May 28, 2026)**

**PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:**

On May 16, 2016, the Ceremonials Committee approved the *Statement on Acknowledgement of Traditional Land*. The [Statement](#) was provided to the Academic Board on May 30, 2016 for information.

On April 5, 2021, the Ceremonials Committee approved a revised *Statement on Acknowledgement of Traditional Land*. The [revised Statement](#) was provided to the Academic Board on April 21, 2021 for information. The words "most recently" and "river" were removed. This was based on feedback that was provided by the Mississaugas of the Credit.

## HIGHLIGHTS:

A revised *Statement on Acknowledgement of Traditional Land* was approved in 2021 is as follows:

*“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 the Mississaugas of the Credit. 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.”*

Since its adoption, the *Statement* has been used at institutional events<sup>1</sup>, including Convocation, ground-breaking ceremonies, and building openings. The *Statement* is also widely used by members of the University community at other University events as appropriate.

Further to a recommendation from Shannon Simpson, Senior Director, Office of Indigenous Initiatives, the Ceremonials Committee has approved a revision to the current *Statement* to reflect the name change of one of the First Nations.

The Office of the Grand Chief of the Wendat Nation has advised that the Wendat People have formally decided through a democratic process to exclusively use Wendat as their Nation’s identifier. This reflects their collective desire to reclaim their identity and to put aside a colonial designation that no longer aligns with who they are. They have asked the University of Toronto to remove the term ‘Huron’ from its land acknowledgement and to use ‘Wendat Nation’ instead.

The Office of the Grand Chief has advised that “... the return to the name Wendat is a deliberate and meaningful act of decolonization. The term ‘Huron’ was imposed on our Nation by European colonizers in the early 1600s. It derives from the French word *hure*, referring to the mane of a wild boar—an allusion to hairstyles observed at the time. The word also carried pejorative connotations in French, referring to someone seen as uncouth or vulgar. This name was neither chosen nor embraced by our ancestors. (...) This change would represent a meaningful gesture of respect for our Nation’s self-determination and would support ongoing efforts toward reconciliation and accurate recognition.”

Accordingly, the Ceremonials Committee approved the recommended revision.

It was Resolved

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

THAT the following *University of Toronto Land Acknowledgement Statement* be approved effective immediately, replacing the *Statement* approved by the Ceremonials Committee on April 5, 2021.

*“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 Wendat Nation, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. 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.”*

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

n/a

**RECOMMENDATION:**

For information.