

# Centre for Indigenous Learning and Support Plan



# Summary Statement

Moving forward to 2022, the Sheridan learning community will invigorate our enviable organizational **character**; maintain and intensify our pursuit of **quality**; and continue to develop, implement and deploy tools that promote individual and organizational **accountability**.

# Academic Priorities

- » Build community by embodying Sheridan's unique character.
- » Advance quality teaching and deep learning through inclusive, learner-focused design and academic support services that embrace the diverse strengths of our students.
- » Cement our commitment to polytechnic education by promoting and supporting scholarship, research and creative activities.
- » Fuel academic and career success by cultivating curiosity, a passion for growth and learning, perseverance, fun and a sense of purpose.
- » Enhance the student experience through programs, services and space design.
- » Develop an operational culture of planning, accountability and continuous improvement.



# Centre for Indigenous Learning and Support Plan

The Centre for Indigenous Learning and Support (CILS) planning framework is rooted in a holistic Indigenous worldview. The Medicine Wheel is not easily defined, and many First Nations communities will view it differently. It is characterized by representing the alignment and continuous interaction between physical, spiritual, emotional and mental realities. The medicine wheel is looked at in all four directions: North, East, South and West. Each direction in the Medicine Wheel has different interpretations as it relates to Indigenous pedagogy. Each direction will support each other as we further the goals of the Indigenous Office.

## The values that are guiding the planning process are as follows:

- » Relationships – We work collaboratively with institutional partners to build strong relationships based on mutual respect and the embodiment of Sheridan's unique character.
- » Inclusion – We centre Indigenous culture, knowledge and values through the inclusion of Indigenous principles of education and ways of knowing into curricular and co-curricular learning opportunities.
- » Diversity – We embrace and seek to highlight the diversity of Indigenous learners, including the acknowledgement of intersectionality around race, ability, sexual orientation, gender expression, etc., as well as differences in life experience, perspectives and circumstances.
- » Respect – We respect and value the history, wisdom and expertise of Indigenous peoples and see it as a core responsibility to uphold and transmit these important narratives throughout the Sheridan learning community.
- » Accountability – We maintain accountability to Sheridan's learning community and to the Indigenous communities of Turtle Island (North America).

## Land Acknowledgement Statement

Sheridan would like to acknowledge that all of its campuses reside on land that for thousands of years before us was the traditional Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Anishinaabe Nation, Huron-Wendat and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. It is our collective responsibility to honour and respect those who have gone before us, those who are here, and those who have yet to come. We are grateful for the opportunity to be working on this land.



## Priority #1

### *Build community by embodying Sheridan's unique character.*

The East Direction comes from a place of vision, awareness and new beginnings. The focus is on research and development as they relate to supporting Indigenous leadership and knowledge, as well as fostering partnerships within and across the postsecondary sector and with Indigenous communities.

We will continue to build strong relationships based on mutual respect and the active inclusion of Indigenous knowledge. In accordance with Academic Priority #1, this will be achieved through internal and external partnerships and by creating welcoming environments on each campus that reflect Indigenous cultures.



#### Goals

#### Actions to achieve this initiative

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| » Recruitment                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Support the Office of the Registrar (OTR) in the hiring of an Indigenous Recruitment Officer to do outreach and build community relationships.</li> <li>» Provide advice to relevant internal departments so that Indigenous communities are effectively targeted in all recruitment processes.</li> <li>» Develop resources that highlight the experience of current Indigenous students and showcase why they chose Sheridan.</li> <li>» Enhance marketing materials to target Indigenous learners by working with the Office of the Registrar.</li> </ul>   |
| » Partnerships                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Build partnerships with Indigenous organizations such as Indspire, Six Nations Polytechnic, GREAT and the Peel Aboriginal Network to increase supports for Indigenous learners and enhance the student experience.</li> <li>» Build linkages and partnerships between Indigenous K-12 and postsecondary education systems through the use of Indigenous Recruitment Officers.</li> <li>» Continue to build partnerships with internal departments to advance awareness about Indigenous cultures.</li> </ul>   |
| » On-Campus Awareness and Events | <p><b>Awareness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Work with Communications, Public Affairs and Marketing (CPAM) to develop marketing materials reflecting Sheridan's official (traditional) land acknowledgement.</li> <li>» Develop an "Official Land Acknowledgement" plaque/banner at each campus location.</li> </ul> <p><b>Events</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Host events during Treaties Recognition Week.</li> <li>» Host a series of Truth and Reconciliation events in partnership with various departments and student groups.</li> <li>» Increase staff and students' exposure to, and understanding of, Indigenous art by working with Sheridan's Creative Campus Galleries.</li> <li>» Continue to enhance and expand Sheridan's Indigenous Awareness Week.</li> <li>» Support Residence staff (in our North Direction) to create events for Indigenous students living on campus.</li> <li>» Expand the Universal Drum Circle Event to include a Social and Pow Wow.</li> <li>» Co-host educational opportunities with community partners to learn Indigenous languages and hear about their importance.</li> </ul> |



## Priority #1 continued

### Goals

### Actions to achieve this initiative

- » Space
  - » Provide designated space for Indigenous services on all campuses and an expanded space at the Trafalgar Campus. These spaces will foster dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners by providing opportunities to engage in culturally relevant activities.
  - » Work with Facilities Services to identify and increase visibility of Indigenous cultures throughout gathering spaces, gardens, signage and artworks in a meaningful way.
  - » Develop special events and programming featuring Indigenous art installations and community art focused on embedding Indigenous language in spaces across Sheridan campuses, sparking creativity and innovation, in partnership with Creative Campus Galleries.
  - » Expand Medicine Garden spaces to each campus.
- » Indigenous Education Council (IEC)
  - » Expand Sheridan's Indigenous Education Council (IEC) by engaging new Indigenous community members from diverse backgrounds.
  - » Continue to work with the IEC to enhance our connection to Indigenous communities, thus ensuring accountability and continuous improvement.
  - » Continue to foster relationships with the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU), Indigenous Education Branch, to ensure sustainable funding through the Postsecondary Education Fund for Aboriginal Learners (PEFAL), engaging our IEC when appropriate.\*
  - » Actively participate with Colleges Ontario, the Indigenous Peoples Education Circle and other relevant postsecondary organizations.

### Metrics

- » Consistent and reliable data, Indigenous self-identification, retention, attainment and graduation.
- » Number of Indigenous applicants.
- » Number of internal and external members on our Indigenous Education Council that represent First Nations, Metis and Inuit.
- » Increase representation of Indigenous cultures on campus.
- » Number of social media engagements, website hits, and media articles.

\*Funding initiatives are subject to change without notice. Taken from Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities: Achieving Results through Partnership – First Progress Report on the Implementation of the Ontario Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training Policy Framework.





## Priority #2

### *Advance quality teaching and deep learning through inclusive, learner-focused design and academic support services that embrace the diverse strengths of our students.*

The South Direction identifies ways of relating through time. Here the model emphasizes the creation of culturally appropriate curriculum in partnership with Indigenous knowledge keepers, in developing instructional resources for use across Sheridan.

In accordance with Academic Priority #2, we will continue to advocate for the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge and values into our learning community. This can include the harmonization of Indigenous knowledge, ways of knowing and pedagogies into existing curricular and co-curricular programming. CILS will support the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) to foster faculty development to increase collegial understanding of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous knowledge as an approach to a worldview.



### Goals

» Foundations for Understanding Indigenous Cultures and Histories.

### Actions to achieve this initiative

- » Develop a three-part workshop series for Sheridan staff and faculty on the Foundations of Indigenous Culture, cross-cultural communication and tips on assisting Indigenous learners to be successful in postsecondary education.
- » In partnership with the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL), Indigenous Education Council (IEC), the Centre for Equity and Inclusion (CEI) and Human Resources (HR), and using multiple modes of delivery, CILS will work collegially to develop ongoing professional development on Indigenous history, intercultural training (including experiential, hands-on learning activities), and land/place-based learning aimed at the following groups:
  - » Educators/Instructors
  - » Leaders/Senior Administration
  - » Researchers
  - » Curriculum Developers
  - » Front-line Student Support Workers
  - » Facilities Personnel
- » In partnership with CTL, IEC, and CEI, develop and implement learning modules focused on anti-oppressive practice, racism and discrimination on campus in order to increase the personal and emotional safety of students and staff and to ensure that the aforementioned learning modules are successful.

### Metrics

- » Percentage of faculty, staff, administrators trained in understanding Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing.
- » Number of training modules developed to support professional development of new employees.



## Priority #3

### *Cement our commitment to polytechnic education by promoting and supporting scholarship, research and creative activities.*

The South Direction identifies ways of relating through time. Here the model emphasizes the creation of culturally appropriate curriculum in partnership with Indigenous knowledge keepers, and the development of instructional resources.

The goal is to continue to work with Indigenous community partners to identify a protocol of engagement with respect to research on Indigenous Education. We will also work closely with the Undergraduate Research Office to identify opportunities to understand the impacts of Truth and Reconciliation within Sheridan's learning community.



### Goals

#### » Research

### Actions to achieve this initiative

- » Collaborate with faculty on Scholarship, Research and Creative Activities (SRCA) opportunities to advance research on Truth and Reconciliation at Sheridan.
- » Implement teaching awards and other forms of faculty recognition to highlight outstanding scholarship, research and creative activities related to Indigenous learners and the overall learning community.
- » In line with a commitment to bring in Indigenous scholars/ Canada Research Chairs (OCAD), host a one-day “Summit and Consultation” on Indigenous Education to share promising, innovative and creative practices.
- » Undergraduate research will support initiatives in the North Direction and East Direction, and continue in the South Direction, to support quality of teaching and programs/services in partnership with the Office of Undergraduate Research.

### Metrics

- » Understanding the nature of Indigenous Education within Sheridan's framework.
- » Percentage of research projects focused on Indigenous Education including, but not limited to, Truth and Reconciliation, Calls to Action or Colleges and Institutes Canada Indigenous Education Protocol principles.



## Priority #4

*Fuel academic and career success by cultivating curiosity, a passion for growth and learning, perseverance, fun and a sense of purpose.*

The North Direction, South Direction, and West Direction all align with Academic Priority #4. The North focuses on student engagement and supports. The South focuses on teaching and learning opportunities for staff, faculty and students. The West Direction focuses on services and also supporting all other directions in the model.

In accordance with Academic Priority #4, we will continue to advocate for the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge and values into our learning community. We will work with the Centre for Teaching and Learning to increase collegial understanding of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous knowledge as an approach to a worldview.



### Goals

» Curricular and Co-curricular Support

### Actions to achieve this initiative

- » CILS will advocate for the hiring of an Education Developer adept at understanding Indigenous ways of knowing to design and develop Indigenous-focused course content, learning outcomes, learning tools/strategies and assessment measures. The Education Developer will work on the foundations of understanding Indigenous Histories and Cultures and expanding the institutional item bank to include items that reflect Indigenous ways of knowing and learning. The Education Developer will work closely with the Indigenous Counsellor to support content and delivery for learner success.
- » Advocate for the integration of Indigenous ways of learning into teaching assessment tools and core teaching and learning course evaluation items.
- » Offer formal and informal learning opportunities about Indigenous peoples (Elders, lunch and learns, sharing circles, guest speakers, storytelling, feasts).
- » Expand and enhance in-class visits from Indigenous knowledge keepers.
- » Develop guides for faculty on practical ways to embed Indigenous values into learning.
- » Promote the harmonization of Indigenous knowledge and values into curriculum.
- » In partnership with CTL and IEC, embed Indigenous values and knowledge into existing programs.
- » In partnership with the OTR and the Office of the Provost, enhance flexibility in the delivery of programs to allow adult learners to pause and restart programs as required due to family and work obligations.
- » Develop guidelines on culturally relevant assessment tools for Indigenous learners, in partnership with CTL and IEC.
- » Develop a general education elective on Indigenous studies, in partnership with CTL, IEC and Indigenous community partners; offer on campus and in the community.

### Metrics

- » Percentage of programs with Indigenous knowledge embedded within them.
- » Number of co-curricular learning opportunities.



## Priority #5

### *Enhance the student experience through programs, services and space design.*

In the North, the emphasis is on movement and acting on the knowledge and understanding created from the other quadrants of the model. For Sheridan, this may include making investments and creating strategies to improve outcomes for Indigenous students and staff. In the West, the focus is on the creation of new knowledge. This may include Indigenous resources, such as supports and services for students, as well as hiring and supporting the development of Indigenous faculty, staff and administrators.

We will continue to deliver and enhance services and programs – in collaboration with key internal partners – to effectively engage Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners. In accordance with Academic Priority #5, students are at the forefront of our goals and strategies, such that Indigenous learners achieve their full potential both academically and professionally. We will strive to ensure that Indigenous values are embraced within the institution through collaboration with key partners such as the Centre for Teaching and Learning, Student Affairs, Student Union, Faculties and other campus departments.



#### Goals

#### Actions to achieve this initiative

» Mental Health and Well-Being.

- » Enhance CILS services through a holistic approach that is culturally inclusive of Indigenous ceremonial practices.
- » Hire and support at least one Indigenous Counsellor position to provide culturally sensitive services and consultation to the counselling team.
- » Co-create faculty development curriculum related to CILS student engagement priorities, in partnership with CTL and led by the Indigenous Counsellor.
- » Develop a “Storytelling as a Way of Healing” program for Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents by engaging with Campus Living Centres (Sheridan Residence).
- » Co-design a faculty development component of the Teaching and Learning Academic Plan that focuses on quality teaching and fostering deep learning for Indigenous students, in partnership with CTL.

» Transition and Retention.

#### Student Support

- » Develop a First-Year Experience Strategy that positions Indigenous students to meet or exceed their learning goals in partnership with Student Affairs.
- » Develop a resource guide for Indigenous learners focused on culturally responsive healing strategies and tips for success at Sheridan from the student perspective.
- » Organize events for fostering connection opportunities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students throughout the year (Residence and Orientation).

#### Financial Support

- » Continue to identify financial assistance opportunities for Indigenous learners, in partnership with Financial Aid and Awards and Advancement.
- » Create an “emergency fund” for Indigenous students in financial crisis.

» Student Leadership and Career Development.

- » Continue to increase the number of Indigenous Peer Mentors on all campuses, in partnership with Student Leadership.
- » Connect students with Indigenous organizations and community partners.
- » Expand career development opportunities and supports for Indigenous students transitioning to the workforce through a partnership with the Career Centre.
- » Connect current students with Alumni as mentors by working with the Career Centre and Sheridan Alumni.
- » Provide opportunities for Indigenous learners to attend conferences (e.g. Indspire National Gathering, Higher Education Summit, CILS Indigenous Education Symposium, etc).



## Priority #5 continued

### Goals

### Actions to achieve this initiative

- » Indigenous Self-Identification
  - » Develop accessible ways for Indigenous learners to self-identify (i.e. Sheridan's main website, acceptance letters, etc.).
  - » Create CILS-specific welcome letters to promote Indigenous self-identification, in partnership with the OTR.
  - » Improve reporting and data collection of Indigenous learners who voluntarily self-identify.
  - » Develop opportunities to creatively promote awareness about various Indigenous identities and addressing "what does it mean for me to identify as Indigenous?" by working with CPAM and OTR.
  - » Design and implement Indigenous self-identity protocols that are respectful and based on current research and approaches.
  - » Continue to participate in "Open House" events during the academic year by working collaboratively with the OTR.
- » Support
  - » Increase accessibility of information about CILS by enhancing the Centre's profile on platforms such as Slate and Access Sheridan.
  - » Assist in developing and implementing alumni programming to engage and support Indigenous graduates and collect longitudinal data about their career trajectory and success.
  - » Add a more visible link on Sheridan's main page to CILS (Indigenous Services).
  - » Continue to enhance the following services:
    - » Elder in Residence
    - » Orientation Week
    - » Computer Loan Program
    - » Campus Supports
- » People
  - CILS Office Staff**
    - » Expand access to Elders & knowledge keepers for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and staff.
    - » Hire an Indigenous Student Advisor responsible for the development of holistic advising needs.

### Metrics

- » Establish a baseline of self-identified Indigenous learners to find any gaps in attainment, retention and achievement.
- » Number of Indigenous learners who self-identify.





## Priority #6

### *Develop an operational culture of planning, accountability and continuous improvement.*

The West Direction focuses on the creation of new knowledge. For Sheridan, this may include Indigenous resources, such as supports and services for students, as well as hiring and supporting the development of Indigenous faculty, staff and administrators. The West Direction ultimately supports the other quadrants to sustain CILS, which is based on a culture of planning, accountability and continuous improvement.

We will continue to develop and enhance culturally responsive programming and services in collaboration with key integral partners to benefit the academic, professional and personal success of Indigenous students and staff, in accordance with the Academic Plans.



#### Goals

##### » Support

#### Actions to achieve this initiative

» Ensure support services are multi-pronged to meet the diverse needs of Indigenous peoples, be they urban, rural, Status, Non-Status, First Nations, Metis, Inuit, etc., by working in partnership with Student Affairs.

##### » Resources

» Keep abreast of funding opportunities from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) funding through the Postsecondary Education Fund for Aboriginal Learners (PEFAL) or other initiatives.

» Identify potential and sustainable funding opportunities to support core services for Indigenous learners, in partnership with Advancement.

##### » People

#### Human Resources

» Work towards commitments for hiring and mentoring of more Indigenous employees with ongoing appointments throughout Sheridan, including senior administration, faculty and support services, in partnership with HR.

» Work collaboratively with HR around locating appropriate candidates, as well as ongoing training needs, to increase the number of Indigenous staff and faculty.

» Contribute to training for incoming staff on Anti-oppressive Practice and Self-Care.

##### » Governance

» Continue to advocate for the recognition and inclusion of Indigenous peoples within Sheridan's governance structures.

» Provide ongoing advice when consulted on issues and concerns that affect Indigenous peoples at Sheridan.

» Continue to have an active role on Sheridan's Senate.

#### Metrics

- » Number of Indigenous staff and retention.
- » Funding initiatives from government, community and industry resources.
- » Consistent and reliable data – feedback on support services.



## GET IN TOUCH

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### **Hazel McCallion Campus**

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