

A Framework for Truth & Reconciliation

Yeates School of Graduate Studies



The goal of Indigenizing education is to create safer spaces for Indigenous learners: a more inclusive environment that affirms Indigenous worldviews and ultimately enhances and enriches the educational and cultural experience of the entire community.

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Welcome

The Yeates School of Graduate Studies has made a commitment to Indigenizing graduate education. To further that commitment, this report was developed under the leadership of the former vice-provost and dean, Dr. Jennifer Mactavish, with support from the director of Ryerson's Office of Aboriginal Initiatives, Monica McKay.

At YSGS we've been thinking about the relevance of master's and doctoral degrees, products of centuries-long academic traditions, in our modern world. How can graduate students help tackle society's greatest challenges, like climate change, the adverse effects of globalization and urbanization or social inequality? How can we rethink graduate education for the 21st century?

It is important that we centre Indigenous perspectives in this rethinking process. For too long Indigenous knowledge has been undervalued and research has too often been conducted on Indigenous Peoples' land rather than with Indigenous communities. Indigenous perspectives have the potential to reframe graduate education in terms of holistic student development, reciprocal research relationships and respectful community engagement. From an Indigenous perspective, we must think through our responsibilities to each other and to the Land that sustains us: concepts that have existed since time immemorial but also embody Ryerson's innovative spirit.

Indigenizing means welcoming Indigenous learners into our programs, it means tailoring supports to their unique needs, creating Indigenous programs that respect different worldviews, and equipping students with the skills needed to navigate both Indigenous and non-Indigenous worlds. But responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) also means improving the graduate student experience for everyone. With reconciliation, we have a responsibility to create critically engaged and thoughtful citizens and we hope that this report provides a strategic framework for the long journey that lies ahead.

I am personally grateful for the groundwork, consultation, idea-generating, drafting and reviewing that was conducted by Riley Kucheran, Alysia Myette, Presley Mills, Monica McKay, the YSGS Indigenous Graduate Leadership Student Circle, Dr. Mactavish, Dr. Samantha Wehbi and Rachel DiSaia.

It is with great hope that I share this report and invite the graduate community at Ryerson to join me in our acts of Truth and Reconciliation.



Dr. Cory Searcy
Vice-Provost and Dean
YSGS

Land and Territorial Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements have become an important part of affirming Indigenous presence in places like higher education. Today, they are common fixtures at the openings of ceremonies, events and reports, but calling attention to traditional territories or historical injustices needs to be done with a purpose. Too often acknowledgements are empty words that historicize the experience of Indigenous Peoples.

YSGS is committed to doing better.

When meaningfully delivered, acknowledgements are assertions of Indigenous sovereignty in Canada. They come with responsibilities to honour treaty obligations and stand in solidarity with Indigenous Peoples' fights for justice. Additional context and reflection on one's personal or collective role in decolonization is also appropriate.

Toronto, or Tkaronto as it was traditionally known, occupies a place that has been home to Indigenous Peoples for more than 15,000 years. This territory is subject to the "Dish with One Spoon Wampum Treaty" between the Anishinaabe, Mississaugas and Haudenosaunee that bound them to share and protect this land. Subsequent Indigenous Nations and Peoples and settlers from all over the globe have been welcomed into this treaty in the spirit of peace, friendship and respect. Tkaronto is now home for many First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples. Recognizing where we stand is not to historicize the experiences of Indigenous Peoples or to offer platitudes. This acknowledgement is but one of many intentional acts for addressing injustices and committing ourselves individually and collectively as a graduate community to the path of truth and reconciliation.



A Message from the Indigenous Advisor

Aaniin/Boozhoo! Riley-zhaagnaashii-wnikaazod, Kucheran-baabaawiindig, Desmoulines-maamaawiindig, makwanindoodem, Biigtigong Nishnaabeg-nindoonjibaa. Anishinaabe-agokwe shpi-gkinoohmaagan.

Greetings! My English name is Riley, my father's family name is Kucheran and my mother's family name is Desmoulin, who are Bear Clan members from the Pic River First Nation. I am an Ojibway Two-Spirit graduate student and the inaugural Indigenous Advisor at YSGS.

Introducing myself in Anishinaabemowin (the Ojibway language) is an act of personal decolonization. As an intergenerational Residential School Survivor I grew up without speaking Anishinaabemowin, practicing anishnaabewin (culture) or learning through dibaajimowinan (personal stories). Instead I was educated off-reserve in communities where I denied my Ojibway heritage out of guilt, shame and fear. This continued until I came to Graduate Studies.

At Ryerson I engaged in biskaabiiyang, a Nishnaabeg process of looking back at one's personal colonization to take steps towards mino-bimaadiziwin, a path that generates good life. My graduate student experience has been a healing journey. Through research about Indigenous fashion design I've connected with local Indigenous groups, met and learned from Elders and knowledge holders here in Toronto and in land-based settings, and I've reconnected with my own community in Biigtigong.

A strong desire to replicate this experience for future Indigenous learners fuels my work at YSGS. I believe that Indigenizing graduate education has the power to reshape the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians and create a more just and equitable society.

I'm excited and hopeful for the long journey ahead, yet much has happened since I joined the Office of the Vice-Provost and Dean in May of 2018. We've held space for our Two-Spirit Queer community members during Pride Month; with fellow graduate student Laura Heidenheim we organized the relaunch of Ryerson's Pow Wow; we launched the YSGS Indigenous Graduate Student Leadership Circle; released a new video produced by Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services; and held a Rethinking Graduate Studies Forum with a mind towards reconciliation.

During this time, myself and Rachel DiSaia, strategic initiatives and policy coordinator, have met with various academic units and offices on campus and drafted this report that provides some context and guidelines for Indigenizing graduate programs. Our hope is that it also becomes a "living document" to guide our Indigenization efforts.

I am so proud to be a part of this journey. Chi-Miigwetch (Big Thank You).



Riley Kucheran
Indigenous Advisor
YSGS

Vision and Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide guidance for our journey towards making graduate studies at Ryerson the first choice for Indigenous learners with the passion and energy to lead the next generation of Indigenous creative and intellectual changemakers.

We have made great strides since our modest beginnings in 2000. YSGS now has more than 60 programs that serve 2,900 graduate students. Yet, according to admissions records, in the 2018-19 academic year there were only 22 self-identified Indigenous graduate students at Ryerson or less than 0.1 per cent of the graduate student population. While the Canadian Association for Graduate Studies (CAGS) does not track the ethnicity of graduate students, we know that Ryerson's number of Indigenous graduate students is low.

Ryerson is challenged by its lack of dedicated Indigenous studies programs as well as its urban location that's comparatively further away from First Nations, Inuit or Métis communities. But we believe our low enrolment numbers can be an opportunity.

As Dr. Michelle Pidgeon (2014) reminds us, "relationships matter," so by getting to know the few Indigenous students at Ryerson and tailoring our programs and supports for them - focusing on the quality of their experience rather than the quantity of students - we will, in turn, Indigenize our programs. The stories of Ojibway graduate student Riley Kucheran and the School of Fashion as well as MN/PHCNP student Jasmine Sutherland, who is Cree, and the School of Nursing are proof of this. Both students have been engaged in Indigenizing projects with their respective chair or director that contributed to their own professional development and will have long-term significant impacts on Indigenous student experiences. They built reciprocal relationships and planted seeds that will come to fruition for generations of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

We believe that this "slow" approach that focuses on building relationships is the best course to Indigenization. "Indigenization" and "decolonization" can have vastly different meanings¹ so for the purpose of this report we use "Indigenizing" to describe the process of infusing Indigenous knowledge and perspectives into all of the structural layers of an institution. For YSGS this means our academic and administrative supports as well as our programs and policies.

The goal of Indigenizing is to create safer spaces for Indigenous learners: a more inclusive environment that affirms Indigenous worldviews and ultimately enhances and enriches the educational and cultural experience of the entire community.

¹See Mae Cook (2019): <https://www.folio.ca/what-do-people-really-mean-when-they-say-indigenization/>

Ryerson Context

The following section details some of the work already being done by Ryerson's Truth and Reconciliation Strategic Plan Working Group, the Indigenous Graduate Student Leadership Circle, the Rethinking Graduate Education Forum and graduate programs themselves.

Truth and Reconciliation at Ryerson

In the spirit of Truth and Reconciliation, the university has acknowledged that the institution's namesake, Egerton Ryerson, is widely known for his contributions to Ontario's public educational system. In his role as the Chief Superintendent of Education, Ryerson's recommendations were instrumental in the design and implementation of the Indian Residential School System. In 2015 the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) reported that children in the schools were subjected to unthinkable abuse and neglect, to medical experimentation, punishment for the practice of cultures or languages, and death. The TRC concluded that the aim of the Residential School System was cultural genocide. We recognize that the name of the university and the history attached to this name has created a barrier for prospective and current students to engage in graduate education.

In January 2018 Ryerson released Building a New Foundation for Generations to Come, the community consultation report that outlined Ryerson's response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).² The report described six themes that emerged from consultations with Indigenous community members, provided 15 ideal next steps and made 50 recommendations for how Ryerson can further its reconciliation efforts, some of which apply to graduate studies. While any number of these recommendations can be adopted by the members of our graduate community, it is our hope that programs take on leadership roles in addressing the following points so that we can continue to move forward in our process of reconciliation.

Increase resources for the outreach, recruitment and retention of Indigenous students.

This should include raising money for scholarships geared to Indigenous students and the establishment of concrete enrolment targets by setting aside a certain number of spaces for Indigenous students in programs across the university (next step #6).

Increase opportunities for Indigenous self-identification to include second, third, fourth-year and graduate students, and ensure that this information is designed, reviewed and kept by Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services in collaboration with the Office of the Vice-President, Equity and Community Inclusion (next step #8).

Develop the annual Aboriginal Student Showcase to become a premier event for the university (next step #11).

Improve outreach and supports for Indigenous scholars to complete their PhDs and establish opportunities to become faculty members at Ryerson (next step #13).

Where numbers allow, **mandate Ryerson advisory and decision-making committees to have varied Indigenous representation** (recommendation #6).

²Summaries of the Truth and Reconciliation Report and the 94 Calls to Action are provided by the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation: nctr.ca/reports2.php.

Build community events such as monthly Knowledge Symposiums and gatherings similar to the successful Office of the Vice-President Equity and Community Inclusion's Soup and Substance series, only modified to meet Indigenous needs and interests (recommendation #21).

Increase the integration of Indigenous content, resources and pedagogies in curriculums across Ryerson including field experiences, service learning, practicums and work experiences (recommendation #24).

Develop training in the history of Egerton Ryerson's colonial role and anti-colonial frameworks, as well as Indigenous cultural competency training for all Ryerson staff and make this training also available to faculty (recommendation #36).

Partner with Indigenous communities to develop courses and distance learning like the University of British Columbia's collaborative bachelor of social work program delivered with a local First Nation (recommendation #41).

Establish an annual Indigenous history week (recommendation #50).

YSGS Indigenous Graduate Student Leadership Circle

In January of 2019 the YSGS and the Office of Aboriginal Initiatives committed to providing support for Indigenous graduate students through the creation of a circle to help build community, develop leadership skills and foster institutional change. Recognizing that one of the most important factors in graduate student success is relationship building, the Circle invited all students who are Indigenous to Canada as well as international Indigenous students to join a conversation about the unique challenges, opportunities and needs of Indigenous graduate students. The Circle meets regularly to socialize, engage in workshops or plan future initiatives. Interested students can contact Riley Kucheran at riley.kucheran@ryerson.ca for details.

At the first Circle, attendees discussed how the act of coming together is political: we occupy the land and the histories of colonization. We questioned how we might mobilize our goals individually and collectively to increase accessibility, visibility, representation and opportunities for other Indigenous learners, or develop mutually beneficial and supportive relationships between the university and various Indigenous communities. We talked about the curriculum and the resources needed for equitable representation in classrooms, inclusion of Elders on supervisory committees, and navigating research with Indigenous perspectives that require strong relationships and meaningful ways of giving back to communities.

The Circle agreed that a systematic survey and evaluation of the experience of Indigenous graduates students at Ryerson was needed to move forward.

2019 Rethinking Graduate Education Forum

YSGS has been working with various stakeholders to “rethink” graduate education delivery and experience. Ongoing conversations challenge individuals to step back, look up and search outside the box of their day-to-day operations and to think about what we are aiming to accomplish in terms of global outcomes of graduate education.

Rethinking Graduate Education Forums are single steps in our ongoing commitment to unfold and grow as we deepen the process of reflecting, planning and implementing for the future of graduate education.

In February of 2019 the Rethinking Graduate Education Forum (for graduate program directors, associate deans with graduate responsibilities, select graduate students, and Indigenous Graduate Student Leadership Circle members) was developed for the discussion of Indigenizing graduate education in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

A keynote presentation on the history of Indigenous Peoples through colonization was followed by round table discussions led by Kevin Lamoureux, Education Lead for the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. All participants discussed opportunities to Indigenize graduate programs and YSGS as a whole and what the next steps may look like.

Ryerson Internal Audit

One of the key recommendations from the Rethinking Graduate Education Forum was to conduct an internal audit of all Indigenous initiatives happening across campus. Initial findings indicate that graduate programs at Ryerson have addressed the TRC to varying degrees. Some have yet to begin the journey towards Indigenization, while others have made great strides. Below are some of the highlights:

In the **communication and culture program** Dr. Julie Tomiak has offered a “decolonizing the city” course every other year and both the MA and PhD methods courses have integrated a decolonizing methodologies week. Indigenous students have been able to take land-based courses as directed reading electives and an interdisciplinary network of Indigenous scholars at Ryerson and York University are available to supervise students.

The **digital media program** is collaborating to create a virtual version of the Indigenous Walking Tour around campus.

The **documentary media program** frequently brings in guest Indigenous scholars and artists for lectures on Indigenous documentary productions and research methods, with the goal of supplementing current course offerings by integrating more Indigenous content.

Early childhood studies offers a course in Indigenous early learning taught by an Indigenous instructor, several other courses contain readings by Indigenous scholars, and program coordinators have connected students with Indigenous scholarship opportunities and the Indigenous Graduate Student Leadership Circle.

Immigration and settlement studies has amended their program's mission statement to address issues of reconciliation in the context of settler colonialism. They have developed an Indigenous city field trip for first-year students that is also available to community members.

The Ted Rogers School of Management's MBA program has made a commitment to addressing TRC Call to Action #92 (business and reconciliation) and is in the process of establishing a group to oversee their efforts. In the past the program has supported Indigenous students with placements, and has requested that the admissions committee pilot an Indigenous pathways program for Indigenous entrepreneurs.

Nursing held a series of workshops on integrating Indigenous knowledge, anti-Indigenous racism and cultural safety in the classroom for students, faculty, staff and alumni affiliated with the program. The Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing hired an Indigenous consultant and research assistant to Indigenize all of its course outlines, which were used for the 2018-19 academic year.

Nutrition communication students engaged in a KAIROS Blanket Exercise and faculty have been determining how best to integrate Indigenous content in their courses. The program was successful in recruiting an Indigenous student for the 2019-20 cohort.

Public policy and administration offers a course in Indigenous law and policy and several other courses include Indigenous content. The program has prioritized Indigenous applicants in the review of admission files. There is a Hydro One Scholarship for one to two incoming Indigenous students each year and the program routinely assists students with placements. In its latest program review the program prioritized changes related to the TRC and applied for curriculum development funding from Ryerson's Aboriginal Education Council.

Social work recently hired three Indigenous faculty members who now supervise Indigenous students' major research papers. The MSW program has also offered two Indigenous approaches to social work courses: SK 8208: Indigenous Knowledge in Social Work and SK8209: Aboriginal Social Work Practice and Research.

Summarized Findings

While these Indigenous initiatives are promising, programs also identified gaps and areas needing improvement. Most programs that responded to the internal audit would welcome more information, resources or suggestions on how to begin or continue offering Indigenous content or supports. Some programs described their approach to Indigenization as unorganized and requested assistance in creating a guiding vision or strategy for their efforts. Several programs identified their need for help in recruiting Indigenous students and/or attracting faculty and staff.

Canadian Context

Until the 1950s, if an Indigenous person in Canada wanted to go to university, they would lose their Indian status. Beginning in the 1960s, there was a large-scale migration of Indigenous Peoples into urban centres and the beginning of native studies programs (like a BA at Trent University in 1967), so that by the 1980s Indigenous Peoples were beginning to graduate with advanced degrees.³

Since then, Canadian governments have been making concerted efforts to increase Indigenous participation in higher education at the undergraduate level but Indigenous Peoples have continued to be overlooked in graduate recruitment. Unfortunately statistics about Indigenous participation in graduate education are unavailable and this topic requires further investigation.⁴

Across Canada, universities are now developing initiatives to support Indigenous students during their graduate careers, from recruitment to retention and transition into their professions or further academic work. Initiatives include:

- Indigenous enrolment targets
- Indigenous studies programs or special cohorts
- Indigenous awards, grants and scholarships
- inter-institutional partnerships such as exchanges or Indigenous doctoral cotutelles
- on-campus Elders available for general wellness or academic office hours
- Indigenous admissions policies or special considerations, designated seats, or holistic evaluations
- transition programs from undergraduate to graduate-level studies
- Indigenous peer mentorship and student ambassador programs
- dedicated student spaces including housing.

Several universities across Canada fund and maintain **SAGE programs** (Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement) with the goal of developing the critical mass of Indigenous Peoples with master's and doctoral credentials that are needed to transform Indigenous education. In British Columbia SAGE is a province-wide, inter-institutional peer-support/faculty-mentoring program for both Indigenous students and non-Indigenous students engaged in Indigenous research. SAGE operates on principles of respect, reciprocity, relationships and responsibility, with the following goals: increase the numbers of Indigenous master's or doctoral students and graduates; assist Indigenous students transitioning to master's and doctoral programs; develop graduates with a cultural and community consciousness to positively affect change within Indigenous communities; support the academic success and cultural affirmation of students by linking their academic graduate research with culturally informed mentors; establish and encourage mentorship cohorts across the province in post-secondary institutions; create network opportunities and community-building for graduate students; collaborate with post-secondary institutions across Canada and beyond to foster new SAGE opportunities on national and international levels.

³ Dobson, 2004. "Honour song: Native graduates voice success."

⁴ Pidgeon, Archibald and Hawkey, 2014. "Relationships matter: Supporting Aboriginal graduate students in British Columbia, Canada."

Domestic Sector Scan

The **University of British Columbia (UBC)** hosts the province-wide, inter-institutional peer-support/faculty-mentoring program SAGE and a dedicated Aboriginal coordinator in the Faculty of Graduate Studies. There are several scholarships and other funding opportunities specifically for Aboriginal graduate students including the [Aboriginal Graduate Fellowship](#) and the [Aboriginal Graduate Fellowship Bridge Funding](#). UBC does not have a specific Aboriginal graduate admissions policy, however many graduate programs take into consideration the full range of academic, cultural, personal and professional knowledge of Aboriginal applicants.

McMaster University does not have Indigenous-specific graduate programs, but an Indigenous student group provides opportunities for scholarly dialogue and collaboration between programs, some of which have Indigenous applicant processes. An Indigenous summer research [scholars program](#) allows Indigenous undergraduates to shadow Indigenous graduate students.

Trent University offers an MA in Canadian and Indigenous studies and a PhD in Indigenous studies. The latter requires students to take Indigenous knowledge courses, a practicum field placement that gives back to a community and an apprenticeship with an Elder. There are dedicated internal and external awards, a cultural counsellor is available for students and cultural programming is available in traditional structures or in a campus medicine garden.

The **University of Saskatchewan** has set an Indigenous graduate student enrolment target of nine per cent and has committed to include Indigenous knowledges and experiences into all graduate degree programs, and also requires environmental scans to determine gaps and opportunities. A new law degree is delivered jointly with the Nunavut Arctic College, and an undergraduate Aboriginal student achievement program provides peer mentorship with graduate students and other academic and cultural supports.

The **University of Western Ontario** offers an MA in Indigenous education and several schools have an Indigenous admissions process, like the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry and the Faculty of Law, which may admit Canadian Aboriginal candidates unconditionally.

International Context

It is essential that we rethink graduate education as part of a global conversation in response to the increasing complexity of our global knowledge economy and the diverse career pathways of graduate program alumni.

Despite their small number there is much to learn from international Indigenous graduate programs. It is essential that we rethink graduate education as part of a global conversation in response to the increasing complexity of our global knowledge economy and the diverse career pathways of graduate program alumni. Opportunities for international exchanges that can supplement Ryerson's Indigenous graduate offerings should also be explored.

Native American graduate education in the **United States** is not much further along than in the Canadian context. In 1979 the University of Arizona became the first institution in the U.S. to offer an MA degree in American Indian policy and in 1997 it became the first to offer a PhD in American Indian studies. Several schools benefit from large endowments and external sources of funding, such as the Sloan Indigenous Graduate Partnership at the University of Montana which awards up to \$40,000 a year to PhD students. Today the American Indian Graduate Center provides scholarships and publishes the American Indian Graduate Magazine. Five schools in the Tribal College system offer master's degrees, including Oglala Lakota College which opened a Department of Graduate Studies in 2000 and began offering the Lakota leadership and management education administration emphasis program.

In **New Zealand**, wananga are public higher educational institutions akin to universities but characterized by Maori traditions, knowledge and customs. Te Kupenga o MAI is a national network of key organizations focused on the accelerated development of Maori and Indigenous doctoral candidates. It is part of a capacity-building program that runs annual meetings and workshops for Maori and Indigenous PhD students enrolled or interested in doctoral programs and also runs international knowledge exchange programs.

International Sector Scan

The **University of Arizona**'s American Indian studies PhD is an interdisciplinary program. It is designed to prepare students for academic careers, to conduct research from a cross-cultural perspective, develop theories and methodologies that are useful to sovereign tribes, and transition to leadership and policy-making roles in higher education, tribal communities and government.

Montana State University (MSU) offers an interdisciplinary MA in Native American studies through its Native American studies department. MSU is geographically located near Montana's seven tribal colleges and seven reservations, home to 12 tribes which provides students with unique opportunities to collaborate with sovereign Indigenous nations. There are more than 500 students in the department and graduate students contribute to the American Indian Council and the organization of key events like international guest lectures and the annual Pow Wow. Students are also offered teaching assistantships.

The [University of Otago](#) in Dunedin, New Zealand offers an MA in Indigenous studies that's rooted in Maori knowledge and customary, environmental and cultural practices, and is also available online. The degree prepares graduates for administrative and leadership roles with Indigenous communities in New Zealand and abroad and is also an entry qualification for the PhD program. Generally students are required to have an honours degree to enter the MA but exceptions are considered.

The [University of Waikato](#) in Hamilton, New Zealand offers programs in the Faculty of Maori and Indigenous studies with several scholarships and funding sources available to students.

The School of Indigenous Graduate Studies at the [Wananga University](#) in Te Wananga, New Zealand offers MA and PhD programs through a lens of whanau experiences and kaupapa Maori pedagogy draw from the works and inspirations of Indigenous Peoples. Programs are delivered by teaching adjunct of more than 20 Indigenous/Maori PhDs, many of whom are furthering iwi/hapu/tribal developments. A doctor of Maori Indigenous development and advancement program is designed specifically for students in professional areas. It considers the working experience of students and encourages them to consider how their research can contribute to tribal, community and Indigenous organizations.



"Vitality" mural by **Chief Lady Bird**, Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Space, Daphne Cockwell Health Sciences Complex.

Braiding Sweetgrass:

A Framework for Indigenizing Graduate Studies

As we enter into a new Ryerson University Academic Plan (2020-25) which further articulates the goal of advancing Indigenous initiatives, YSGS is committed to Indigenizing its offerings and creating specific supports for Indigenous students. A model for Indigenizing graduate studies that we have developed builds on teachings about sweetgrass braids (based on the book, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants*, by Indigenous scientist and author Robin Wall Kimmerer, 2013).

Whereas individual strands of sweetgrass can easily break, a braid is stronger and thus symbolizes unity; braiding is easier with more than one person, thus encouraging collaboration; braiding is an act of healing, it makes use of plant medicines and brings clarity to the mind or heart; and when braiding sweetgrass one weaves together the past, present and future into a collective whole.

This is the inspiration for our framework. Indigenization needs to simultaneously accommodate and support Indigenous students' past, present and future, represented by three strands:

1. Getting Indigenous students here

- Building relationships with communities for long-term recruitment.
- Exploring an application review process that accounts for special considerations and/or holistic evaluation for the purpose of admissions.
- Fundraising for awards, grants, fellowships and scholarships.

2. Supporting Indigenous students when they are here

- Building awareness and cultural competencies for faculty and staff.
- Creating respectful learning environments that honour Indigenous knowledges.
- Expanding counselling and academic support services.
- Advancing collaborative Indigenous scholarly, research and creative (SRC) projects.

3. Making sure Indigenous students thrive when they leave

- Expanding professional development supports with Indigenous organizations.
- Nurturing ongoing and reciprocal relationships with Indigenous alumni.
- Assisting Indigenous students' transition to further graduate education.

Recommendations

It is our hope that members of the Ryerson graduate studies community think about Indigenization using the braided sweetgrass model and by engaging with members of the Indigenous community to guide their efforts.

After consultation with the graduate program directors, associate deans with graduate responsibilities, the Indigenous Graduate Student Leadership Circle and the wider Indigenous community, the following recommendations have been identified:

- Develop an Indigenizing graduate education action plan to address the complete list of recommendations.
- Enhance recruitment efforts and increase enrolment of Indigenous students across all programs.
- Create signage for the YSGS reception area that includes education about the land/territory that we are situated on.
- Provide training for staff and faculty connected to graduate studies on Indigenous issues and supporting Indigenous students.
- Increase the number of Indigenous faculty who have YSGS membership.
- Identify opportunities to make current Indigenous faculty's course offerings more accessible to students across programs.
- Work with University Advancement to identify possible funding sources for Indigenous graduate student awards and scholarships.
- Develop a network of Indigenous graduate alumni to provide guidance and advice to current students, and inform Indigenization at YSGS.
- Build partnerships with Indigenous organizations and communities for course offerings, research collaborations and work placements.
- Create a student employment position that acts as a contact for current and prospective Indigenous graduate students and supports the coordination of Indigenous student engagement.
- Establish an open and transparent method of ongoing dialogue, consultation and representation between the vice-provost and dean of YSGS, the Office of the Vice-Provost and Dean, Graduate Studies and Indigenous faculty, staff, undergraduate students and graduate students regarding matters of policy, process, initiatives and strategies.



