



SFU

**FACULTY OF ARTS
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

*The Faculty of Arts and
Social Sciences respectfully
acknowledges the Coast
Salish peoples of the
k'wík'wəłəm (Kwkwetlem),
x'məθkwəyəm (Musqueam),
Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish),
and Səlílwətał (TsleilWaututh)
Nations on whose traditional
territories Simon Fraser
University is settled.*

A JOURNEY

INTERIM FASS RECONCILI-ACTION PLAN

Fundamental Values

Advancing Reconciliation
Equity, Diversity, Inclusion
Communication, Coordination, Collaboration

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Simon Fraser University
July 2021



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PREAMBLE

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) acknowledges its commitment to advancing responsiveness to reconciliation, and the needs of Indigenous students and communities. Through transformative planning and implementation of decolonization, Indigenization and reconciliation efforts, this document provides direction and strategies for a pathway forward.

Acknowledging the need is one thing — knowing that it is essential to respect and incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing and being into our programs, services and academic delivery. It is another thing to move past intention and center it in design, and then implement meaningfully. Thus, the intent of this document is to provide a clear path along the journey towards decolonizing and Indigenizing the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at SFU.

As educators and administrators, FASS must centre Indigenous knowledge in reconciliation efforts to offer ethical, trans-systemic educational programming and delivery. This requires us to stand beside and walk with each other with an open heart and open mind.

FASS has the largest participation of Indigenous students enrolled in programs SFU-wide, along with experience gained from delivering three strong Indigenous focused programs — the Indigenous Language Program, Indigenous Studies, and the Indigenous University Preparation Program. The Faculty has the responsibility and the honour of leveraging this knowledge in order to grow and evolve our understanding and implementation of Indigenous teachings into our academic endeavours.

In alignment with the FASS Five-Year Academic Plan (2018-2023), this plan also acknowledges:

“Advancing reconciliation means improving the success rates of Indigenous students and increasing research opportunities for Indigenous scholars. It also means mobilizing Indigenous ways of knowing, and FASS must go further in our commitment and find new models of academic governance, develop new programs, and allocate the resources to do so. The tools of promoting equity, diversity and inclusion, as well as valuing communication, coordination and collaboration can serve in recognizing and mobilizing Indigenous ways of knowing.”



WORDS FROM OUR DEAN

Jane Pulkingham

As I complete my term as Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, I am pleased to transmit this Reconcili-action Plan.

My hope is that this Reconcili-action Plan will serve as a guide and springboard to further build upon and expand the goals identified in this interim plan, assess the progress of the Faculty against these goals, and use that information as the basis for the development of a formal strategic plan for FASS to continue to move forward on our journey to reconciliation.



INDIGENOUS TEACHING GUIDING THIS WORK

Drumming and Singing

As a symbol of FASS's commitment to uplifting reconciliation work with an Indigenous lens, this plan is inspired by the teachings that come from drumming and singing, which is and has been a vehicle of education for Indigenous people since time immemorial.

The drum symbolizes the unification and coming together of many voices, and brings us together in a multi-generational way. In this way, the drum reflects the coming together of Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators, staff, students, community members, knowledge holders, and partners for this work. The drum beat synchronizes our hearts and minds so we can work and act as one.

A song uplifts, signifies important work, and shares valuable teachings and lessons. In this way, a song will be used to describe the key strategic objectives of this plan which are: students, faculty & staff, education & research, relationships, and commitment.

INVITATION

We invite you to reflect upon the teachings of drumming and singing shared here. Now, reflect upon your strengths, weakness, wisdom, knowledge, skills, abilities and experience.

Consider how you see yourself in relation to the reconciliation work laid out in this plan. Are you an observer, participator, contributor, collaborator, ally, a resistor?

1. A SONG FOR OUR STUDENTS

GOAL 1.1

Support the whole journey of the Indigenous student experience from recruitment, transition, retention, completion and employability. These recommendations are vital in building and a sense of community. Without this commitment FASS and SFU will struggle with student retention and completion.

Reconcili-ACTION:

- a) Create an Indigenous Student needs assessment to inform the development of future student-focused programs and services.
- b) Develop an “Indigenous Youth Leadership Camp” centered on Indigenous holism (mental, emotional, physical, spiritual) and focused on strategies to prepare students for a successful post-secondary journey.
- c) Create an “Indigenous Student Peer Mentorship Program” for 1st year students, to create a sense of community, offset the disconnection Indigenous students experience being away from their communities, and provide socio-emotional and academic support.
- d) Promote engagement in curricular and co-curricular life in FASS, creating space for multi-generational learning, exploring, and connecting by hosting community events (in addition to convocation), such as a “FASS Celebrates National Indigenous Day” on June 21st.
- e) Further develop and deliver an “Indigenous Student Career Fair” to promote employment perspectives for Indigenous students in various sectors.
- f) Continue to deliver and support the Indigenous University Preparation Program as it evolves from a temporary to a permanent offering.

GOAL 1.2

Build student intercultural understanding and learning (formal and informal ways) on Indigenous peoples, cultures, presence, histories, and the role of reconciliation.

Reconcili-ACTION:

- a) Create programming and initiatives (such as webinars, round tables, etc) that support student participation in community-engaged learning and sharing with faculty, staff, Indigenous community partners, and knowledge holders.
- b) Develop a formal cultural education avenue for Indigenous learning for students, such as a microcredit course, to encourage and acknowledge broad FASS student participation in reconciliation. This course will also support students with future employment opportunities as organizations are increasingly looking for candidates with understanding of Indigenous perspectives.
- c) Create a program that celebrates and rewards leadership among students for reconciliation participation in projects, initiatives, academic achievement, and research.

GOAL 1.3

Enhance a sense of belonging and enhanced student involvement through an increased Indigenous presence in all positions in FASS (ie: student support services, as well as staff positions such as department managers, advisors, and directors).

Reconcili-ACTION:

- a) Consider hiring Indigenous specialists for summer and/or permanent positions who face forward with Indigenous Students.
- b) Increase opportunities for Indigenous students to obtain research and teaching assistant positions to support various reconciliation, decolonizing, and Indigenous initiatives. This increases student belonging, presence, and opportunities for mentorship.
- c) Increase visual presence in FASS student spaces, classrooms, and offices by installing Indigenous signage, place names, teachings related to student success and education, and translations.



2. A SONG FOR OUR FACULTY AND STAFF

GOAL 2.1

Prepare faculty and staff to advance the work of reconciliation by developing collaborative circles for learning in decolonizing and Indigenizing curricula, instruction, programs, services, partnerships and engagement.

Reconcili-ACTION:

- a) Continue to evolve and leverage the FASS Reconciliation Working Group has in the identification and development of decolonizing and Indigenizing programs, projects, and initiatives.
- b) Further develop and deliver the “Learning from our Hosts” cultural awareness training, and ensure that it is co-developed with Indigenous community partners, knowledge holders, and educational experts.
- c) Create a knowledge sharing and learning program that incorporates Indigenous orality titled “Offerings: Indigenous Knowledge and Wisdom in Post-Secondary Education.”
 - i. Video Series
 - ii. Webinars: Offer scheduled webinars by experienced FASS Faculty and staff, community partners, Indigenous education experts, and students who will share their experience with learning, developing, and delivering knowledge in ways that contribute to Reconciliation goals and objectives.
 - iii. On-line learning modules: Develop online learning modules on topics related to Indigenous peoples and cultures that can be embedded in curricular and co-curricular experiences.
- e) Develop a “FASS Reconcili-ACTION Resource” webpage providing enhanced access to a-c above, and other resources related to reconciliation knowledge, skills and abilities of faculty, staff, and students.
- f) Support FASS departments to incorporate reconciliation activities into their programming in support of the goals set out in this FASS Reconcili-ACTION Plan.

GOAL 2.2

Enhance recruitment, retention, and recognition of Indigenous faculty and staff achievement.

Reconcili-ACTION:

- a) Increase the capacity and continuity for reconciliation work by dedicating funding for a permanent Director, Indigenous Relations position.
- b) Further understand how FASS can attract, hire and retain Indigenous educational experts by researching and reviewing recruitment, equity, and hiring practices in accordance with SFU employment standards and policies, and industry examples.
- c) Continue the commitment to making Indigenous faculty appointments, as outlined in the FASS Five-Year Academic Plan (pages 13 and 15) by supporting and encouraging department efforts to review and revise faculty appointment, salary review, and promotion criteria to determine how faculty who demonstrate leadership in reconciliation work can be formally valued and acknowledged.
- d) Celebrate and reward Indigenous and Non-Indigenous staff and faculty members involved in reconciliation service, research, and scholarship by developing a program titled “Paving the way” or “Champions of Reconcili-ACTION”. This will ‘stand up’, uplift and honour their contribution and leadership.



3. A SONG FOR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

GOAL 3.1

Bring Indigenous community voices of knowledge holders, elders, and Indigenous educational experts into teaching practices to support Indigenization of curriculum and to build deeper relationships of trust and collaboration.

Reconcili-ACTION:

- a) Develop a “FASS Resident Knowledge Holder” program comprised of Indigenous knowledge holders and elders with lived, professional, and educational experience in Indigenous education, including FASS alumni and Indigenous educational experts. Encourage faculty and staff to engage with and learn from resident knowledge holders for programs, events, other.

GOAL 3.2

Integrate Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies into teaching and learning, in both new and existing curricula.

Reconcili-ACTION:

- a) Create a position to work alongside the Director of Indigenous Relations, focused on responding to demonstrated need for Indigenous curriculum development and supporting academic programming in reconciliation (for example, an Indigenous Pedagogies Teaching Fellow or course release for a faculty member).
- b) Dedicate funds from the FASS Reconciliation Curriculum Grant for the 2021-2022 academic year to support and acknowledge elders, knowledge keepers, and Indigenous educational experts who are invited into classrooms. Work towards locating funding to make this initiative permanent.
- c) Revisit the FASS Five-Year Academic Plan recommendation to create an interdisciplinary course that addresses reconciliation that could be used as a model and mentorship opportunity for all departments within FASS.

GOAL 3.3

Support the identification of research topics that are deemed relevant and important to Indigenous Communities, in a way that informs FASS’s understanding of local community needs.

Reconcili-ACTION:

- a) Create a pilot program with one Indigenous community partner, that works to identify key research area of community interest and need, laying the groundwork for scholarly and community-based work. Consider an established Indigenous community partnership in FASS, such as the INLP.

GOAL 3.4

Provide access to resources that support research in the areas of Indigenization, decolonizing, and reconciliation.

Reconcili-ACTION:

- a) Develop awards, scholarships and grants that support researchers’ (faculty and students) responses to Indigenous community and broad societal needs, setting them on a course to continue important work that evolves decolonization, Indigenization and reconciliation effectiveness.



4. A SONG FOR RELATIONSHIPS

GOAL 4.1

Improve participatory planning with Indigenous communities.

Reconcili-ACTION

- a) Develop and host a regular (three times/year) “Indigenous Learning and Sharing Circle” comprised of FASS Resident knowledge holders as well as local and urban Indigenous education experts who are compensated for their participation, and facilitated by the Director, Indigenous Relations and Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programming, Teaching and Learning, and Student Experience. This circle will create space for building ‘right relationships’, and will ensure that FASS work is community informed, academically resilient, and grounded from an Indigenous perspective. Resident knowledge holders will receive an honorarium – a thank you – for their participation.

GOAL 4.2

Enhance MOU and Partnership Agreements

Reconcili-ACTION

- a) FASS will continue to evolve stewardship agreements with community partners in Indigenous Language Programming in a consultative, culturally responsive, and effective manner through enhancing bilateral service contracts.

GOAL 4.3

Acknowledge Indigenous Knowledge holders’ contribution to FASS programming in the areas of reconciliation, Indigenization and decolonization.

Reconcili-ACTION

- a) Develop Knowledge Keeper Award — a FASS Dean’s Award — for Indigenous language holders who co-teach alongside FASS’s Indigenous Language Program faculty, acknowledging this program delivery would not be possible without them.
- b) Develop a “Gifting and Honorarium Program” reflective of the expertise held by elders, knowledge holders, FASS Resident Knowledge Holders, and Indigenous educational experts. This will reduce barriers to access and create broader understanding of process for appropriate gifting and honorarium protocols amongst faculty and staff (For example, JIBC and TRU recommend \$500 a day, \$250 for half day). Create FASS merchandise with the FASS Reconcili-ACTION logo eg; Drums).

5. A SONG FOR COMMITMENT

GOAL 5.1

Develop strong symbols and accountabilities of our commitment to reconciliation that will speak loud and clear to the broad Indigenous community. Acknowledging and respecting Indigenous approaches to announcing and symbolizing meaningful work.

Reconcili-ACTION

- a) Continue to develop and implement the final version of the FASS Reconcili-ACTION plan.
- b) Develop a logo that represents FASS’s commitment to doing reconciliation work in a good way, and that can be used in promotional material, gifting/ giveaway program items, etc..
- c) Develop a song that represents FASS’s commitment to reconciliation.
- d) Understand that this document is a living plan. FASS is committed to being truly responsive and reflective of the lived reality of current reconciliation needs; thus, this document will be a living and breathing plan, with a yearly review and an opportunity for amendments conducted by the FASS Reconciliation Working Group.

GOAL 5.2

Develop a community wide campaign and ceremony to celebrate and demonstrate our commitment to reconciliation.

Reconcili-ACTION

- a) Create a “FASS Celebrates Reconciliation” event to officially launch this plan, new logo, and the FASS reconciliation song.





HOLDING OUR HANDS UP

We would like to hold our hands up, in respect and gratitude, to all of those who participated in bringing this document together.