



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between:

Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA)

And:

Selkirk College (College)


Selkirk College recognizes and affirms its responsibility and obligation to support Indigenous education. Selkirk College identifies Indigenous education as a priority and understands that Indigenous education strengthens the college's contribution to improving the lives of Syilx learners, families and communities. As such, the College respects and recognizes that since time immemorial, the Syilx Peoples have made this territory their home with a way of being and knowing that informs contemporary perspectives and guides self-determination.

Whereas Selkirk College understands the importance of building a long term relationship with the Syilx People;

1. That the Syilx Okanagan Nation Chiefs Executive Council is the Syilx First Nation governance entity in all Syilx matters affecting their land, Resources and Peoples including education matters affecting Syilx Okanagan Nation interests and rights;
2. That through open and regular channels of communication the ONA and the College will work collaboratively on all matters affecting indigenous education and quality of education both in delivery and program development;
3. That the ONA, Okanagan Nation Education Committee (ONEC) and the Okanagan Indian Educational Resources Society (OIERS, also known as En'owkin Centre) work collaboratively with Selkirk College on Selkirk College's programs and curricula designed specifically to teach Syilx Okanagan Nation history, culture, language, philosophy and knowledge;
4. That Indigenous programs and curricula be cooperatively developed in the spirit of collaboration, through joint committees with equal representation of Selkirk College, ONEC/OIERS representatives, followed by the standard Selkirk College approval process;
5. That Selkirk College will develop and deliver programming based on principles described in the attached appendix;
6. That ONA representatives work with Selkirk College on seeking, developing, and delivering distant and community-based learning opportunities; and
7. The MOU will be reviewed every five years by both parties to ensure it continues to meet the needs of both parties.

Dated this: 27th day of July, 2021


Okanagan Nation Alliance
Chiefs Executive Council


Selkirk College
Board of Governors


Okanagan Nation Alliance
Executive Director


Selkirk College
President/CEO

Appendix: Selkirk College commitments to working with Syilx Okanagan Nation communities through the following principals

Selkirk College respectfully acknowledges:

- Recognition to the indigenous peoples within whose traditional territory the college resides and operates;
- The importance of post secondary education and training for Syilx peoples, their families, and communities and the need for improved levels of participation and success for indigenous learners in post-secondary education and training in British Columbia and beyond;
- The need to foster a long term, respectful relationship which recognizes the history, culture, values, traditions, education and learning needs of all Syilx peoples;
- The unique history and cultures of the Syilx peoples of the Okanagan, West Kootenay and Boundary regions must be respected, honoured, and celebrated;
- The autonomy of indigenous peoples to exercise their respective title, rights, and jurisdictions, and to independently represent their interests and aspirations;
- That Syilx peoples have a history of respecting and recognizing each others' interests, as well as working in partnership and cooperation, as neighbours and relations, in support of each others' interests and aspirations;
- The independence of the respective post secondary educational institutions, traditional knowledge, programs and curricula of indigenous peoples;
- The critical importance for post-secondary education to align its programs and services with the spirit, intent, and recommendations of the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation report, the principles of the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Declaration Act (DRIPA) in BC; and
- That improved, formal dialogue and partnerships are fundamental to:
 - The Achievement of indigenous student success
 - Defining the needs of Syilx learners;

- Enhancing and Improving access to and coordination of learning opportunities and services to indigenous learners;
- Improving quality of learning experiences and services; and
- Addressing the gaps in capacity to deliver those learning experiences and services.

Selkirk College thus commits to working collectively, and in the spirit of respect, trust, and mutual benefit, to increase engagement with, access to, and participation of Syilx learners of the West Kootenay and Boundary regions in post -secondary education through:

- Meaningful inclusion with Syilx learners and communities in developing programs and services with a view to improving access and success,
- Providing a formal and regular communication and consultation process through the Indigenous Services Advisory Committee in regards to Indigenous education, student wellness, and Syilx approaches to learning and knowing;

Collaboration on the implementation of the *Our Journey Together* Indigenization plan at Selkirk College¹

- Improved response to and inclusion of Syilx learners and their communities in the development and delivery of programs and services,
- Commitment to develop a process for defining the parameters for use of traditional and cultural knowledge when same is included in Selkirk College activities when appropriate,
- Commitment to implement those elements of BC's Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act² to increase the opportunities for Syilx students to participate in post-secondary education;
- Collaboration on potential joint funding opportunities and project proposals that may enhance program and service delivery partnerships for community-based programming, co-development and co-delivery of curricula, or applied research opportunities and the,
- Commitment to develop a process to evaluate the effectiveness of this document and to act upon recommendations put forward by that evaluation.

¹ [Indigenization Plan | Selkirk College](#)

² [A New Path Forward \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)