



Indigenous Students' Union

November 2022

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Introduction

tân'si, tawnshi, tunngasugit

This document sets forth the goals and principles that will guide the Executive Committee of the Indigenous Students' Union (ISU). The (ISU) operates as both a Student Representative Association under the Students' Union and under the umbrella of the Dean of Students.

Mission Statement

The ISU seeks to create a safe and inclusive space for self-identified Indigenous students to re-affirm and foster balance in spiritual, mental, physical, and emotional health through promoting cultural, political, academic, athletic, and interpersonal interests.

President's Message

tân'si!

In my short time as President, I have learned so much about what it means to be a leader and how I, and the rest of the executive team, can help make the UofA a better place for Indigenous students on campus. I have had the opportunity to consult with students and see what their priorities are. I hope to continue the work of our previous president, Vaughn Beaulieu-Mercredi and strengthen the Indigenous community at the U of A.

My intent, as with the rest of the Executive committee, is that this document provides a roadmap for what we plan to accomplish for the 2022-23 year.

It is an honour and privilege to serve as your President, and I look forward to working with you all in the future to strengthen and improve the environment at the UofA so that Indigenous Students can have the best university experience they can have.

Feel free to email me at malijha@ualberta.ca if you have any questions!

hîy hîy,

Malijha Moyan, President

Committee Positions

Here is where your Indigenous Students' Union Executives are spending their free time advocating for you!

- Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Committee (ARRC);
 - Malijha Moyan
 - Chantel Akinneah (Chair)
- Council on Student Affairs (COSA);
 - VACANT
- Council of Faculty Associations (COFA);
 - Tamara Belly
 - Malijha Moyan
- COFA Finance and Administration Working Group;
 - Shauna Stace
- Committee on Documentation of Identity (CDI);
 - Shannon Cornelsen
- National Indigenous Advisory Committee (NIAC);
 - Shannon Cornelsen
 - Chantel Akinneah
- Native Studies Faculty Committee (FNSC);
 - Shannon Cornelsen
 - Chantel Akinneah
 - Tamara Belly
- Sustainability Committee (SC);
 - Mackenzie Burnstick
- Sustainability and Capital Fund Committee (SCFC)
 - Mackenzie Burnstick
- Student Group Committee (SGC);
 - Mackenzie Burnstick

If you have any concerns to bring to your Executive members on their respective council/committee, please contact them at their email address' below:

President

Malijha Moyan

malijha@ualberta.ca

Vice-President Finance

Shauna Stace

sstace@ualberta.ca

Vice-President Consultation & Engagement	Shannon Cornelsen	cornelse@ualberta.ca
Vice-President Administration	Tamara Belly	tbelly@ualberta.ca
Vice-President Internal/External Relations	Mackenzie Burnstick	mdburnst@ualberta.ca
Vice-President Internal/External Relations	Chantel Akinneah	akinneah@ualberta.ca

Maskwa House

Long Term Advocacy Goal

In recognizing that the University of Alberta must do more to meet the needs of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, the University intended to build the Maskwa House of Learning on North Campus.

Centred in front of the Education building, Maskwa House was set to be a space set aside specifically for Indigenous students on campus and act as the hub for Indigeneity on campus. As it currently stands, First People’s House, the Faculty of Native Studies, and the Indigenous Students’ Union from each other in different buildings across campus; a tactic employed by colonial institutions alike to suppress and weaken the voices of Indigenous Peoples across Turtle Island.

One of the issues with the quality of education for Indigenous students is the quality of spaces. While the ISU has been advocating for Maskwa house for decades, The UofA has built Dent/Pharm and other buildings instead of making Maskwa house a priority. As our past President Vaughn had said in his speech at Indigenous Celebration Week in 2022, “We have to walk through a back room full of kegs to reach our bathroom in the basement of North Powerplant; our flooring is lifting due to excessive water damage; our ceilings are cracking and browning. Our lounge is akin to a reserve, shoved away. Not maintained and separated from our kinship networks. If you need concrete proof that the University of Alberta does not care about Indigenous student space,”

It is in the interest of the Indigenous student community that Maskwa House be built. This is why your Indigenous Students' Union at the University of Alberta will continue to advocate for the resumed building of Maskwa House. The Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Committee's (ARRC) recommendations to the Students' Union (SU) places committed advocacy onto the SU. It is the belief of the Indigenous Students' Union that the combined efforts of the ASC and the SU will be beneficial to the building of Maskwa House.

ISU will meet with the Students' Union, as well as the Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Committee, to come up with a plan for a unified approach to the University in order to get the building of Maskwa House back on track.

Rebranding of Aboriginal Student Council

Medium Term Operational Goal — ONGOING

The ISU has done a lot to rebrand so far, such as changing our name and logo. This is still in the process as we navigate through the obstacles of changing our name.

Growing Our Community on Campus

Long-Term Engagement Goal — ONGOING

The Indigenous community of the University of Alberta has always had a presence. In the past two years, our community has been online due to the COVID-19 pandemic; however, the ISU is committed to fostering and growing our post-secondary Indigenous community. Now that most restrictions are lifted, we hope to grow our community by hosting events, doing giveaways, and improving the ISU lounge.

The Indigenous Students Union will be hosting events in the near future. Sign up for our mailing list to receive our bi-weekly newsletters

Advocating for a Mandatory Native Studies Course for All Faculties

Long-Term Advocacy Goal — Not started

As per the Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Committee (ARRC) recommendation, “The SU shall increase advocacy for the implementation of mandatory Aboriginal course content”, The ISU plans to work with ARRC to advocate for this. This is a priority for the ISU because of the great importance that education on Indigenous history has for society. Many students at the UofA will one day have powerful positions in society and will have an impact on the way Indigenous Peoples are treated in Canada. In order to reduce and eliminate the biases society has towards Indigenous Peoples that cause racism, we must educate people on the issues that Indigenous Peoples face. Racism comes from ignorance and lack of awareness. The ISU will work hard to push the U of A to implement a mandatory Natives Studies course for all faculties.

Advocate to APC

Add Examples from ISP

Volunteer Program & Recruitment Committee

Medium Term Engagement Goal — ONGOING

Our VP Internal/Externals Chantel and Mackenzie are building a volunteer program that students can apply to.

The volunteer positions that we will have are:

- Director of Health and Wellness (Fall 2022)
- Director(s) of Cultural Events (Fall 2022)
- Director(s) of Social Events (Fall 2022)
- Director(s) of Outreach (Tentative)
- Director(s) of Professional Development (Tentative)
- Director of Operations (Tentative)
- Volunteer(s) on Call (Fall 2022)
- Director of Auditing and Finance (Fall 2022)
- Director of Funding (Tentative)
- Director of Recruitment (Tentative)

- Director of Academics (Tentative)
- Director of Philanthropy (Tentative)

The purpose of this program is to have more support and hands on our team and give students a range of commitment options that they can volunteer for (as opposed to executive positions). Ideally, each director position has one or two coordinators associated with it.

The recruitment process should ideally begin in July, and latest at the beginning of August. This would ensure that volunteers can begin working on their projects at the start of the Fall term and that students are able to participate and involve themselves in those activities and programs that the directors execute. In the Fall 2022 semester, this idea was proposed. However, the recruitment process has extended into the midterm season and is not ideal for the executives and the students.

The Internal portfolio, Administration, and President are responsible for selecting the best candidates for the volunteering positions.

Recruiting volunteers for the ISU was just launched this year, and there are a lot of adjustments that need to be made. As a solution, we would like to extend an invitation to those interested in joining the Recruitment Committee that the ISU is creating.

The goal of this committee:

- to finalize the roles and responsibilities of each volunteer position within the organization
- to complete the budget associated with each role throughout the school year
- aid the creation of information items and resources that are useful for each position,
- formalize the roles in our by-laws, governance manual, and legislation,
- and establish a proper timeline for volunteer recruitment

In the future, a Recruitment Committee may be necessary. Not only will this ease the recruitment process, but it will familiarize members of the committee with interview processes and what makes an “ideal candidate” when they enter the workforce. The Recruitment Committee should at least be comprised of:

- President
- VP Operations
- VP Internal/External(s)
- Director(s) of Cultural Events
- Director of Auditing and Finance
- Director of Recruitment

- Director of Academics

Therefore, those director positions within the Recruitment Committee should begin their term in May, alongside the Executives. These director positions should take priority as they are necessary for ISU functioning. If the Recruitment Committee does not come to fruition, these positions should still be prioritized over the other positions.

The Indigenous Student' Union (ISU) will provide more opportunities for students to volunteer and get involved on campus.

Revising Our Programs

Short-Term Operational Goal — NOT STARTED

The ISU is committed to ensuring that our programs are accessible and useful for Indigenous students. That is why we will revise our programs

We will:

Revise the Child Care Subsidy Program to ensure that students can receive the benefits from it that they so desire.

Revise the volunteer program as explained above

Revise the otôtêmiwêwin Program by making it more helpful to mentees

TRC Education Program: Incorporating Truth and Reconciliation Commission Recommendations

Short-Term Advocacy Goal — ONGOING

Finding ways to incorporate more acts of reconciliation into the general student body and educating about the TRC recommendations. I.E.) having volunteers who understand that they are helping with the reconciliation efforts and which calls to action they are addressing.

Also, posting on social media about what kind of actions a regular student can take to be part of the reconciliation process. I.E.) Learning more about Indigenous history by taking the FREE course offered by the Faculty of Native Studies. Also, highlighting a call to action every month via social media and newsletter so that students can feel empowered to continue their reconciliation efforts.

This program is currently under review by the VP Internal/External.

Gift Card Student Support Program

Short-Term Advocacy Goal — ONGOING

Providing gift cards for students in need of food, fuel or books. The actual gift cards will be purchased through SUBmart and available through First Peoples' House, to be distributed as they deem necessary. It is their discretion (First Peoples House) as to who is in need of these supports, as they are most familiar with the Indigenous students on campus. A detailed spreadsheet will be required, and the student will have to sign for the gift cards, as they will be treated as cash. All spreadsheet details will be given to the VP Finance for reconciliation of the bank statements. A cheque for the gift cards will be forwarded to the UASU financial officers in the amount of \$2500.00 per term for the 2022-2023 year.

This will allow our Indigenous students the ability to have those emergency resources available if they need to travel home quickly or if the students have run out of funding to buy groceries. This is only a short-term solution, but it is easier to access for students in dire financial need.

Renovating the Lounge

Medium-Term Operational Goal — ONGOING

The ISU Lounge is enjoyed by many students, which is why we are committed to making the space the best it can be. Lately, we have been organizing the space and buying utilities such as our new printer for students to use.

Our renovation goals for the year include:

- Paint the lounge
- Add Kitchen Space including a pantry
- Replacing the outdoor Banner
- Renewing the decor and furniture
- Adding more study space for students