



## **GFC Aboriginal Education Committee Annual Report 2014-15**

The Aboriginal Education Committee (AEC) held six meetings in the period from September 2014 to August 2015:

September 25, 2014  
November 7, 2014  
January 14, 2015  
March 24, 2015  
April 14, 2015  
June 4, 2015

There was quorum at all meetings.

In 2014-15, there were three significant institutional events pertaining to First Nations, Métis and Inuit initiatives, as defined in the Aboriginal Education Policy. The official opening of Iikaisskini, the interim Gathering Place in Paterson Centre, took place on December 4, 2014. The name Iikaisskini, which means Low Horn, was gifted to the University by Blackfoot elder, Wilton Goodstriker.

In the spring, the University hired Dr. Martha Many Grey Horses as inaugural Director of the FNMI Centre. She started her position on May 1, bringing to the number of staff in Iikaisskini to four.

On May 29, as part of the Spring Convocation celebration, the University hosted a First Nations, Métis and Inuit graduation reception and round dance. This event, intended to recognize FNMI graduates in a celebration inclusive of both the university and broader community was made possible through a generous donor contribution, and is hoped to be the first of an annual recognition event. The event also recognized 2014-15 as the fortieth year anniversary of the Native American Student Association.

As well, throughout the year, the five AEC Working Groups continued to meet, refine their processes, and present recommendations to the Aboriginal Education Committee. The working groups are: the Gathering Place Working Group; Cultural Advancement Working Group; FNMI Enrolment and Student Success Working Group; FNMI Research Issues Working Group; and Indigenization of Curriculum Working Group.

One recommendation that came forward and that is being implemented in 2015-16 was to host a series of lectures, student workshops, and community workshops in Iikaisskini. Another recommendation was to publish a series of articles on indigenization of the curriculum, and the first of these, focused on

the history and role of the Aboriginal Education Committee, was published in the Teaching Centre newsletter in May, 2015.

*Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* was released in May 2015. The Aboriginal Education Committee agreed that the University would develop a response to the TRC report, and in July the Director of Iikaiskini with support from the President's Office led members of the Aboriginal Education Committee, university faculty and staff, and community members in a workshop to identify the goals and scope of this initiative. A preliminary plan was developed for the upcoming year.

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