



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Committee: University of Winnipeg Indigenous Identity Working Group (UWIIWG)

Approval: VPP

Date: October 2023

The University of Winnipeg is located in Treaty 1 Territory, on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabeg, Nêhiyawak, Anishininiw, and Dakota peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis Nation. We acknowledge that our water is sourced from Shoal Lake 40 First Nation in Treaty 3 Territory.

BACKGROUND

Concerns about fraudulent claims to Indigenous identity have been arising across the country, including in Canadian universities, as was recently highlighted at the University of British Columbia and University of Saskatchewan. False claims to advantage an individual's professional, personal, and/or financial gain are serious and create harm for Indigenous people as well as the academy.

With support from the President's Office, the University of Winnipeg recognizes our role in moving Truth and Reconciliation forward, and is committed to Indigenous success, engagement and achievement.

Dialogue with respect to Indigenous citizenship is a complex and important conversation for our community to have, including taking care to minimize barriers, and ensure supports. The University of Winnipeg honours Indigenous sovereignty, including with regards to citizenship; therefore, engagement with Indigenous community (on and off UW campus) is of utmost importance.

A diverse working group with intersectional representation has been struck to begin this conversation, with the goal of recommending a process and policy in 2024. This working group will seek advice from Indigenous individuals, communities, and governments, among others.

The working group will be co-chaired by Indigenous faculty at UWinnipeg and guided by Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Holders. As one of the co-chairs, Dr. Chantal Fiola, Interim Associate Vice-President-Indigenous Engagement, will provide regular updates to the President regarding this work.

These Terms of Reference outline the scope, duties, and membership composition of the UWIIWG.



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The UWIIWG will:

1. Strike an Indigenous-led, community-engaged process.
2. Ensure diverse representation of Indigenous voices and perspectives.
3. Undertake this work in a way that respects Indigenous knowledges, is inclusive of relevant experiences, and aims for safer spaces to share experiences.
4. Review and consider relevant best practices across the academy.
5. Review existing UW processes and identify gaps.
6. Seek input from relevant Indigenous stakeholders internal and external to the university, including communities, governments, leaders, citizens, and UW students, staff, and faculty to inform this work.
7. Seek input from relevant internal university stakeholders (e.g., HR, Legal Counsel, UWSA, UWFA, Admissions, Awards, Student Services and Registrar, etc.).
8. Make recommendations and draft a policy with procedures and implementation plan to prevent and mitigate Indigenous identity fraud at the University of Winnipeg, and to ensure that opportunities meant for Indigenous students, staff, and faculty are retained by the aforementioned Indigenous individuals.
9. Maintain confidentiality when doing the work of the IIWG and discussing these matters and materials.

The UWIIWG will not:

1. Adjudicate the identity of specific individuals.
2. Reference individuals of our UWinnipeg community and discuss claims of their citizenship as part of their responsibilities.

Recommendations from the UWIIWG shall be brought forward for discussion and resolved ideally through consensus. If required, the Co-Chairs may table formal motions and all members, including the Co-Chairs, will hold equal voting rights.

The UWIIWG will provide their recommendations and draft policy to the President and Vice-Chancellor and Vice-Presidents executive team (VPP) who may consult with others as necessary, including with regards to implementation.



UWIIWG MEMBERS

Elders:

Barbara Bruce
Margaret Lavallee
Martha Peet

Co-Chairs:

Chantal Fiola
Paul DePasquale

Indigenous government:

Howard Burston
Nikki Komaksiutiksak
Will Goodon

Community:

Christine Cyr
Rainey Gaywish

UW faculty:

Cathy Mattes
Karen Froman
Laura Forsythe

UW staff:

Angeline Nelson
Stacey Belding
Tanis McLeod Kolisnyk

UW students:

Jonathan Henderson
Megan Lindell
Stacy S. Paniyuk