Promoting an Environment for Indigenous Student Success

Presented by Carla Loewen, Justin Rasmussen and Carl Stone

August 25, 2015
Workshop for Advisors
Acknowledgment

The University of Manitoba campuses are located on original lands of Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis Nation.
INTRODUCTIONS
Indigenous Achievement

• The Executive Lead advises and reports to the President while maintaining a reporting relationship to the Office of the Vice-President (Academic) and Provost.

• Mandate is to have university-wide responsibility for:
  • Leading the development of a strategic plan;
  • Overseeing the strategic directions of university related Indigenous activities;
  • Coordinating and facilitating the development of Indigenous initiatives and programs; and
  • Building bridges within and external to the university.
Pathways to Indigenous Achievement
Perceptions Activity

1): Gather into groups of four. I will assign each group a question.

2): Discuss your question together. Make notes.

Question A: What do you think the perceptions of staff are about Indigenous students at the University of Manitoba?

Question B: What do you think are the barriers and challenges that Indigenous students experience?

Question C: Does your advising differ from Indigenous students compared to other student populations, and if so how?
Carl Stone, B.A.

- Anishinaabe
- Brokenhead First Nation
- Student Advisor with Cultural focus, Aboriginal Student Centre since 1999
- B.A in Psychology
- Father of 2, proud Grandfather of 3
- Toastmaster Facilitator
- Guest Lecturer
About the presenters....

Carla Loewen

- B.Ed, 2001; B.A., 2003; M.Ed. Candidate
- Cree from Pukatagawan, MB.
- Academic/Student advisor since 2005
- Specializes in Adult & Post-Secondary Education
- Work focus on Indigenous student engagement and creating a positive student community
- Big Sister for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Wpg for over 8 years
About the presenters...

Justin Rasmussen

- Métis
- Raised in Ile Des Chenes, MB
- Trained as a Behavioural Ecologist/Ornithologist
- Indigenous Graduate Student Success
- Faculty of Graduate Studies
- Indigenous Student Centre
- Ph.D. (Canterbury, NZ)
- Carpenter
Outline of Presentation

1. Perceptions
2. Terminology
3. The importance of identity
4. A brief history of Indigenous education
5. Video: It's Not an Opinion, It's a Fact
6. Demographic profile of Indigenous students at UM
7. How challenges affect Indigenous students in PSE
8. What is UM currently doing?
9. Activity
10. What can you do?
11. Questions?
Terminology

Evolution: Indian → Native → Aboriginal → Indigenous

Aboriginal People: First Nations, Inuit, Métis

Predominantly in Manitoba: Anishinaabe (Ojibway), Cree, Dakota, Dene, Oji-Cree, Inuit, Métis

Bartlett, Madriaga-Vignudo, O’Neil, & Kuhnlein, 2007
The Importance of Identity

Indigenous Graduates from the University of Manitoba - May 2014

A brief history on Indigenous education

Background:

History of Aboriginal Education - assimilation, residential schools, low educational attainment

“From mandatory religious training, to rules which forbade the use of Indigenous languages and cultures, residential schools and their oppressive form of education had devastating effects upon the Aboriginal peoples.” (Preston, 2010, p. 57)
Sir John A. MacDonald (first Prime Minister of Canada), May 9th, 1883:

“When the school is on the reserve, the child lives with its parents, who are savages; he is surrounded by savages and though he may learn to read and write, his habits, and training and mode of thought are Indian. He is simply a savage who can read and write. It has been strongly pressed upon myself, as head of the Department, that Indian children should be withdrawn as much as possible from the parental influence, and the only way to do that would be to put them in central training industrial schools where they will acquire the habits and modes of thought of white men… That is the system which is largely adopted in the United States…. That is the scheme which I will lay before the House rather later this week.” (House of Commons Debates 1883)
Indian Affairs wanted this....

Duncan Campbell Scott:

“I want to get rid of the Indian problem. I do not think as a matter of fact, that the country ought to continuously protect a class of people who are able to stand alone... Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question, and no Indian Department...”

Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, 1920
Leaders strove for this….

- Pride.
- Identity.
- Culture.
- Success.
- Spirit.
- Strength.
- Happiness.
It's Not an Opinion, It's a Fact: Aboriginal Education in Canada

https://youtu.be/tswVV2YkJKA

Published on May 29, 2012 by the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, which is British Columbia’s Aboriginal public post-secondary institute in Merritt, British Columbia.
### Demographic Profile of Canadian Aboriginal Students

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<tr>
<td>Undergraduate students</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>924</td>
<td>1080</td>
<td>1563</td>
<td>1503</td>
<td>1464</td>
<td>1513</td>
<td>1638</td>
<td>1748</td>
<td>1771</td>
<td>1876</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>1973</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate students</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>158</td>
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<td>Post-Grad students</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>929</td>
<td>1102</td>
<td>1605</td>
<td>1596</td>
<td>1578</td>
<td>1648</td>
<td>1766</td>
<td>1883</td>
<td>1912</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>2087</td>
<td>2,140</td>
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<tr>
<td>New</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>572</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of U1 class</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>9.6</td>
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#### 2014 Data

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<tr>
<td>Total number of Aboriginal students</td>
<td>2,168</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall percentage</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
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Source: University of Manitoba Office of Institutional Analysis
Attrition at the end of Second Year
Full-Time Only

Source: University of Manitoba Office of Institutional Analysis
Understanding the life of Indigenous post-secondary students

The most common challenges for Indigenous students are:

Historical

Educational

Cultural

Financial

Social

“Aboriginal peoples have historically faced - and continue to face - significant barriers to accessing and succeeding in elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education.”
(Usher, 2009, p. 7)
What is being done at the University of Manitoba to support Indigenous students?

- Indigenous Faculty and Staff

- 120 Indigenous studies courses, including 66 courses offered through the Department of Native Studies

- Office of Indigenous Achievement
  - Indigenous Advisory Circle
  - Allies group

- Indigenous Student Centre
Migizii Agamik (Bald Eagle Lodge)
University of Manitoba
Indigenous Student Centre

**Academic** - application assistance, course selection, referrals, appeal assistance, etc.

**Cultural** - smudging, Elders, cultural learning, Indigenous Awareness Week, Annual Graduation Pow Wow

**Personal** - support, advocacy, referrals, someone to talk to

**Physical** - funding and applications, student aid & bursaries, job postings, social activities
Indigenous-focused Programs

• Aboriginal Business Education Partners
• Aboriginal Nursing Cohort Initiative
• Academic Support Program, Faculty of Law
• Access and Aboriginal Focus Programs
• Bachelor of Social Work in Thompson, MB
• Centre for Aboriginal Health Education, Bannatyne Campus
• Engineering Access Program
• Indigenous Planning Exchange, Faculty of Architecture
• Inner City Social Work Program, William Norrie Centre

Leadership & Mentorship Opportunities

• Indigenous Circle of Empowerment (ICE)
• Promoting Aboriginal Community Together (PACT)
• University of Manitoba Aboriginal Students Association (UMASA)
• Métis University Students’ Association (MUSA)
## Indigenous Student Enrolment Goals

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<th>2014</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2023</th>
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<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
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Break Time!
Name Activity

HELLO
my name is
What can you do?
Takeaway #1

The Student/Advisor relationship: The foundation for facilitating success of Indigenous students.

Shore and Storm (2006)
Takeway #2

Consider ceremony, Elder letter of supports, and travel as reasons for academic appeals (deferrals, AWs, etc.).
Takeaway #3

“Pigeon holing” course selection
Takeaway #4

Let students know about the services available to them at the University of Manitoba.
Takeaway #5

Talk to Indigenous students
Takeaway #6

Do not put Indigenous students ‘on the spot’ or pressure them into the role of cultural educator.

Clark et al. (2014)
Takeaway #7

Address inappropriate comments when they happen.

Must-See Recommendation:
http://www.whatilearnedinclasstoday.com/
Takeaway #8

Welcome Indigenous students in your admission letters
Takeaway #9

Form a partnership with the Indigenous Student Centre
Takeaway #10

Include the Traditional Territories Acknowledgement statement in official faculty functions and large meetings.
Conclusion

Learn

Raise Awareness

Join us
QUESTIONS?

We will be here after the presentation for further discussion if interested.
Full Moon Ceremony

Thursday, August 27th
7 pm in Migizii Agamik
Women’s Ceremony

All women are welcome.
Indigenous Celebration Station Day

Wednesday, September 16 from 11:00-3:00

Games and Activities!

At each station get a utensil to be used for a free lunch!

Student Membership Drive!
EXPLORER INNOVATOR PIONEER ADVENTURER VISIONARY TRAILBLAZER

26TH ANNUAL TRADITIONAL GRADUATION POW WOW

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2015

JOIN US FOR THIS SPECIAL CELEBRATION

University of Manitoba
WHAT ARE YOU DOING NEXT SUMMER?

SCIENCE RESEARCH TALKS AT MIGIZII AGAMIK

GET INVOLVED MONDAYS @ 12:30PM

CIRCLE ROOM MIGIZII AGAMIK

Faculty of Science | Faculty of Graduate Studies | Indigenous Student Centre | Indigenous Achievement
References


[http://umanitoba.ca/admin/president/media/PRE-00-018-StrategicPlan-WebPdf_FNL.pdf]
[http://www.whatilearnedinclasstoday.com/]


If Time: HUMOUR!!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=545t5SvcyDo

Charlie Hill, comedian, 1977, Richard Pryor Show