We acknowledge the traditional territories of the Coast Salish peoples, on whose lands the SFU campuses reside.
Important reconciliation and decolonization work is being done at Simon Fraser University (SFU) by various individuals and departments as the university continues the process to implement the Aboriginal Reconciliation Council’s (ARC) Walk This Path With Us report and the 34 calls to action. This bi-annual report summarizes the progress on the report’s calls to action from April 1 – September 30, 2020.

**Cluster 1**

**Safe and Welcoming Indigenous Spaces**

A Vision Workshop with SFU Indigenous Faculty, Students, and Staff.

First Peoples’ Gathering House meeting with representatives of Sḵwx̱ wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), x̱məm̓ ḥəm̓ wəm̓ (Musqueam), səl̓ ilw̓ ətaʔɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) and kʷikʷəƛ̓ əm̓ (Kwikwetlem) Nations.

Tsleil-Waututh First Nation Chief Leah George Wilson, SFU President Joy Johnson and guests at the First Peoples’ Gathering House Ground Awakening Ceremony.

From left, former SFU President Andrew Petter, Minister of State for Childcare Katrina Chen, former B.C. Minister of Advanced Education Melanie Mark, SFU Board Chair Christopher Lewis, Director of the Office for Aboriginal People Protém Ron Johnston, and SFU Professor Eldon Yellowhorn at the announcement of the First Peoples’ Gathering House at SFU’s Burnaby campus.
FIRST PEOPLES’ GATHERING HOUSE

The need for a First Peoples’ Gathering House has long been recognized and was affirmed in the ARC Report. The ARC recommendation has been that this ceremonial space should serve as a cultural hub for the use and education of SFU community members, including faculty, students and staff and visitors. This First Peoples’ Gathering House is a multi-stakeholder project that includes the involvement of the Indigenous community, government and SFU.

The engagement process consisted of 12 working sessions. Site workshops including site tours and surveys were conducted to discuss the potential of three possible sites and gain feedback on which site is preferred. The engagement process has included more than five site and vision workshops, multiple open houses with the broader SFU community as well as discussions and meetings with Indigenous students, faculty and staff and with SFU’s First Nations community partners. Additional feedback opportunities were also available through online surveys and hard copies which were shared at the sessions mentioned.

The Orange Shirt Day and First Peoples’ Gathering House Ground Awakening ceremony took place September 30th, 2020. Planning for the 12,000-sq. ft. First Peoples’ Gathering House at the Strand Hall Annex site is underway, with approved total funding of up to $15 million. The Request for Proposals (RFP) process was completed in summer 2020 and Urban Arts Architecture was awarded the contract.

For more information and regular updates: https://www.sfu.ca/aboriginalpeoples/first-peoples--gathering-house.html

Contact: Dr. Eldon Yellowhorn, eldon_yellowhorn@sfu.ca and Ron Johnston, ronald_johnston@sfu.ca

INDIGENOUS OUTDOOR CLASSROOM AND TRC MEMORIAL GARDEN

The Indigenous outdoor classroom and TRC memorial garden will be a welcoming learning space that is open to all students, faculty and staff at SFU as well as local Indigenous communities. Incorporating Indigenous place-based, pedagogical understandings of teaching and learning, the outdoor classroom and garden will support the development of inclusive creative ecologies for learning and facilitate transformative reconciliation and Indigenous resurgence.

Over the summer and fall there has been a Ground Awakening ceremony, formation of a sub-committee and finalizing the design and selection of key materials from the mountain, including boulders and wood logs.

Contact: Jennie Blankinship at jennie_blankinship@sfu.ca and Kristin Matheson at educproj@sfu.ca

INDIGENOUS STUDENT CENTRE (ISC) EXPANSION

The expansion of the Indigenous Student Centre (ISC) on SFU’s Burnaby campus remains an Aboriginal Strategic Initiative (ASI) priority. At this time, the ISC project is with the City of Burnaby Building Department and awaiting the permit to be issued. When issued, the work will go to tender and the construction process will begin.

Contact: Tracey Mason-Innes, tmasoninn@sfu.ca

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Contact: Tracey Mason-Innes, tmasoninn@sfu.ca

SEE ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

SFU’s Artist-in-Residence—Laiwan, a Vancouver interdisciplinary artist and SFU alumnus, and Roxanne Charles, a student and member of the Semiahmoo First Nation—are creating a new process based and site-specific work of art to be housed amidst the busy engineering labs, lecture theatres and classrooms of the university’s new building at the Surrey campus.

Due to COVID-19 and protocols related to working within Indigenous communities, this project has been delayed during this time period.

Contact: Elizabeth Starr, elizabeth_starr@sfu.ca

HONOURING FEAST

For nearly two decades the Indigenous Student Centre (ISC) has hosted an Honouring Feast to recognize and celebrate the Indigenous culture of the Pacific Northwest Coast of Canada.

This year, the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a shift to the virtual world, with more than 250 Indigenous graduands, their family, friends and special guests attending an online Honouring Feast, held in conjunction with National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21st.
“The event has always been identified as a special ceremony to honour and celebrate Indigenous students on the completion of their education at SFU,” said Marcia Guno, ISC director.

For the past three years the feast has been catered by Salishan Catering, located on the Musqueam First Nations Reserve, and despite being virtual, this year was no exception.

Company owner Denise Sparrow and her team from the Musqueam First Nation delivered boxed lunches that included alder-grilled salmon with blackberry sauce, salad and crowd-favourite bannock (deep fried bread), in eco-friendly boxes to 122 students and their families in the Lower Mainland. Students residing outside the Lower Mainland received a gift basket from St. Jeans Cannery in Comox.

The Honouring Ceremony celebrated 143 Indigenous graduands, including 91 undergraduate students, 53 graduate students—including 18 MBAs—and 30 First Nations Language Program graduates (16 diplomas in First Nations Language Proficiency and 14 certificates in First Nations Language Proficiency).

CLUSTER 2

INNOVATION AND INDIGENIZATION IN CURRICULUM AND RESEARCH

LANGUAGE KEEPERS PROJECT

The Growing Community-based Indigenous Language Project (GCILP) is a multi-faceted strategy to stabilize and extend ongoing First Nation’s language revitalization outreach and community-based language instruction on campus; reinforce SFU’s participation in a B.C. framework agreement on standards for the acquisition of language fluency; and continue in building articulation and transfer agreements with post-secondary partners to open more pathways for Indigenous students to language degree completion.

Over the past six months much progress has been underway. Post-doctoral fellow Dr. James Crippen resumed remote delivery teaching FNLG 300 Advanced Grammar of Tlingit Language in the Yukon.

Dr. James Crippen will soon begin his new role teaching at McGill University. Dr. Crippen will fulfill his appointment at the end of December. For the transition, Dr. John Lyon, Assistant Professor, Linguistics, Fresno State University will support the project as Visiting Faculty for this ASI-supported position. Dr. Lyon specializes in Salish language and linguistics, and aside from continuing his work on Nsyilx̱cn (Okanagan) and St’át’imcets (Lillooet), he is currently working remotely with Dr. Marianne Ignace, a group of Secwepemc Elders, as well as past MA GCILP graduates and undergraduates on developing a practical, ‘user-friendly’ grammar of Secwepemctsin. While Dr. Lyon’s work is supported by the ASI initiative, other costs of this research continue to be supported by Dr. Ignace’s Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Partnership grant, and a new SSHRC Insight grant held by Dr. Davis (UBC) and Dr. Ignace as co-principal investigator on developing practical grammar for several languages.

The establishment of a graduate terms of reference for a scholarship award and the updating of the undergraduate scholarship award have begun. In collaboration with SFU Advancement and Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) Advancement, the terms have been prepared and are currently in final review. The expected launch of the two awards and the application/nomination process is late fall 2020.

Contact: Jessie Williams, jessie_williams@sfu.ca
The Indigenous Curriculum Resource Centre (ICRC) Librarian was hired for a one-year term from April 12, 2020 – April 17, 2021. Ashley Edwards has been working with a focus on the online ICRC space. Planning for the physical ICRC space on the 4th floor of Bennett Library has been delayed due to COVID-19, although discussions are still carrying on.

Contact: Gwen Bird, gbird@sfu.ca and Jenna Walsh, jmwalsh@sfu.ca

Transmissions Expanded is an online portal of educational materials related to Lisa Jackson’s Transmissions art installation, an opportunity to dig deeper into the languages, revitalization efforts and cross-disciplinary thinking that animates the artwork. Transmissions Expanded gives a glimpse into what Elders mean when they say, “the culture is in the language.” Transmissions Expanded also includes documentation of The Roots of Meaning: A Symposium on Lisa Jackson’s Transmissions, which took place Sept. 20th, 2019 at the SFU’s Goldcorp Centre for the Arts organized by Dr. Kate Hennessy (School of Interactive Arts and Technology) and Dr. Karrmen Crey (School of Communication). It includes a reading syllabus prepared by Dr. Crey as a pedagogical supplement to the site.

On September 23rd, 2020, Anishinaabe filmmaker Lisa Jackson launched Transmissions Expanded at the online SHIFT Festival. Transmissions Expanded is a web portal accompanying Jackson’s three-part, 6000 square-foot multimedia installation, which premiered at the Fei & Milton Wong Experimental Theatre at SFU’s Goldcorp Centre for the Arts in September 2019. Both the installation and web portal were developed in partnership with Dr. Kate Hennessy and Dr. Karrmen Crey with funding contributed by the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (FCAT) and SFU’s Aboriginal Strategic Initiative. The website was publicly launched on the opening night of the SHIFT Festival at McMaster University. For more information please visit: https://socrates.mcmaster.ca/shift-2020

The educational component of the Transmissions art installation has successfully been completed. Please see https://transmissionsx.com for further details.

Transmissions Expanded is a repository of resources and media on Indigenous languages, philosophies and revitalization efforts across Canada. The repository features materials produced for a symposium, The Roots of Meaning, co-developed by Dr. Hennessy and Dr. Crey, which focused on questions and ideas raised by the installation, including Indigenous language ecologies, futures.

Contact: Karrmen Crey, karrmen_crey_2@sfu.ca and Kate Hennessy, hennessy_kate@sfu.ca

CEE Indigenizing and Decolonizing Curriculum

The Centre for Educational Excellence (CEE) Indigenizing and Decolonizing Curriculum project is facilitated jointly by members of the CEE Indigenizing and Decolonizing Curriculum Strategy Group including Nanda Dimitrov, Dorothy Christian, Sheri Fabian, Bianca Brigidi, I-Chant Chiang and Janet Pivnick.

The team is currently working to further Indigenize curricula at SFU by building institutional capacity to support faculty who wish to decolonize and Indigenize their courses.

In the fall of 2020, three webinars brought together faculty members in a community of practice to explore strategies for Indigenizing and decolonizing their courses through conversation with distinguished Indigenous scholars from diverse institutions in B.C. and across Canada. The
Panel discussions were hosted and led by CEE’s Associate Director, Indigenous Initiatives, Dr. Dorothy Christian Cucw-la7.

In September, faculty colleagues joined Professor Emerita Dr. Jo-ann Archibald Q’um Q’um Xiiem (University of British Columbia) for a conversation about “The Many Facets of Decolonizing and Indigenizing in the Academy.”

Contact: Nanda Dimitrov, cee_dir@sfu.ca and Dorothy Christian, dorothy_c@sfu.ca

ISTLD-CEE DECOLONIZING AND INDIGENIZING GRANT (FORMERLY TEACHING LEARNING CENTRE)

There are two decolonizing and indigenizing curricula projects, awarded to Dr. Meg Holden and Dr. Malcolm Steinberg. These projects have unfortunately been stalled due to COVID-19 but are expected to continue in the new year.

Contact: Dorothy Christian, dorothy_c@sfu.ca and Nanda Dimitrov, cee_dir@sfu.ca

THE INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN THE DISCIPLINES (ISTLD)—DECOLONIZING TEACHING SEMINAR SERIES & GRANTS PROGRAM

Decolonizing Teaching is an Integrated Seminar Series (DTSS) and Grants program that familiarizes program participants with the history and ongoing impact of colonialism on Indigenous and settler Canadians and supports them as they design changes to their courses to ameliorate this impact. Each participant can access up to $6000 to support and study the impact of the changes they make.

The program’s lead facilitator is ISTLD’s Episkenew Fellow, Dolores van der Wey, an associate professor in education and a member of the Haida Nation who specializes in critical race pedagogy. She is supported by the ISTLD team, that includes Sheri Fabian (director), Laura D’Amico (research associate), Tara McFarlane (administrative coordinator), an undergraduate student from the Heiltsuk Nation, Steven Hall and a graduate student from the Haida Nation, Jaskwaan Bedard. Initially the program was designed to have six three-hour seminars spread over roughly one term. However, both facilitators and participants felt this was insufficient and so it has been expanded to include 14 three-hour seminars spread over a full academic year.

The final seminar of the second cohort was held in June 2020. To date, three proposals from the second cohort have been finalized and one final report from the first iteration has been completed. Several projects have been delayed as a result of changing teaching schedules due to COVID-19.

Contact: Dolores Van der Wey, dolores_vanderwey@sfu.ca and Sheri Fabian, sfabian@sfu.ca

BEEDIE INDIGENOUS INITIATIVE

Due to the impacts of COVID-19 across the university, aspects of this initiative relating to the Indigenizing of Beedie spaces, such as the purchase of ceremonial items, are on hold until programs are planned for in-person delivery again. Likewise, the Resident Elders’ Program is also in suspended planning until there can be safe face-to-face engagement with Elders again. The Indigenous Governance Committee is set to have its first meeting in October and will meet every other month.

For other aspects of this initiative, such as the plans to expand the Executive MBA in Indigenous Business Leadership, there is a shift from “West/East” to a more generalized national program, but engaging with national partners cannot happen in full until travel restrictions and substantive plans are developed to mitigate safe and healthy partnerships, particularly in conversations concerning space needs and locations for program delivery that often require on-site visits.

Contact: Dara Kelly, dara_kelly@sfu.ca and Debra Hoggan, debra_hoggan@sfu.ca
SAN’YAS: INDIGENOUS CULTURAL SAFETY TRAINING

More than 600 leaders and staff from across the university have participated in the San’Yas: Indigenous Cultural Safety Training program. The training is a unique online program to increase foundational knowledge, self-awareness and skills with respect to Indigenous cultural safety. Human Resources has made the training available through the support of ARC funding and we encourage any interested staff or managers to sign up.

For more information on this training please visit: https://www.sfu.ca/human-resources/learning-development/SanSafetyTrain.html

Contact: Tara Black, tara_black@sfu.ca

With ASI funds, SFU was able to secure seats for continuing SFU Faculty Association members to participate in San’yas Indigenous Cultural Safety Training, offered in partnership with SFU’s Faculty Relations Department and the Provincial Health Services Authority of British Columbia. Since the launch of the expanded offerings eight faculty members have participated in the training (as of Sept. 30, 2020) and there continues to be a steady interest by faculty members to engage in this training.

Contact: Jen Perry, jennifer_perry_3@sfu.ca and Suman Jiwani, suman_jiwani@sfu.ca

ETHICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR RECONCILIATION:
PREPARING THE GROUND AND A WAY FORWARD

Ethical Foundations for Reconciliation: Preparing The Ground and A Way Forward is an initiative of the Indigenous Research Institute. The work to deepen understandings of Indigenous knowledges, ethics and research within SFU has gently and respectfully continued during Covid-19 restrictions through small virtual gatherings on the Zoom platform with members of the Office of the Vice-President, Research and International (VPR), Office of Research Ethics and Research Ethics Board. The team has been approached by the Office of Research Ethics to advise on changes to the research ethics review application process related to Indigenous research and engagement. The team also plans to continue Indigenous Ethics conversations in the months ahead.

While the planned in-person Indigenous Ethics Dialogues at SFU continue to be paused in light of the COVID-19 context, the team has been partnering with initiatives outside of SFU in co-hosting and participating in important national Indigenous ethics conversations and dialogues, working together to enact ethical space in the virtual realm and co-creating videos of events as educational resources that will support the SFU community. The work will continue as possible and evolve as needed in response to the pandemic.

Contact: Vicki Kelly, vicki_kelly@sfu.ca, and Shelley Gair, shelley_gair@sfu.ca

DIGITAL RESOURCES INITIATIVE

The Digital Resources Initiative involves a plan to work with faculty and community members to establish procedures and policies for the long-term preservation of Indigenous resources. This will include the allocation of traditional knowledge labels for certain materials and the digitization and management of materials already in house. The Indigenous Content Specialist will be collaborating with Indigenous scholars and other knowledge keepers in the community to acquire, contextualize, curate, develop and digitize Indigenous research resources.

This important initiative began June 1, 2020. Alix Shield has been hired as the Indigenous Digital Content Specialist for this project and has developed the granting program to distribute the funds earmarked for the Indigenous Digital Content awards.

The call for proposals recently closed for the Indigenous Digital Media Grants (IDMG), however additional funding will be available in Spring 2021. The IDMG provides financial support to SFU researchers, creators and makers to cover costs associated with the development of Indigenous digital resources. We welcome applications for projects that aim to create forms of digital media through processes of digitization or through the creation of new media (films, podcasts, websites, etc.). For more information on the Indigenous Digital Media Grants please visit: https://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/academic-integrity/indigenous-initiatives/idmg

Contact: Mark Jordan, mjordan@sfu.ca, and Natalie Gick at natalie_gick@sfu.ca
RECLAIMING RIGHTS AND VOICE

The project has been delayed due to the pandemic. Work on writing an application for major funding from a SSHRC Insight Grant is underway and could provide enough funds to support most of the film production related to this project.

Contact: Michael Hathaway, michael_hathaway@sfu.ca

INDIGENOUS STUDIES CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The Indigenous Studies Curriculum Development Program is making good progress. This program began in July 2020 and more details will be shared in the next report.

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CLUSTER 3

STUDENT PATHWAYS AND SUPPORT

LOOKING FORWARD

The purpose of this study was to develop a better understanding of First Nations, Métis, Inuit students needs and opportunities to embark on their journey to and through SFU. Initially this report was to be submitted in March 2020 but due to COVID-19 and other factors the Pathways Report was delayed. As of June 2020, this project has been completed. The final report submitted in summer 2020 was the culmination of two years of work by dedicated members of the working group and a stellar group of research assistants who have been instrumental to this project’s success.

The report provides a thorough literature review, a national landscape on Indigenous access, transition and retention across Canadian universities, and perhaps most importantly, the voices of more than 200 knowledge holders who shared their thoughts with us through interviews or sharing circles.

In addition to an executive summary which was shared with those who participated in this project (done in commitment to reciprocity and honouring our responsibilities to the work), a supplemental summary specific to SFU South of the Fraser was also prepared.
This last document was prepared in response to the multiple requests from Indigenous community members and organizations, along with other stakeholder groups, to hold up recommendations that were specific to guiding the work of building pathways for Indigenous peoples South of the Fraser river. This concludes the important work together and in walking this work to the Office of the Vice-President, Academic and Provost (VPA).

Contact: Michelle Pidgeon, researchprojects_pidgeon@sfu.ca

**Cluster 4**

**Administration, Hiring and Project Management**

The Reconciliation Working Group is pleased to share that the second SFU Reconciliation Annual Report was released in summer 2020. The full report is available at: https://www.sfu.ca/aboriginalpeoples/sfu-reconciliation.html

Consultant Marcia Turner, Daxgedim Haan’ Nation Building (formerly Marcia Dawson Consulting) was the Indigenous writer for this report.

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To stay up to date with the latest news, events and programs please visit: www.sfu.ca/reconciliation

If you or your department is engaged in Reconciliation work, please send your stories and pictures to: sfuarc@sfu.ca

**SFU Reconciliation Working Group Members**

- **Ron Johnston**
  - Director, Office for Aboriginal Peoples (Protem), Reconciliation Co-Facilitator

- **Sobhana Jaya-Madhavan**
  - Associate Vice-President External Relations
  - Reconciliation Co-Facilitator

- **Joanne Curry**
  - Vice-President External Relations

- **Catherine Dauvergne**
  - Vice-President Academic and Provost