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Date of Expiry: March 15, 2022

KSA Decolonization & Reconciliation Policy

1.0 Preamble

Kwantlen Polytechnic University is located on unceded lands. Furthermore, Indigenous peoples in Canada historically have and continue to experience multiple barriers to accessing education at all levels, and particularly at the post-secondary education. The Kwantlen Student Association's responsibility, as a holder of the Kwantlen name, is committed in acknowledging and understanding issues related to colonization and reconciliation. Furthermore, as a commitment to addressing the 94 recommendations given by the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions' report, KSA has developed a policy with clear direction for staff, council, executive and volunteers to educate themselves on these issues and to strive for purposeful and credible efforts towards reconciliation.

This policy seeks to outline a collective understanding of the important work of Decolonization and Reconciliation, and to stimulate education and relationship building (internally & externally) in a manner that is culturally safe and cooperative. Within this policy are many references and links. We encourage students and staff to review these resources and move towards a better understanding of the traditional nations of this region.

This policy also seeks to educate students and staff to achieve a humble and respectful understanding of all students at KPU. KSA seeks to surpass the institutional expectation of cultural competency, and instead strive to realize a culturally safe and culturally humble space to work and study in.

2.0 Definitions

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC): Commission called upon in 2008 to address and investigate the cultural genocide of the Residential School System.

PSSSP: Post-secondary Student Support Program. This is administered by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and is levied through the different First Nations' funding.

Cultural Genocide: Defined by the TRC's report as, "the destruction of those structures and practices that allow the group to continue as a group. States that engage in cultural genocide set out to destroy the political and social institutions of the targeted group. Land is seized, and populations are forcibly transferred, and their movement is restricted. Languages are banned. Spiritual leaders are persecuted, spiritual practices are forbidden, and objects of spiritual value are confiscated and destroyed. And, most



significantly to the issue at hand, families are disrupted to prevent the transmission of cultural values and identity from one generation to the next.”ⁱ

Cultural Competency: “A set of behaviors, policies, and attitudes which form a system or agency which allows cross-cultural groups to effectively work professionally in situations. This includes human behaviors, languages, communications, actions, values, religious beliefs, social groups, and ethic perceptions. Individuals are competent to function on their own and within an organization where multi-cultural situations will be present.”ⁱⁱ

Cultural Safety: “Cultural safety means [health care] professionals adopt a humble, self-reflective [clinical] practice that positions them as respectful and curious partners when providing care, rather than as a figure of higher knowledge and authority.”ⁱⁱⁱ

Cultural Humility: “Cultural Humility is a process of self-reflection to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another’s experience.”^{iv}

Indigenization “On a very practical level, Indigenization is the process of creating a supportive and comfortable space inside our institutions within which Indigenous people can succeed. But “success” is a very big word here. It’s not just success in students completing coursework or programs. It is also “success” in reframing knowledge production and transmission within the academy from an Indigenous perspective.”^v

Decolonize: “Decolonization once viewed as the formal process of handing over the instruments of government, is now recognized as a long-term process involving the bureaucratic, cultural, linguistic and psychological divesting of colonial power.”^{vi}

3.0 Indigenous Awareness Mandate and Policy

3.1 Land Acknowledgement[vi]:

With great humility & respect the KSA honors and recognizes the unceded, shared, and traditional territories of Kwantlen, Matsqui, Katzie, Semiahmoo, Qayqayt, Kwikwitlem, Tsawwassen, & Musqueam Nations on whose territories KPU’s campuses stand.

The acknowledgement of traditional and unceded territory of the local Nations is an ancient cultural protocol of Indigenous people in Canada. This recognition honors that Indigenous communities



have occupied these lands from time immemorial and still call the territory home.

KPU has five campuses located in the Coast Salish Territories of Metro Vancouver and which spans across three large municipalities south of the Fraser River. Each campus will have adjusting territorial acknowledgements with respect to the land on which the corresponding campus is built.

These acknowledgements are a starting point for a land acknowledgement. Land Acknowledgements should never be rehearsed or read out as they then become just a procedure. Acknowledgements require critical thinking and reflection. The information within this policy is to guide you in knowing what lands you are meeting on, but the intent of land acknowledgment is to respect the tradition of the peoples of these lands, and to reflect on the impact of colonization. Land acknowledgement is one way we can move towards the intent of the TRC recommendations.

Protocol Guidelines:

1. If a local Chief, Elder, or political representative is present at your event it is respectful to have representation and involvement by offering the person to do a traditional opening or prayer. If no representative from community is present it is still appropriate, respectful and in good practice that the MC/Chair do the territory acknowledgement.
2. It is important to take the time to ask KPU questions regarding the pronunciation of the territories. You can check in with your colleagues, the Indigenous Services Team, or look up the pronunciation online.
3. It is important to note that Qayqayt First Nation is a federally recognized Nation without a land base and may not be commonly known to the public.

Territories of Individual Campuses:

The Surrey and Cloverdale campuses reside on the Coast Salish territories of the Kwantlen, Katzie, and the Semiahmoo.

Civic Plaza resides on the shared territory of the Kwikwitlam, Qayqayt, Katzie, and Kwantlen First Nations.



12666 72nd Avenue
Surrey, BC V3W 2M8

Reception: 604.599.2126
Fax: 604.599.2429
Website: www.kusa.ca

The Langley Campus resides on the Coast Salish territories of the Kwantlen, Matsqui, and Katzie First Nations.

The Richmond campus resides on the Coast Salish territories of the Musqueam First Nations.



Pronunciation Guidelines^{vii}

<u>Campus</u>	<u>Nation</u>	<u>Pronunciation</u>
Richmond	Musqueam First Nation	Mus-quee-um
Civic Plaza	Kwikwetlem First Nation Qayqayt First Nation Katzie First Nation Kwantlen First Nation	Kway-quit-lum Kee-kite Kate-zee Kwant-len
Surrey	Katzie First Nation Kwantlen First Nation Semiahmoo First Nation	Kate-zee Kwant-len Sem-ee-ah-moo
Cloverdale	Katzie First Nation Kwantlen First Nation Semiahmoo First Nation	Kate-zee Kwant-len Sem-ee-ah-moo
Langley	Kwantlen First Nation Matsqui First Nation	Kwant-len Matt-sqwee

3.2 Prioritization of the following five TRC Goals

Protect the right to Aboriginal languages, including the teaching of Aboriginal languages as credit courses (10(iv)).

Create university and college degree and diploma programs in Aboriginal languages (16).



We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism. (57)

Build student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect (63(iii)). Require education for all students on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal– Crown relations. (86)

3.3 Sustainability^{viii}

A complete discussion of sustainability must also include a discussion of **social equity and social justice**. The climate crisis and other related environmental degradation have been exacerbated by systems of oppression formed throughout history, many of which still operate today. In addition, socioeconomic inequity is correlated with ecological degradation. Therefore, “a truly sustainable society is one where wider questions of social needs and welfare, and economic opportunity are integrally related to environmental limits imposed by supporting ecosystems.”

In Canada and elsewhere in the world, **colonization** contributed greatly to the oppression of Indigenous, Inuit, First Nations, Metis and Aboriginal peoples while also resulting in significant negative environmental impacts. Even today, Indigenous peoples’ rights to their territories are often challenged by the same projects and initiatives which create the worst environmental impacts. **Reconciliation** with Canada’s Indigenous peoples is an important process in the creation of a sustainable Canada and must be pursued by the KSA throughout its sustainability efforts.

In keeping these ideas at the forefront of sustainability discourse, the KSA will not implement or support sustainability policies or initiatives which perpetuate further harm towards marginalized groups. To do this, it will be necessary to engage in consultation with **marginalized** groups to fully understand the impacts of any policies created by the KSA. To create a sustainable society, systems of oppression must be dismantled, and marginalized groups must be supported.

Sustainability is complex, both in theory and in practice. In order for this policy to be truly effective, its goals must be integrated across all portfolios of the KSA. While each year’s elected representatives and staff will have their particular skill sets and interests, it is expected that all staff and decision-makers within the KSA will act in good faith towards achieving the goals of this policy.



3.4 Representation

Representation that reflects meaningful Indigenous engagement via Indigenous Students, Staff, Faculty, or Community is essential for the maintenance and sustainability of working relationship. Representation and visualization for Indigenous learners build cultural identity that fosters community and resilience (reconciliation). As an action demonstrating our commitment to truth and reconciliation, KSA will identify ways to host and collaborate with Indigenous students on campus each semester.

3.5 Annual review of policy

In order to ensure that KSA is meeting the objectives of this policy, there will be an annual review conducted with a report to council.

3.6 Education

Whereas TRC 63(iii) recommends to “Build student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect,” KSA commits to having all student volunteers, council, executive members and staff complete the training model “Indigenous Awareness”^{ix} and other modules that are being developed.

Whereas KSA has committed to fostering a space of cultural humility, and to build on TRC recommendation 63(iii), student volunteers, council, executive members and staff will watch at least one of the recommended videos on cultural humility.

Whereas the KSA presides on campuses which are on the traditional and unceded territories of the Coast Salish First Nations, and that the KSA has colonially settled upon those lands;

Whereas the KSA on the KPU campuses of Surrey and Cloverdale that preside on the shared territories of the Kwantlen First Nation, Katzie First Nation, Musqueam First Nation, Semiahmoo First Nation, Tsawwassen First Nation ; KPU campus of Richmond presides on the territory of the Musqueam First Nation; KPU campus of Langley presides on the shared territories of the Kwantlen First Nation and Katzie First Nation and Matsqui First Nation; KPU campus of Civic Plaza presides on the territory of Qayqayt, Katzie, Kwikwitlem, and Kwantlen First Nation

Whereas despite Canada becoming an incredibly wealthy country through the reins of colonialism and resource development without the Indigenous peoples’ consent, Indigenous students face hugely probable barriers to education including but not limited to the backlog of the PSSSP, systemic racism, socio-economic stratification and gentrification, intergenerational trauma as a



result of the residential school system, neocolonial law and much more, preventing and delaying Indigenous students access to education.

Whereas the TRC has dedicated an entire section of their recommendations for reconciliation to education and has specifically recommended that, *"We call upon the federal government to provide adequate funding to end the backlog of First Nations students seeking a post-secondary education,"* (TRC Calls to Action, page 2) it is imperative that the educational gaps be addressed alongside the acknowledgment of territories, therefore;

4.0 Resolution

Be it resolved that if Indigenous student representative seat is vacant KSA will ensure engagement, representation and collaboration from our Indigenous student population by initiating active recruitment.

Be it Resolved that the KSA supports and endorses the recommendations made by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, especially with regards to education.

Be it further resolved that KSA will commitment to an ongoing and progressive realization of the agreed upon TRC goals.

Be it further resolved that KSA commits to having all student volunteers, council, executive members and staff complete the training model "Indigenous Awareness"^x and other modules that are being developed.

Be it Resolved that the KSA recognizes and acknowledges that it presides on unceded Coast Salish territories of the Kwantlen First Nation, Katzie First Nation, Musqueam First Nation, Qayqayt First Nation, Semiahmoo First Nation, Tsawwassen First Nation and the Matsqui First Nation;

Be it Further Resolved that the KSA supports and works towards making post-secondary education more accessible to Indigenous students within Canada and the deconstruction of the barriers to education that Indigenous students within Canada face.



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ⁱ TRC, Executive Summary, page 1

ⁱⁱ <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/cultural-competency.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.fnha.ca/documents/fnha-policy-statement-cultural-safety-and-humility.pdf>

^{iv} <http://www.fnha.ca/documents/fnha-creating-a-climate-for-change-cultural-humility-resource-booklet.pdf>

^v http://www.fourworlds.ca/pdf_downloads/Reconciliation_within_the_Academy_Final.pdf

^{vi} <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/a-brief-definition-of-decolonization-and-indigenization>

^{vii} Thank you to the KPU Indigenous Services office for this guideline

^{viii} KSA Sustainability Policy

^{ix} <https://courses.kpu.ca/course/view.php?id=29346>

^x <https://courses.kpu.ca/course/view.php?id=29346>