

# INDIGENOUS EDUCATION PLAN: 2021-2023

Naawsidoong Mino Nawendiwin:  
Building Good Relationships



HUMBER

# HONOURING INDIGENOUS ROOTS

Humber College is located within the traditional and treaty lands of the Mississaugas of the Credit. Known as Adoobiigok, the “Place of the Alders” in Michi Saagiig language, the region is uniquely situated along the Humber River Watershed, which historically provided an integral connection for Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and Wendat peoples between the Ontario Lakeshore and the Lake Simcoe/Georgian Bay regions. Now home to people of numerous nations, Adoobiigok continues to provide a vital source of interconnection for all.

In keeping with our connection to the land and its original inhabitants, and inspired by the Indigenous Education Protocol, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s Calls to Action, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Humber respects the primary importance of Indigenous cultural foundations, upholding principles of mutual respect, inclusion and community engagement in our everyday actions.



# MESSAGE FROM CHRIS WHITAKER, PRESIDENT AND CEO

I would like to congratulate and thank everyone, at Humber and beyond, who were involved in the development of Humber's first Indigenous Education Plan. I appreciate the tremendous effort that went into gathering critical insight and perspectives from Indigenous communities locally, nationally, and internationally. The result of this collaborative, Indigenous-led work, endorsed by our Indigenous Education Council, is an ambitious, innovative plan to enhance Humber's Indigenous education and Truth and Reconciliation efforts.

Humber's strategic, academic, and operational plans continue to prioritize Indigenous education and are guided by Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan)'s Indigenous Education Protocol, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's (TRC) Report and Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

In the past several years, Humber has made significant investments to enhance the quality and quantity of services for Indigenous students and employees, and to ensure that all of our students are prepared, through inclusion of Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing in curriculum and training, to live and work in our current and future Canadian context. This includes the hiring of additional Indigenous employees in key areas such as academic research, health and wellness, and career development. We have also taken great strides in recognizing important cultural initiatives such as Orange Shirt Day, the Moose Hide Campaign, and National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

I am proud that Humber's provincial and national leadership in Indigenous Education have been recognized with the Gold Medal for Indigenous Education Excellence at the 2021 CICan Awards of Excellence.

We look forward to the next chapter of our shared journey with the launch of the Indigenous Education Plan. The future is bright when we continue to emphasize Naawsidoong Mino Nawendiwin: Building Good Relationships.



**Chris Whitaker**  
President and CEO,  
Humber College Institute of Technology  
and Advanced Learning



# MESSAGE FROM JASON SERIGHT, DEAN, INDIGENOUS EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT

I am pleased and proud to introduce our first Indigenous Education Plan, which reiterates our longstanding commitment to Indigenous learners, families, communities, and organizations. In keeping with our commitment to the principles outlined in CIGan Indigenous Education Protocol, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's (TRC) Report and Calls to Action, and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Humber has expressed a commitment to building culturally safe and respectful environments across all levels of the institution. In 2018, our Strategic Plan reaffirmed this commitment through initiatives that "expand and enhance Indigenous programming, methodology, research, practice and delivery."

To date, we have learned from Humber Indigenous Education Council members, Elders, Indigenous Communities and Organizations, and students, faculty and staff who played a crucial role as partners and resounding voices informing the goals and priorities outlined in this document. We have also spent a significant amount of time engaging with partnering colleges, universities and polytechnics, nationally and internationally, all of whom have been a vital source of inspiration in the creation of our current plan.

While we recognize that Humber College has made great strides in Indigenous Education, we cannot rest on past achievements alone. Rather, we must continue to innovate through holistic approaches that support Indigenous learners, families, and communities; heart, mind, body and spirit. Our focus has been - and will continue to be on - building *mino nawendiwin* (good relationships) with the communities we engage, both on and off campus. It is my hope that this plan will provide a means by which all members of the Humber community can find their place and role in the important work ahead. I strongly believe the end result of this work will create frameworks that will benefit all students, staff, faculty, administrators, and communities connected to Humber.

We are all Humber!



**Jason Seright**

Dean, Indigenous Education and Engagement



# OUR BACKGROUND

Humber's Indigenous Education Plan (IEP) actualizes institutional commitments to Indigenous Education as a means of guiding ongoing and future development of programs and services in support of Indigenous learners, families, and communities.

Recognizing the importance of responding to the seven principles set forth in the Indigenous Education Protocol, Indigenous students, staff, faculty, Elders and community members played a crucial role as partners and strong voices informing the goals and priorities set out in this document. This plan summarizes themes and strategies that were formed in the spirit of shared purpose, driven by collaborative exchange and a recognition that the forward movement of reconciliation is a responsibility we all share.

Our accomplishments include:

- Established Indigenous Resource Centers at both North and Lakeshore Campus locations, and the Wigwamen Residential Lounge for students at North Campus;
- Hired Indigenous staff with ongoing appointments that support Indigenous student success, services and community events;
- Built extensive collection of Indigenous resources in partnership with Humber Libraries;
- Co-produced Indigenous art exhibits with Humber Galleries and the Interpretive Centre featuring students and community artists;
- Hosted Indigenous Knowledge Gatherings in partnership with the Faculty of Social & Community Services, the Faculty of Media & Creative Arts and Faculty of Health Sciences & Wellness;
- Successful collaboration with Faculty of Applied Sciences and Technology and Indigenous architects for Indigenous Cultural Markers at Lakeshore campus and the Barrett Centre for Technology Innovation;
- Co-hosted first intercollege response to Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action with Colleges Ontario, Coordinating Committee of Vice Presidents Students, Indigenous Peoples Education Circle, and Coordinating Committee of Vice-Presidents, Academic;
- In partnership with the Humber's International Centre and OTAGO Polytechnic in New Zealand, provided students at both institutions with meaningful cross-cultural exchange opportunities in Canada and New Zealand;
- Successful community collaborations with Toronto Indigenous Fashion Week, McMichael Art Gallery, ImagineNative Indigenous Film Festival and the Iroquois Lacrosse Program based in Six Nations.

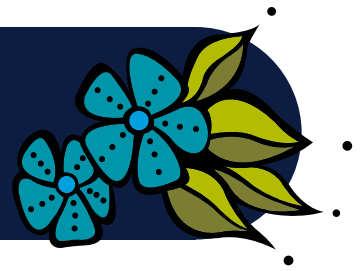
# OUR FOUNDATION - MINO NAWENDIWIN - GOOD RELATIONSHIPS

Mino nawendiwin is an all-inclusive practice of relating that honours the dense web of relationships that exists within place, including interconnections that are developed with land (earth, waterways, sky), and other-than-human beings (animal, plant and spirit). Teachings of mino nawendiwin describe the earth as maternal, creation as a large network of extended familial relationships, and life as a collection of experiences that reach out from one's self to family, community, and nation, contributing to the collective wellbeing of the whole. As such, good relationships are ever-changing and fluid, requiring constant care, reflection, and consideration of the impact of everyday actions.

As an institution, Humber College maintains a complex network of relationships with and obligations to Indigenous learners, families and communities, both locally and globally. Our nearest relationships and responsibilities are to Indigenous learners with whom we have deepening and formalized relationships. Working outward from Indigenous learners, Humber maintains relationships with and responsibilities to Indigenous communities in the Lake Simcoe/Georgian Bay region. We also have relationships with Indigenous nations in other parts of Canada, representing yet another set of relationships and responsibilities that we must nurture. Finally, as an emerging international leader, Humber has spent a significant amount of time building relationships with Indigenous peoples across the globe. As a whole, these relationships set the stage, or act as a scaffold and supportive foundation from which the priorities outlined in this plan can emerge.



# OUR PRIORITIES: INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE AND CAMPUS CULTURE



Strong relationships are built from a foundation of respect, reciprocity, and the continuous renewal of values and actions that support collaborative exchange. In braiding Indigenous ways of being, knowing, and doing into all we do, we are welcoming ideas, knowledges, and perspectives that enrich us all. Relationships call us to action, inspiring opportunities for reciprocity and a sense of belonging that ensures the continuous guidance, collaboration, and leadership of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples on spheres of impact critical to Humber College's/University of Guelph-Humber's commitment to decolonization, reconciliation, and resurgence. They also strengthen our institutional identity, having the power to impact every member of our collective community.

**Goal 1: Develop clear structures, processes and adequate resources to ensure the continuous guidance, collaboration, and leadership of Indigenous people(s) within decision making processes and governance structures.**

## ACTION ITEMS

- Include Indigenous representation into committees, advisories and leadership circles.
- Revise the Humber Indigenous Education Council's terms of reference, recruit diverse membership, and increase opportunities for engagement.
- Develop an All My Relations Committee to ensure that the goals and objectives of the IEP are broadly integrated within academic and operational functions.
- Implement a robust strategy supporting the recruitment, retention and advancement of Indigenous employees with ongoing appointments, including staff, faculty, and senior administrative positions.
- Continue to prioritize providing culturally-responsive and timely financial compensation for external Indigenous vendors.
- Provide introductory Truth and Reconciliation training within the first year of employment at Humber.
- Support Faculty/Departmental Units to identify the principles set out in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action, the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Indigenous Education Protocol as specific strategic areas of focus and commitment.

**Goal 2: Enrich Humber College/University of Guelph-Humber campuses and physical landscapes with a stronger Indigenous presence and more responsive engagement.**

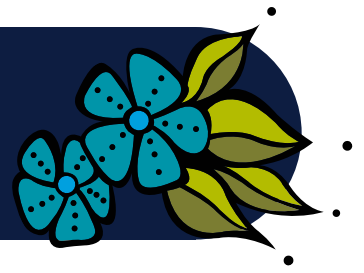
**ACTION ITEMS**

- Work with the Government Relations, Marketing and Communications department to develop accessible educational tools, events and marketing resources reflecting Humber College's/University of Guelph-Humber's official land acknowledgement statement.
- Increase indoor and outdoor spaces for Indigenous people to gather and conduct land-and culture-based education, cultural practices, and ceremonies.
- Identify and make visible the longstanding connections of Indigenous peoples to culturally significant places across Humber campuses.
- Establish a Visiting Indigenous Scholar program.





# OUR PRIORITIES: EXCELLENCE IN INDIGENOUS EDUCATION AND RESEARCH



As an institution, Humber College offers a broad range of high-quality academic programs and research initiatives enriched by strong experiential learning, emphasizing, among other outcomes, the development of intellectual, academic and practical skills in problem solving, critical thinking, and social responsibility. Striving to take action to advance the recognition and successful braiding of Indigenous ways of being, knowing, and doing into research, curricula and pedagogic practice, this Indigenous Education Plan takes these accomplishments one step further in support of learning environments that foster innovation and collaboration through respectful, reciprocal, and transformative pedagogy and practice. In the context of Indigenous Education and Research, this means embracing opportunities that empower students, staff, and faculty to develop a reflective knowledge base, governed by strong bonds and unwavering commitment to shared accountability.

**Goal 1: Braid Indigenous ways of being, knowing, and doing into Humber's academic programs, course content, and co-curricular activities.**

## ACTION ITEMS

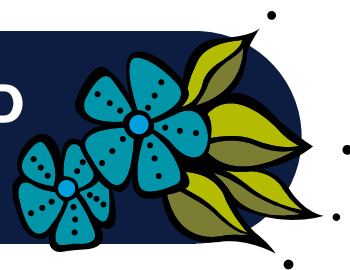
- Undertake faculty-level curriculum reviews to map Indigenous curriculum content and pedagogic practice; faculty/student experience; best practices; and actionable recommendations moving forward.
- In collaboration with Indigenous communities, organizations, and post-secondary institutions, develop and deliver culturally responsive academic upgrading/bridging programs that can be delivered in Indigenous communities and/or on campus.
- Develop institution-wide faculty level Indigenous Quality Assurance Standards that, at a minimum, require academic programs to include substantive content in at least one course that explores Indigenous histories, experiences, worldviews and knowledge systems, including the historical/ ongoing expression, impact, and implications of settler colonialism within each Faculty's field of study.
- Expand program and course offerings in Indigenous Studies.
- Partner with Indigenous communities, organizations, and institutes, locally, nationally, and globally, to develop culturally responsive accredited post-secondary Indigenous Studies programs that can be delivered in communities and on campus.
- Continue to develop and deliver co-curricular activities that allow Humber students to gain a better understanding of Indigenous histories, experiences, worldviews and knowledge systems, including the historical/ ongoing expression, impact, and implications of settler colonialism.
- Create a professional development program that trains faculty and staff who are seeking to foster safe and inclusive classrooms and workplaces.

**Goal 2: Expand research initiatives that are community-led, reciprocal, and centred in Indigenous ways of being, knowing, and doing.**

**ACTION ITEMS**

- Co-develop and implement a strategy that will mobilize research that is co-developed with and led by Indigenous communities in support of priorities identified locally, nationally, and globally.
- Establish Indigenous Research Committee (IRC) and IRC Chair position to offer guidance, promote collaborative relationships, and advance innovation in Indigenous research, locally, nationally and globally.
- Co-develop Indigenous research protocols and community-specific ethical research guidelines to ensure research is being conducted in a respectful, culturally responsive, and formalized manner.
- Conduct research that engages regional Indigenous communities and urban organizations to determine their needs and priorities for academic learning outcomes, programs, student services, and tuition assistance, and develop strategies to meet these needs.
- Co-develop an Indigenous Research Libguide that assists students, faculty, staff, communities and researchers to access resources, information, publications, films and reports that build knowledge while supporting ongoing education and professional development.
- Co-develop Indigenous-focused professional development experiences that prepare and support faculty and staff as they foster safe and inclusive classrooms and workplaces.

# OUR PRIORITIES: CULTURALLY RICH, SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS



In order to pursue their education, Indigenous students face the difficult task of leaving their families and communities to pursue post-secondary education. Recognizing this reality, this plan aims to support Indigenous students as they make the transition to, during, and beyond Humber/Guelph Humber. This plan allows for the development of a range of student-focused services and programs in support of Indigenous student success, health and well-being, including the provision of culturally tailored transition and support services, academic advising and cultural counselling, social events and culturally responsive programming.

**Goal 1: Empower Indigenous learners to achieve their full potential, socially, academically and professionally.**

## ACTION ITEMS

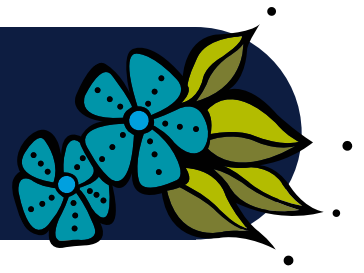
- Expand high impact transitional practices and co-curricular activities including the development and implementation of the following programs and initiatives:
  - » First-Year Foundations peer mentorship program that positions Indigenous students to meet or exceed their learning goals.
  - » Online resource portal and co-curricular activities focused on student success from a student perspective.
  - » Intersectional programming that fosters connections between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students (Residence, Intersectional events with LGBTQ+ Centre and Black Academic Success and Engagement (BASE), and Orientation).
- Expand Indigenous student access to needs-based financial aid for tuition, living expenses, emergency travel, child care, housing, and cultural/ceremonial development.
- Build a culturally-responsive academic and career advising model that increases personal capacity while addressing the diverse needs of Indigenous students and alumni.
- Expand participation of Indigenous students in career planning, advising, and work-integrated learning opportunities.

**Goal 2: Design and deliver initiatives that establish positive, nurturing and healthy relationships, building a sense of community and belonging.**

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- Develop special events and programming that highlights the diversity of Indigenous cultures and cultural practices, including powwows, land-and-culture based activities, and Gallery Exhibits highlighting Indigenous artistic expression.
- Update Indigenous self-identity protocols to ensure they are inclusive and based on current research and best practices.
- Develop an Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers program that will provide students with the opportunity to receive guidance, support, and mentorship from Elders and Knowledge Keepers.
- Provide a range of essential Counselling Services to the Humber College/University of Guelph-Humber students.
- Increase data collection and assessment of key indicators of student mental health and wellness.

# OUR PRIORITIES: COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



In the context of Indigenous education, community engagement is a process that builds and invests in sustainable relationships with Indigenous learners, families, communities, and organizations. This Indigenous Education Plan (IEP) supports community development through a wholistic, community-led process, supported by principles of respect, reciprocity, responsibility, relationality, and a shared commitment to praxis. Ideally, this involves ‘grassroots’ approaches that identify and respond to a community’s strengths, needs, and aspirations. Community engagement is participatory; thus, sharing influence, increasing interconnection, raising awareness, taking action, and making learning real are all vital components of the IEP.

**Goal 1: Partner with Indigenous communities to develop outreach initiatives that are meaningful, authentic, and responsive to the strengths and diverse needs of Indigenous learners, families, and communities.**

## ACTION ITEMS

- Increase the reach of existing outreach programs including those geared towards Indigenous youth (e.g., Indigenous Camp Choice).
- In collaboration with Indigenous communities, organizations, and post-secondary institutions, develop and deliver culturally responsive academic upgrading/bridging programs that can be delivered in communities and/or on campus.
- Develop marketing materials that highlight the experience of Indigenous students and showcase alumni (e.g. Role Model Calendar/Viewbook).
- Strengthen relationships with secondary and post-secondary institutions, urban organizations and Indigenous communities, supporting a multi-pathway approach for transitioning Indigenous students into post-secondary studies.

**Goal 2: Strengthen bonds of respect, reciprocity, innovation, and creativity rooted in humility and ethical space.**

**ACTION ITEMS**

- Expand community-based partnerships that promote cultural sustainability and support existing and new language revitalization initiatives.
- Build partnerships with Indigenous organizations such as Indspire, Anishnawbe Health, ImagineNative, Council Fire, Native Canadian Centre, Native Women’s Resource Centre, NaMeRes, and the Peel Aboriginal Network.
- Develop new partnerships with local, regional and international Indigenous communities to offer mutually beneficial community-based experiential learning opportunities (e.g. international experiences, community-engaged learning courses, internships, field experiences in Indigenous communities, etc.).



## MESSAGE FROM GINA ANTONACCI, SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC AND JASON HUNTER, VICE-PRESIDENT, STUDENTS AND INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING

We would like to congratulate Jason Seright and the Indigenous Education and Engagement (IE&E) team and thank all those who have helped shape the Indigenous Education Plan (IEP). Authentic and impactful Indigenous education and Truth and Reconciliation efforts require collaborative, strategic commitment from all areas of the college. We would like to recognize the wide range of individuals across all of the college's departments and Faculties that have helped to develop this plan.

Humber, with the leadership of the Indigenous Education and Engagement team, continues to braid Indigenous ways of being, knowing, and doing into everything we do, including academic programming, research, student support services and other key initiatives. We remain committed to developing and enhancing Indigenous community partnerships at local, provincial, national, and international levels.

We understand the importance of creating clear structures and processes, and committing the required resources to ensure the ongoing guidance, collective strength, and leadership of Indigenous peoples within all Humber departments, Faculties and governance structures. By supporting our Indigenous learners and employees, and enhancing learning opportunities for all staff and students, the Humber community will benefit from unique experiences and perspectives.

Humber's ongoing work related to Indigenous education and equity, diversity, and inclusion will be reflected in the Academic Plan. We are also pleased to continue to offer Indigenous education courses and Truth and Reconciliation Training to all Humber learners and employees.

As our country continues to reflect on and address the history of Residential Schools in Canada, we believe Humber's IEP situates us in a position to bear witness to and learn from Indigenous knowledge keepers, and collectively work toward a greater understanding and practice of Truth and Reconciliation.

Thank you again to those who contributed to the plan, we look forward to continuing to work, listen, and adapt with you as we engage in this meaningful work. Truth and Reconciliation offers both an individual and a collective path of learning and reflection, one that Humber is here to support and guide every one of its community members through. Like a braid of sweetgrass, we are so much stronger when we work as one.



**Gina Antonacci**  
Senior Vice-President, Academic



**Jason Hunter**  
Vice-President, Students and Institutional Planning