

**EDWARDS BUSINESS STUDENTS'
SOCIETY**

**INDIGENOUS
INITIATIVES**

2021/2022 UPDATES



AUTHORS AND CONTRIBUTORS

LAUREN AUSSANT, DANTE CARTER, THOMAS WINROW,
AUBREY-ANNE LALIBERTE-PEWAPISCONIAS, JESSICA MIRASTY,
BRAYDEN CARON, DANII KEHLER

UPDATED LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

DATE PROPOSED

APRIL 30 2022

The Indigenous Initiatives Document identified the need for a meaningful land acknowledgment created by the EBSS. The EBSS 2021-2022 council committed to developing a personal land acknowledgment that reflects our positionality, commitments, and actions. We began the process by holding a land acknowledgment workshop for the general council which outlined the importance of personal and meaningful land acknowledgments. Next, we designated an executive council meeting to reflect and share ideas to incorporate in the land acknowledgment. We reflected on the positionality of the EBSS, our connection to the land and the Indigenous community, how to honour our privilege, and our action ideas for the future. We then drafted a land acknowledgment and consulted the IBSS and an Elder for advice on areas for improvement. Once finalized, we presented the personal land acknowledgment to the general council and began incorporating it into meetings and events. The EBSS' personal land acknowledgment is as follows:



We wish to respectfully acknowledge that the Edwards Business Students' Society is located on Indigenous lands and on Treaty 6 Territory. For thousands of years, these lands have been the traditional and ancestral lands of the Cree, Dene, Saulteaux, Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota, and the homeland of the Métis Nation. Today, these lands are still home to many Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on these lands.

We acknowledge our position of privilege as a student group embedded in an institution rooted in colonialism that has contributed to a harmful past and continued harmful actions against Indigenous students. We recognize our responsibility to the Saskatoon community and both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students through our efforts to work towards decolonization and reconciliation. We believe in the importance of honouring Indigenous knowledge and working to better our relationships with the Indigenous community by actively working to dismantle colonial practices within our operations.

We honour our privilege by working to ensure that the education and resources we offer are accessible, equitable, and transparent. We commit to amplifying Indigenous voices and ensuring we are doing things in a good way through consultation with Indigenous peoples. We strive to offer support to the Indigenous community through advocacy and consistency. The EBSS represents Edwards students, including those who are Indigenous, so we must be held accountable for our wrongdoings and continually work to improve our relationships with Indigenous students.

As the EBSS operates on Indigenous lands, it is important to acknowledge our connection to the land. Through our privilege, we have the opportunity to study and learn on these lands, which means we must do our best to respect the land through sustainability efforts and advocacy for the protection of resources.

The EBSS commits to helping educate our stakeholders on past and present harmful colonial actions, working and encouraging allyship through advocacy, and consulting with the Indigenous community in efforts to foster better relationships. Our commitments can be seen in our continuously developing Indigenous Initiatives document, as we continually seek new ways to dismantle our colonial practices and learn from our past mistakes.

As we move forward in a spirit of truth and reconciliation, we hold ourselves accountable and recognize our responsibility to the Indigenous community and to the land. We respect and acknowledge the Treaties that were made on these lands and commit to working in partnership with the Indigenous community for a better future.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE PAST YEAR

Since the development of the Edwards Business Students' Society's Indigenous Initiatives Document and the introduction of the Diversity and Inclusion Portfolio in 2021, we have begun implementing steps to decolonize and Indigenize the events, programs, and opportunities offered by the EBSS. Throughout this process, we have learned many valuable lessons surrounding communication, responsibility, and accountability. We will emphasize these values moving forward and commit to continuous learning as we create an equitable and inclusive space for Indigenous students within the Edwards School of Business.

COMMUNICATION

Through the EBSS' Indigenous initiatives work, we strive to do everything in a good way. As such, we emphasize the importance of meaningful communication and consultation with the Indigenous Business Students' Society, one of our umbrella clubs, and the Elders and Knowledge Keepers in our community. Even though our relationship with the IBSS has been strained in the past, we have taken steps this year to rebuild it through meaningful communication. We acknowledge the importance of maintaining positive relationships with the Indigenous community around us to ensure that we are consulting with them on a regular basis as we decolonize and Indigenize our operations.



REFLECTIONS FROM THE PAST YEAR

RAPID EVOLUTION OF THE EDID SPACE

The equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization space is constantly evolving, with new information and priorities coming to the forefront of the discourse. At the Edwards School of Business, the 2021-2022 preliminary data indicates that 12% of undergraduate students are Indigenous. This slight increase, up from 11.06% in 2020-2021, further demonstrates the necessity of implementing equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives tailored to the growing Indigenous student population. Additionally, as more Business Student Associations across Canada are beginning to develop Indigenous Initiatives strategies, it is crucial that we continue to effect change to lead and support others. In a continuously changing environment, we are committed to continually evaluating, adjusting, and adding to our Indigenous initiatives to ensure that they reflect the current needs of Indigenous students.



REFLECTIONS FROM THE PAST YEAR

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Transitioning to an in-person learning environment since the fall term of 2021 has been challenging for the planning of EBSS events and initiatives. While we had intended to implement many aspects of the Indigenous Initiatives Document in the fall term, things were missed and slow moving along the way. We recognize that some fall term events, including the Edwards Formal, were lacking important Indigenous aspects, such as having an Elder or Knowledge Keeper open up the event in a good way with a prayer and to bless the food. Examples such as this demonstrate how our council can improve its internal communications to ensure that all parties involved in an event are aware of the importance of Indigenous components and work to include them on a consistent basis. Furthermore, the EBSS can improve its outreach efforts to Indigenous businesses to include them in academic events (Lunch n' Learns for example), sponsorship, and networking events such as the Edwards Formal. Lastly, the EBSS must place an emphasis on reaching out for consultation and advice from the IBSS and other Indigenous community members to ensure that we are developing and implementing Indigenous initiatives in a good way.



REFLECTIONS FROM THE PAST YEAR

RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

As we continue developing, implementing, and evaluating our Indigenous initiatives, it is crucial for the EBSS to keep our responsibility to the Indigenous students we represent at the front of our members' minds. With that, we must also hold ourselves accountable for our past actions and our current shortcomings. We commit to emphasizing the implementation of the Indigenous Initiatives Document and these updates in the 2022-2023 school year, along with continuous and thorough evaluation. Furthermore, we will begin publicly releasing an annual Accountability Report, detailing the progress we have made on decolonization and Indigenization, our faults throughout the year, and our plans for improvement for the next year. Responsibility and accountability will be guiding values as we continue along the journey to creating a more inclusive, equitable, and representative space within Edwards for Indigenous students.



COMMITMENTS AND ACTION ITEMS

This year, the Indigenous initiatives team, with the help of the IBSS, have conducted an analysis of the EBSS' portfolios and events to identify gaps, areas for improvement, and opportunities for Indigenization. Through this process, we have identified portfolio specific commitments and action items to be implemented in the 2022-2023 school year.

PRESIDENTIAL PORTFOLIO

Recruitment

- Encourage EBSS applicants who are not selected to apply to the Indigenous Business Students' Society
- Reach out to transition schools (i.e. Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies) prior to recruitment to encourage incoming Edwards students to apply



COMMITMENTS AND ACTION ITEMS

MARKETING PORTFOLIO

Education and Promotion

- Promote days of significance and remembrance for Indigenous Peoples on the EBSS social media pages
- Market the student voices and grievances forms on the EBSS social media pages to ensure that it is visible and accessible to students
- Include the personal land acknowledgment on the EBSS website and social media pages
- Send marketing engagement representatives to IBSS meetings to promote and market upcoming events by word of mouth to Indigenous students
- Ensure that EBSS and umbrella club marketing materials are posted in the Rawlinson Centre

Amplification of Indigenous Peoples' voices

- Support and promote the IBSS' social media posts on days of significance for Indigenous Peoples
- Share learning opportunities, conferences, and events put on by Indigenous organizations to the general council and on social media platforms



COMMITMENTS AND ACTION ITEMS

SOCIAL PORTFOLIO

Indigenization of events and initiatives

- Include Elder/Knowledge Keeper prayers and blessings into the Edwards Formal and Graduation Banquet every year
- Reserve sponsor tables at the Edwards Formal for Indigenous businesses
- Reduce grade requirements for graduation awards to allow further accessibility to Indigenous students who may be facing different realities than other students
- Provide sponsored tickets for Indigenous students for the Edwards Formal

CORPORATE RELATIONS PORTFOLIO

Sponsorship package

- Include personal land acknowledgement in sponsorship package
- Include options to sponsor event tickets for Indigenous students in package
- Ensure that sponsorship revenue from Indigenous organizations goes directly to Indigenous students through conferences, tickets, sponsored tables at events, etc.
- Include options to support the Diversity and Inclusion portfolio in package



COMMITMENTS AND ACTION ITEMS

ACADEMIC PORTFOLIO

Indigenization of events and programs

- Incorporate Indigenous businesses into the Lunch n' Learn program
- Ensure that scholarships for Indigenous students are easily accessible through the scholarship matching program and promote the program to Indigenous students
- Provide an Indigenous student stream in the EBSS mentorship program to connect new Indigenous students with upper-year Indigenous students
- Include Elder/Knowledge Keeper prayers and blessings into the International Women's Day Gala and other similar events every year
- Promote and offer opportunities to attend learning opportunities and conferences hosted by Indigenous organizations (i.e. SevenGen, ICE Gathering, etc.)



COMMITMENTS AND ACTION ITEMS

INTERNAL PORTFOLIO

Policies and procedures

- Enforce a zero-tolerance policy for racism
- Strengthen human resource policies and procedures by using trauma-informed and anti-oppressive approaches when dealing with racial discrimination
- Incorporate Indigenous initiatives into bylaws

Umbrella clubs

- Encourage and ensure the IBSS is well-informed on submitting marketing brief forms for marketing through the EBSS

FINANCE PORTFOLIO

Budgeting

- Ensure sufficient funds are allocated towards honorariums, cultural events, and events to celebrate Indigenous students (i.e. Indigenous Achievement Week)

