

INDIGENOUS PROGRAM PATHWAYS INVENTORY PROJECT: PHASE ONE RESULTS

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Project Overview

Project Goal

- To understand, enhance and expand Indigenous program pathways in Ontario

Project Objectives

- To develop an extensive inventory of Indigenous program pathways in Ontario
- To develop an Indigenous Program Pathways Action Plan

Definitions

- A pathway is defined as a route from one program to another program that contains specified eligibility requirements and awarded transfer credits and/or other benefits to be applied at the receiving institution (adapted from ONTransfer, online).
- An Indigenous program is defined as any program which is rooted in or directed toward Indigenous peoples' knowledges, practices and experiences.

Methodology

- Environmental scan of pathway survey instruments conducted
- 42 question survey (multiple choice and open-ended questions) developed and tested internally
- Introductory letter and subsequent survey sent to admission/pathway/Indigenous leads at Aboriginal institutes, colleges and universities in the province
- Survey open September-October 2016
- Multiple responses from an institution were collated for analysis
- Participants who indicated a willingness to participate in follow-up discussions were contacted via email

Methodology Cont.

- Forty-six participants, representing 30 institutions (1 survey discarded)
- 1-3 responses per participating institution
- Institution response rate was 55% (colleges 75%; universities 41%; Aboriginal institutes 33%)
- Sixty percent of respondents from colleges (30% universities; 10% Aboriginal institutes)
- Twenty-nine percent of respondents were Indigenous leads, 24% pathway leads and 16% were admission leads. Thirty-one percent of respondents occupied other positions at their respective institution
- Response rates varied by question

Methodology Cont.

NUMBER OF RESPONSES BY INSTITUTION PER SURVEY QUESTION					
Q1: N=30	Q8: N=23	Q15: N=14	Q22: N=4	Q29: N=1	Q36: N=18
Q2: N=30	Q9: N=29	Q16: N=10	Q23: N=14	Q30: N=3	Q37: N=22
Q3: N=30	Q10: N=19	Q17: N=14	Q24: N=1	Q31: N=1	Q38: N=19
Q4: N=20	Q11: N=19	Q18: N=7	Q25: N=2	Q32: N=4	Q39: N=24
Q5: N=19	Q12: N=14	Q19: N=13	Q26: N=2	Q33: N=4	Q40: N=23
Q6: N=14	Q13: N=13	Q20: N=14	Q27: N=3	Q34: N=25	Q41: N=23
Q7: N=14	Q14: N=15	Q21: N=4	Q28: N=1	Q35: N=19	Q42: N=19

Methodology Cont.

- Twenty-two individuals from 19 institutions (14 colleges and 5 universities) willing to participate in a follow-up conversation
- 12 institutions (8 colleges, 4 universities) participated in follow-up conversations occurring in December 2016-January 2017
- 16 individuals participated in the follow-up conversations
- Follow-up conversations were approximately 0.5 to 1.5 hours in length

Methodology Cont.

- A one-day forum with participation from Aboriginal institutes, colleges, universities, community-based delivery agencies took place in March 2017 to discuss report findings, supporting the development of a draft Indigenous Program Pathways Action Plan
- Fourteen individuals, representing 10 post-secondary institutions participated in the forum

Results: Indigenous Programs

- Sixty seven percent (n=20) of participating institutions indicated that they have Indigenous programs in place
- In the 2015/16 academic year, on average, 165 learners were enrolled in Indigenous programs at a post-secondary institution in Ontario
- The most widespread areas of study are social services, preparatory studies, and health
- Science, environmental, and art and design were among the least widespread disciplines of study
- Award granted ranged from BOG certificate to doctorate, with certificate, diplomas, and Bachelor degrees among the most popular
- There are many innovative programs in Ontario that are among the first of their kind in Canada or North America
- Majority of programs delivered in-person

Results: Indigenous Pathways

- 67% of Aboriginal institutes, 61% of colleges and 87.5% of universities indicated the presence of an Indigenous pathway
- 20-60% of learners in programs subject to pathway from pathway
- Pathways most prevalent in the social science disciplines
- Fluidity between programs (e.g. social services, Indigenous studies, and community development) & multiple pathways per program
- No reported pathways in justice, hospitality and tourism, and aviation or graduate level pathways
- Lack of pathways identified in justice, environmental studies and art & design
- Diploma most common credential to gain access and BA Hons. most pursued credential

NUMBER OF ABORIGINAL INSTITUTES, COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES WITH INDIGENOUS PROGRAMS (PGM) AND PATHWAYS (PWY) BY DISCIPLINE

<i>Discipline</i>	# of Aboriginal Institutes		# of Colleges		# of Universities		Total	
	PGM	PWY	PGM	PWY	PGM	PWY	PGM	PWY
<i>Art & Design</i>	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
<i>Aviation</i>	1	-	1	-	-	-	2	-
<i>Business & Administration</i>	2	1	1	1	-	1	3	3
<i>Community Development</i>	-	-	4	3	-	-	4	3
<i>Education</i>	1	1	2	3	2	1	5	5
<i>Environmental</i>	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
<i>Health</i>	3	2	3	2	1	-	7	4
<i>Hospitality & Tourism</i>	1	-	1	-	-	-	2	-
<i>Indigenous Studies</i>	-	-	2	2	4	1	6	3
<i>Justice</i>	1	-	1	-	1	-	3	-
<i>Language</i>	-	-	3	1	2	1	5	2
<i>Preparatory Studies</i>	1	-	5	2	1	1	7	3
<i>Science</i>	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
<i>Social Services</i>	3	1	4	7	1	1	8	9
<i>Trades & Technology</i>	1	1	1	-	-	-	2	1

NUMBER OF ABORIGINAL INSTITUTES, COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES WITH INDIGENOUS PATHWAYS BY EARNED & PURSUANT CREDENTIAL

<i>Credential Type</i>	# of Aboriginal Institutes		# of Colleges		# of Universities	
	Earned	Pursuant	Earned	Pursuant	Earned	Pursuant
<i>Certificate</i>	2	-	2	-	2	-
<i>Diploma</i>	1	1	10	2	4	-
<i>Advanced Diploma/Degree</i>	1	1	-	1	-	-
<i>Bachelors</i>	-		-	1	-	1
<i>Honours Bachelors</i>	-	2	-	10	-	5
<i>Other</i>	-	-	-	-	1	-

Results: Indigenous Pathways Cont.

- One pathway program reported a waitlist, and others had high interest levels
- Identified need for pathways that are relevant to Indigenous peoples
- Indigenous program pathways are not synonymous with pathways for Indigenous learners
- Continued need for fluidity among pathways
- Indigenous learners may only enter or return to post-secondary studies years after high school or a preparatory program
- ¼ of institutions reported bridging or transition programs in place

Results: Pathway Learners

- Only five institutions indicated that they track demographic information
- One institution shared that 87% of Indigenous pathway learners are female; Three institutions provided geographic information with learners remaining close to home
- Distribution of Indigenous learners in Indigenous pathway programs is comparable to Indigenous programs overall
- Pathways commonly accessed by non-Indigenous learners and urban Indigenous learners

Percentage of Pathway Learners with Aboriginal Ancestry

% of Pathway Learners with Aboriginal Ancestry

<i>% of learners in Indigenous programs with Aboriginal Ancestry</i>	Less than 5%	5-25%	25-50%	50-75%	More than 75%	Unknown
<i>Less than 5%</i>	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%	50%
<i>5-25%</i>	0%	0%	0%	0%	50%	50%
<i>25-50%</i>	0%	0%	50%	0%	0%	50%
<i>50-75%</i>	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>More than 75%</i>	0%	0%	0%	0%	37.5%	62.5%
<i>Unknown</i>	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%

Results: Credit Assessment

- The amount of credits awarded varied from less than one year to two years of study, with the most common being under two years
- Eight institutions believed credit assessment a 50/50 effort between the sending and receiving institution
- Block credit transfer, program/course outcomes, case by case basis, and course outline review methodologies all common, with 2-3 methodologies used concurrently
- No significant relationship between the maximum number of credits awarded in a pathway and level of collaboration, transfer methodology or involvement of various positions in the institution
- Identified need for Indigenous content experts to participate in the transfer credits assessment process

Results: Indigenous Knowledges & Credit Assessment

- Multiple institutions indicated that they have or are currently in the process of indigenizing their curriculum/institution
- When IK was present in non-Indigenous programs, one out of five institutions imparted that IK was factored into credit assessment
- Four institutions have pathways between programs rooted in different cultural traditions, with $\frac{3}{4}$ factoring this difference into assessment
- Interdisciplinary and laddering approaches noted as promising practices. Need to examine integrated approaches in accelerated programs identified
- Tensions between an Indigenous wholistic framework and the credit assessment process and “seeing the learner” acknowledged

Results: Credit Assessment & Personal Experience

- Prior experience was viewed as relevant in multiple disciplines
- Specific methods to assess experience included: challenge exams, curriculum vitae reviews, letters of support and/or essay writing
- Prior Learning and Recognition (PLAR) as a methodology received mixed reviews by participants
- Considerations included assessing language competencies, positioning learners as knowledge holders, and creating new knowledge through deepened understandings
- Work being done to develop pathways with non-accredited institutions

Results: Advantages, Disadvantages & Challenges

- Most respondents agreed pathways provide educational advancement opportunities for the learner (91%), greater access (91%), improved learner mobility (87%), flexibility and convenience (83%) and professional advancement opportunities (74%)
- Pathway development seen as a way to support reconciliation
- 45% of respondents believed there were no disadvantages; Most prominent disadvantage was learners taking courses they may not want to take (35%). Self ID and funding issues also reported
- Challenges include: undervaluing and lack of understanding of IK, lack of resources, restrictive policies, lack of data, K-12 transition, perceived competition & measures of success

Recommendations: Wholistic & Accessible Pathways

- Indigenous pathway development should be comprehensive, spanning from K-12 to employment;
- An enhanced focus on academic upgrading and other initial entry points to post-secondary studies should occur to support access to Indigenous pathways as some Indigenous learners do not currently meet eligibility requirements; and,
- Collaboration among sending and receiving institutions should extend beyond transfer credit assessment to include data sharing and the delivery of wrap-around supports.

Recommendations: Wholistic & Accessible Pathways

Recommendation	Activity	Initial Steps
Wholistic & Accessible Pathways		
Indigenous pathway development should be comprehensive, spanning from K-12-employment	<p>Work with a local community to design and pilot a K-12 to employment pathway model</p> <p>Involve K-12 institutions and learners in the creation of possible pathways</p>	Hold focus groups/meetings with communities and key stakeholders
An enhanced focus on academic upgrading and other initial entry points to PSE should occur	Remove secondary streaming and/or identify alternatives to current forms of equivalency testing that are community-based	Develop a position paper

Recommendations: Collaborative & Community-Driven Pathways

- Indigenous communities, Indigenous learners and Indigenous content specialists must be meaningfully involved in pathway development and assessment processes;
- Indigenous communities should be equipped with the necessary information to meaningfully participate in pathway assessment and development. An environmental scan of similar pathways should be conducted prior to new pathway development to maximize learner advantages, and data related to Indigenous learners should be available;
- Enhanced collaboration should occur between institutions and relevant stakeholders, to support the development of innovative and consistent pathways;

Recommendations: Collaborative & Community-Driven Pathways

Collaborative and Community-Driven Pathways		
Indigenous communities, Indigenous learners and Indigenous content specialists must be meaningfully involved in pathway development and assessment processes	Enhanced collaboration with communities to facilitate a better/deeper understanding of data and subsequent pathway needs	Provide communities with data (i.e. community report) to support the discussion
Enhanced collaboration among and between institutions and relevant stakeholders	Bring together groups in the province who are already engaged in research and/or advocacy work	<p>Review work done to date in this area</p> <p>Meet with the Northern Collaborative and the Confederation College group to identify and discuss shared priorities</p> <p>Meet with Colleges Ontario to identify and discuss shared priorities</p>

Recommendations: Pathway Expansion

- There is a lack of Indigenous pathways within disciplines that are both meaningful and relevant to Indigenous communities, such as justice, environmental science and art & design. Further pathway development in these areas should be explored;
- Indigenous learners are spread across disciplines, requiring the development of additional pathways outside of Indigenous programs; and,
- Best practices should inform the development of new pathways. Consistent with a strengths-based approach, laddering curriculum or other means should be utilized to demonstrate the relevance and value of such pathways to learners and Indigenous communities.

Recommendations: Pathway Expansion

Pathway Expansion		
Best practices should inform the development of new pathways. Consistent with a strengths-based approach, laddering curriculum or other means should be utilized to demonstrate the relevance and value of such pathways to learners and Indigenous communities	Build new pathways based on best practices and strength-based approaches and not historical approaches	Compile an inventory on approaches and best practices in PSE pathway development

Recommendations: Enhanced Data

- Indigenous learners are accessing and experiencing Indigenous pathways differently. More information on Indigenous learners' experiences is needed overall as well as in relation to sub-populations including on-reserve, sponsored and adult learners;
- Further planning at an institutional and system level needs to occur to support standardized data collection and analysis efforts; and,
- Data collection efforts need to be informed by Indigenous-based research principles and include indicators that are meaningful and relevant to Indigenous peoples, including but not limited to Indigenous-based measures of success.

Recommendations: Enhanced Data

Enhanced Data		
Further planning at an institutional and system level needs to occur to support standardized data collection and analysis efforts	Standardize data collection across PSE	Develop Indigenous baseline data requirements
Data collection efforts need to be informed by Indigenous-based research principles and include indicators that are meaningful and relevant to Indigenous peoples, including but not limited to Indigenous-based measures of success.	Data collection to be guided by OCAP principles and Aboriginal Education Councils	Develop draft guidelines or overarching principles for institutions to adopt
	Develop consistent engagement and evaluation pieces to support pathway development and assessment	Develop pathway standards based off Indigenous concepts of success

Recommendations: Indigenous Approaches to Pathway Development

- Personal experience is a respected knowledge tradition among Indigenous peoples and post-secondary institutions should recognize the personal experiences of Indigenous pathway learners upon entry. Innovative work in both an Indigenous and non-Indigenous context is occurring that can inform practices in Ontario institutions;
- Institutions across Ontario are using a variety of approaches to incorporate Indigenous knowledges including integration into current curriculum, stand-alone courses and through extra-curricular experiential opportunities. As such a spectrum of approaches to credit assessment of Indigenous content should be explored in place of a standardized approach;
- Ontario is only at the cusp of incorporating Indigenous knowledges in credit assessment, promising practices, including outcome and interdisciplinary approaches should be explored; and,
- Alternative modes of program delivery and subsequent pathways that align with the lived experience of Indigenous learners, such as collaborative-based programming and block programming should be explored.

Recommendations: Indigenous Approaches to Pathway Development

Indigenous Approaches to Pathway Development		
<p>PSE institutions should recognize the personal experience of Indigenous pathway learners upon entry</p>	<p>General education courses provincially recognized for language and skill competency such as beadwork, drumming, leather work etc.</p>	<p>Examine the space to acknowledge Indigenous knowledges and skills within the current general education framework and PLAR policies and practices</p>
	<p>Build Indigenous knowledges and skills into current curriculum</p>	<p>Create and implement training to support the assessment of Indigenous knowledges and skills through GE and PLAR</p>
		<p>If necessary, create guidelines for Indigenous knowledges and link to current framework and PLAR policies and practices</p>

Recommendations: Commitment to Indigenous Education

- A comprehensive review of institutional and system level policies, including funding policies, is needed to identify and address barriers to Indigenous modes of education delivery, pathway development and assessment;
- Post-secondary education employees should be knowledgeable about Indigenous peoples and equipped to support Indigenous learners; and,
- Post-secondary education learners should be knowledgeable about Indigenous peoples.

Recommendations: Commitment to Indigenous Education

Commitment to Indigenous Education		
A comprehensive review of institutional and system level policies, including funding policies, is needed to identify and address barriers to Indigenous modes of education delivery, pathway development and assessment	Revise the “Minister’s Binding Policy Directive”	Engage in discussions with the Ministry about barriers to Indigenous pathway development
PSE employees should be knowledgeable about Indigenous peoples and equipped to support Indigenous learners	<p>Develop and deliver mandatory cultural sensitivity training as part of employee and faculty orientation</p> <p>Provide Indigenous knowledges training for faculty and employees in protocols, language use and cultural practices</p>	<p>Create a working group to oversee the creation of roll out messaging across the province and to carry out this work</p> <p>Engage senior leadership in planning and roll-out</p> <p>Create and/or adopt training on Canadian/Indigenous history</p>
PSE learners should be knowledgeable about Indigenous peoples	<p>Have the MAESD program standards creation branch embed Indigenous learning outcomes in all PSE programs as vocational learning outcomes</p> <p>Create system-wide resources and supports to teach and embed Indigenous education</p>	Identify resources currently available (best practices, modules etc.)

Next Steps

- Phase II approval received
- Research of the student experience across the continuum from pre-admission to employment within Indigenous program pathways
- Data points desired are: retention of students, credential attainment, satisfaction with experience, challenges faced, future path/goal of student and outcome of credit transfer, pathway or block transfer (did they take/get credit), student funding impacts.

Questions?

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