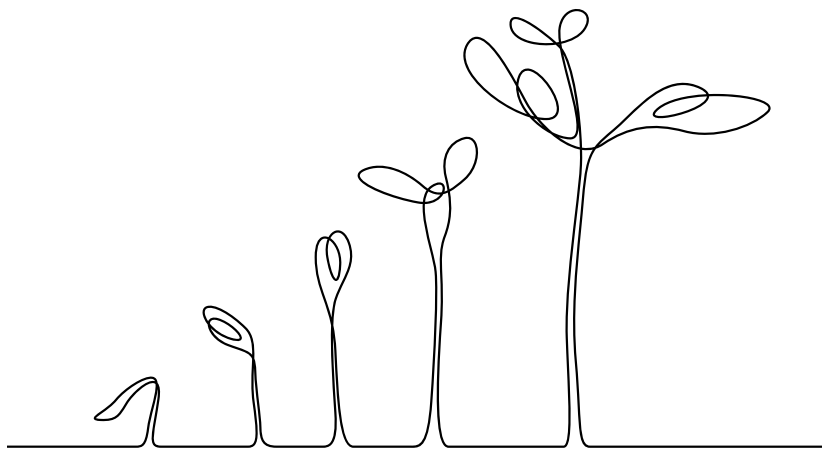


LAURENTIAN UNIVERSITY NATIVE EDUCATION COUNCIL (LUNEC)

Truth and Reconciliation

Taskforce



LaurentianUniversity
Université**Laurentienne**

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Preamble	5
A note about terminology.....	7
Context	8
Process and approach	11
TRTF meeting #1	12
TRTF meeting #2	12
TRTF meeting #3.....	12
TRTF meeting #4.....	12
Expressing a vision for the TRTF Plan	13
Recommendations	16
1.1 Formal acknowledgement	17
1.2 Anishnaabemowin acknowledgement	18
2 Anishnaabemowin more prominent.....	19
3 Increase land based learning sites	20
4 Provide physical space for research institute	20
5 Indigenous content.....	23
6 Indigenous knowledge	23
7 Implementation of Recommendations	25
8 Community engagement.....	26
9 Taskforce goals	26
10 Hiring and onboarding	26
Conclusions and next steps.....	27
Appendix A.....	28
Appendix B	30
References	34

Acknowledgements



The final report of the Laurentian University Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce is the result of the diligent efforts of Taskforce members who contributed insights and participated in four meetings over the course of the past year to develop a set of specific and compelling recommendations aimed at advancing reconciliation.





This task has not been easy.

Taskforce members had to delve into and confront difficult truths. For example, post-secondary institutions have not adequately upheld their responsibility to educate students about the history of colonization and the harmful legacy of residential schools, the erasure of Indigenous knowledges and languages, and the roots of distrust and divisiveness in relationships between Canada and Indigenous peoples.

As places of higher learning and research, universities have educated generations of researchers, public figures, political leaders, educators, civil servants and others who inform policy and decision making in Canadian society. More broadly, universities have been the birthplace of ideas, institutions, policies, systems and structures that for too long either ignored or maintained the devastatingly desperate conditions in which Indigenous people are living.

Beyond acknowledging these truths, universities must act. Such action must be founded on the advice of Indigenous people. Clear steps involve ensuring that all students, staff and faculty learn the true history of colonization in Canada and that the rich history, knowledge, culture and enduring presence and contributions of Indigenous peoples are illuminated and affirmed. Culturally safe learning environments, the promotion of Anishnaabemowin and spaces for Indigenous teaching and research are part of the way forward.

Taskforce members, by entering into safe and sustained dialogue, have modeled a way forward toward renewed relationships, a reclamation of well-being and an inclusive university.

Sincerest gratitude is extended to the Elders, students, staff, faculty and community members who invested their time, goodwill and guidance to this effort. The deliberations and recommendations contained in this report would not have been possible without the contributions of each and every member of the Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce.

We gratefully acknowledge their input and advice.

Miigwech – Merci – Thank you!



Preamble

Located within the boundaries of the Robinson-Huron Treaty of 1850, Laurentian University operates on the traditional lands of the Atikameksheng Anishnawbek.

Laurentian has expressed in its strategic plan, a commitment to “strengthening the foundation of knowledge in higher education and research to offer an outstanding university experience in English and French with a comprehensive approach to Indigenous education”¹.

Laurentian University takes pride in its approach to “Indigeneity”, by which “Laurentian University will be a leader in the process of reconciliation through transformative postsecondary education and research”¹.

In addition, there is strong commitment to ensuring “Laurentian students will become more familiar with Indigenous ways of being and principles of reconciliation through various aspects of campus culture”².

Approximately 1,600 First Nation, Métis and Inuit students are enrolled across all faculties at Laurentian University. Laurentian has more Indigenous faculty than any other university in Ontario with 24 full-time Indigenous faculty members in various departments, and faculties.

The Indigenous Sharing and Learning Centre (ISLC), which opened on National Indigenous Peoples Day in 2017, features a stunning round-room modeled after a teaching lodge and provides innovative facilities in a variety of indoor and outdoor spaces. The ISLC houses Indigenous Student Affairs which provides cultural, social and academic support for Indigenous learners.

Established in 1975, the long-standing Department of Indigenous Studies promotes an understanding of Indigenous peoples, their traditions, aspirations and participation in local, national and international communities. The Department of Indigenous Studies is a leader in offering excellence in Indigenous knowledge and practice within traditional and contemporary contexts.

The School of Indigenous Relations combines a sound platform of knowledge about Indigenous worldviews, traditional teachings, and practices with mainstream theories and studies to equip Indigenous Social Work and Master of Indigenous Relations graduates to work effectively with communities.

Indigenous content is integrated into the curriculum across faculties at Laurentian University to ensure all Laurentian students gain awareness of Indigenous peoples, their knowledges and histories, and their constitutionally unique status and relationships in Canada.

Advancing research on these and other topics, the newly formed Maamwizing Indigenous Research Institute is emerging as a focal point for “culturally appropriate research that enhances mino-bimaadziwin and wellness among Indigenous peoples”³.

Higher education has a responsibility to empower Indigenous self-determination, support decolonization, and unravel systemic and societal inequalities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples and communities.

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) released 92 Calls to Action (4) aimed at government, public institutions and private industry. These Calls to Action seek to address the legacy of harm inflicted on the Indigenous population through the system of Indian Residential Schools. These recommendations seek to advance expressions of reconciliation, and promote social justice and equity for Indigenous peoples in all spheres.

According to the TRC, universities and colleges as key educational institutions have a pivotal role in championing reconciliation in society. Laurentian University for its part, has expressed its commitment to “support Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and will respond by creating a task force to identify priority actions, beginning by offering cultural safety training and opportunities to learn the Anishnaabemowin language to faculty, staff and students”⁵.

In this report, a number of measures have been identified by the Laurentian University Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce. Laurentian University and the federated universities, its affiliated partners, are strongly encouraged to consider implementing these recommendations.



A note about terminology

In Canada, the legal term Aboriginal has been used to refer to three unique groups of Indigenous people: Indian, Inuit and Métis. Each of these groups have their own unique culture, history and languages. More recently, the term Indigenous has been used in place of the term Aboriginal in alignment with an inclusive international understanding of Indigenous peoples across the globe. For the purpose of this report, the Taskforce will use the term “Indigenous”.

The Taskforce wishes to also emphasize a further important distinction. Laurentian University is located in Sudbury, Ontario on the ancestral Anishinaabek territory of the Atikameksheng Anishnawbek. Sudbury, also known as N’Swakamok in Anishnaabemowin - meaning “where the roads meet” - is a historic gathering and trading place as well for many other First Nation communities, several amongst whom are signatories to the Robinson Huron Treaty of 1850. Further, this area is home to many Métis and other First Nations from across Ontario and Canada each of whom have their own unique histories, languages and cultural identities. Laurentian University has welcomed annually an average of approximately 1600 self-identified Indigenous students (11% of the total student population) from across Turtle Island and internationally.

Though the term “Indigenous” is used in this report, the Taskforce respectfully wishes to ensure that this report and the accompanying recommendations therein acknowledge the Anishinaabek and other groups who are the original Indigenous people of this territory since time immemorial.

Finally, the Taskforce recognizes that the term “reconciliation” may mean different things to different people. In moving forward to implement the recommendations of this report, an initial step is needed to ensure a workable definition for Laurentian University and Indigenous partners engaged in this work.



Context



The treatment of children in Indian Residential Schools is a sad chapter in our history”⁶.

In June 2008, Prime Minister Stephen Harper stood in the House of Commons and delivered a statement of apology on behalf of the Canadian Government to survivors of Indian Residential Schools:

“For more than a century, Indian Residential Schools separated over 150,000 Aboriginal children from their families and communities. In the 1870’s, the federal government, partly in order to meet its obligation to educate Aboriginal children, began to play a role in the development and administration of these schools. Two primary objectives of the Residential Schools system were to remove and isolate children from the influence of their homes, families, traditions and cultures, and to assimilate them into the dominant culture. These objectives were based on the assumption Aboriginal cultures and spiritual beliefs were inferior and unequal. Indeed, some sought, as it was infamously said, “to kill the Indian in the child”. Today, we recognize that this policy of assimilation was wrong, has caused great harm, and has no place in our country”⁶.

Most of these schools were operated as joint ventures between Anglican, Catholic, Presbyterian and United churches and the government. The residential school system for Indigenous children “was an education system in name only for much of its existence”⁷. This was an “educational system in which very young children were often forcibly removed from their homes, often taken far from their communities. Many were inadequately fed, clothed and housed. All were deprived of the care and nurturing of their parents, grandparents and communities. First Nations, Inuit and Métis languages and cultural practices were prohibited in these schools. Tragically, some of these children died while attending residential schools and others never returned home. The government now recognizes that the consequences of the Indian Residential Schools policy were profoundly negative and that this policy has had a lasting and damaging impact on Aboriginal culture, heritage and language”⁶.

Though the schools were in existence for well over 100 years, and many successive generations of children from the same communities and families attended them, this profoundly harmful experience was hidden for most of Canada's history.

It was not until survivors of the system began to bring their experiences to light in several thousand court cases, that the truth of the Indian Residential School (IRS) experience began to emerge.

These court cases precipitated the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) which was an agreement between the Government of Canada and approximately 86,000 residential school survivors. The IRSSA sought to recognize the damage inflicted by residential schools on those who were enrolled in these schools during the period 1879 and 1996. A Common Experience Payment (CEP) for former IRS students formed part of this agreement and represented the largest class action settlement in Canadian history.

A cornerstone of the IRSSA was the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada in 2008. The TRC spent six years travelling to all parts of Canada to hear from IRS survivors. The Commission heard from more than 6,000 witnesses, most of whom survived the experience of living in the schools as students. Many of these children were abused, physically and sexually while others died in the schools in "numbers that would not have been tolerated in any school system anywhere in the country, or in the world"⁷.

It is further well documented that the legacy of Indian Residential Schools gave rise to many of the social problems that persist in Indigenous communities to this day.

The Commission's mandate was to uncover the truth and lay the foundation for reconciliation. Having knowledge about residential schools and their legacy, compels action. To redress the legacy of residential schools and to advance reconciliation, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, in its Final Report, called on governments, educational and religious institutions, civic groups and all Canadians to take action on the 94 Calls to Action it had identified.

Reconciliation requires that a new vision, based on a commitment to mutual respect, be developed. Reconciliation is not an Indigenous problem; it is a Canadian one. Virtually all aspects of Canadian society need to consider how they are implicated and how they will approach reconciliation.

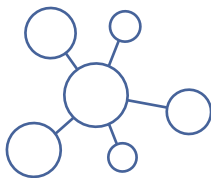
This summary report developed by the Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce describes how Laurentian University and its federated university partners intend to act on TRC Calls to Action and forge a path forward towards reconciliation.

This commitment to the Calls to Action is outlined in Outcome 21 of Laurentian's Ensemble-Together-Maamwi 2018-2023 Strategic plan:

We support the **Truth and Reconciliation** Commission Calls to Action and will respond by creating a task force to identify priority actions, beginning by offering **cultural safety training** and opportunities to learn the **Anishnaabemowin language** to faculty, staff, and students;

Towards this end, Laurentian University's Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce was established in the fall of 2018 to respond to the Calls to Action and emerging issues as identified in the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Final Report by:

- ▶ Having honest and proactive discussions about the Calls to Action (and emerging issues) as they apply to Laurentian (and the federated universities);
- ▶ Identifying strategies and providing recommendations that address the concerns and questions coming from these informed discussions; and,
- ▶ Providing a final report to the President that includes these recommendations and strategies within an implementation plan.





Process and approach

Members on the Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce were selected from amongst faculty, staff, students, leaders, community representatives and other partners who could respectfully contribute to the TRTF in a meaningful way.

Membership was structured as follows:

- a. A broader consultative group that includes members from the Laurentian University Native Education Council (LUNEC) and/or members appointed by LUNEC and/or members invited by LUNEC, and,
- b. A smaller working group organized by the Office of the Associate Vice-President Academic and Indigenous Programs that coordinates the TRTF and writes the final report.

*A full listing of members is attached in **Appendix A**.*

Four meetings were scheduled over the course of a 9-month time period to engage in dialogue and discussion and determine priorities for action.



Four meetings were scheduled over the course of a 9-month time period to engage in dialogue and discussion and determine priorities for action. *The meetings were scheduled as follows:*

TRTF Meeting #1 - Friday September 28, 2018

At this initial meeting, Taskforce members engaged in activities to establish rapport and to learn about the work and activities already in place at Laurentian and affiliated universities in support of Indigenous education, research, student success and community engagement.

TRTF Meeting #2 - Friday November 23, 2018

At the second meeting, participants outlined current activities; as well as those that were identified in current or future operational and strategic plans. Based on this review, they proposed new ideas and activities for consideration in alignment with TRC Calls to Action.

TRTF Meeting #3 - Friday March 8th, 2019

At this meeting, groups developed suggested models or frameworks to approach the work needed to address reconciliation and prioritized from amongst 32 proposed new activities those that should be recommended immediately by the TRTF.

Based on the work of the Taskforce in the initial two meetings, a total of 32 recommendations were proposed for consideration in the Reconciliation plan.

In this third meeting, a process to prioritize from amongst these 32 recommendations was undertaken. Members were asked to highlight their choices for:

- ▶ **Green:** for immediate action as a recommendation in the Reconciliation plan
- ▶ **Yellow:** a medium to longer term consideration as a Reconciliation recommendation
- ▶ **Red:** though important, less of a priority in the context of Reconciliation

Based on these criteria, members were able to narrow the list of recommendations to ten recommendations which they feel are achievable and appropriate in the Reconciliation plan.

TRTF Meeting #4 - Friday May 24, 2019

A final meeting was held to review the prioritized recommendations and add further clarifications and refinements as well as select a proposed model.

*The agendas for each of the four meetings are provided in **Appendix B**.*



Expressing a vision for the Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce Plan

At the first meeting of the Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce in September 2018, a dialogue was initiated to develop a vision for the Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce.

Beyond the TRC Calls to Action and Final Report, a foundational reference point from which to contextualize this work is the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted by the United Nations on September 13, 2007, to enshrine rights that “constitute the minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world”⁽⁸⁾. The UNDRIP seeks to protect collective rights above and beyond those that may be outlined in other human rights charters that emphasize individual human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Declaration is the culmination of 25 years of work by U.N. member states and Indigenous groups.

In addition to freedom from discrimination and the right to nationhood, the Declaration states that Indigenous peoples have the right to enjoy and practice their cultures and customs, their religions, and their languages, and to develop and strengthen their economies and their social and political institutions.

These concepts frame much of the dialogue that ensued.

Small groups were created to discuss their ideas and elements of a vision for the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce. The concepts were aspirational and creative and included specific words, ideas, teachings and images. Many used the Anishnaabemowin language and words to convey their thoughts. The following are key concepts which resonated and were shared consistently across the various groups.

Respect in relationship as equal partners - Groups all spoke to the need for respect as a foundational underpinning for dialogue and relationship before any effort would succeed.



*I feel what you're saying, I get what you are saying".
(Meeting Participant)*

It is also important to begin with an understanding of where we are at and where we want to be. This expression of a vision together will be paramount.

Centering Indigenous voices and perspectives

An important distinction was made about inclusion which often connotes the idea that Indigenous people may be invited into processes designed and driven by others.

However, it was noted that the work should be centered around and driven by Indigenous people and their voices and aspirations need to be amplified. "It begins with us - we need to start at home."

Privileging Indigenous rights, laws, ways and understandings

This work must be based on a recognition of Indigenous laws and governance as well as Indigenous ways of being and knowing.

Further, it must prioritize Indigenous languages especially Anishnaabemowin. In addition, the work of the TRC Taskforce must honour, acknowledge and recognize the original people, their territory and lands and place names upon which the University is operating. This may extend to considering the development of pathways to support land return/land sharing/land reclamation. Most importantly, the vision should be based on recognition and incorporation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a framework for the LU TRC action plan.

The importance of storytelling

If Truth and Reconciliation is to be honoured, all stories matter and must be privileged as truth has many sides. This work needs to incorporate and accept the many stories that need to be heard as difficult as these may be.

Safe and sustained dialogue

The taskforce needs to push beyond the comfort zone for both students and faculties and create safe space for dialogue to occur and continue and to allow for difficult conversation without conflict.

Weweni Naagaadendaamowin

Loosely translated this means, "we have to look after each other" for this to work. This is a central idea behind this taskforce. It is important to nurture this fire or spark of new knowledge and the way in which to work together so that it won't be extinguished. Weweni naagaadendaamowin encourages all involved to "take care of it and one another."

Addressing racism and social injustice

There is a need to name these instances when they happen, confront it and work together to address it. There are many steps that can be taken right now to do so.

Bridge building as modeled by the Two Row Wampum

The Two Row Wampum articulates a way forward for peace and friendship. Depicted in the two-row wampum are two vessels on the water, each with their own path and pace. There is a need to bring back this peace making and bridge building as well as a need to begin taking care of and tending to the water, as water and its health is an indicator of our wellbeing.

Address institutional in-congruencies

Strengthening relationships between students, faculty and staff through cultural competency and by confronting institutional norms of the university and adapting policies which conflict with Indigenous cultural understanding and ways.

These concepts described above as part of the Taskforce's vision are illuminated further and underpin both the model and recommendations expressed by the Taskforce later in this report.

For example, addressing institutional issues or norms that are incongruent with Indigenous culture or ways of being can be approached by undertaking cultural competency training. In a similar vein, privileging Indigenous rights, laws, ways and understanding may find expression in land and language acknowledgement as well as other recommendations put forth by the taskforce. These are outlined in a later section of this report.

Other concepts described relate more to the process of working together over the course of the Taskforce's time frame. Entering into relationships as equal partners, centering Indigenous voices, acknowledging one another's story and truth and nurturing one another's spirit is critical to safe and sustained dialogue and to a respectful process.



Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce recommendations

In this section of the report, ten recommendations are described which emerge from the following areas of focus:

- Honouring the people and land
- Anishnaabemowin acknowledgement
- Land and spaces for teaching and research
- Indigenous content that is authentic and appropriately taught
- Cultural competency – Indigenous Knowledge Sharing & Lifelong Learning
- Support for the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce

The following sections describe each of the recommendations more fully.

Moving beyond land acknowledgement to honouring the people and the land

A Land Acknowledgement is a formal statement that recognizes the unique and enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories.

Its purpose is to recognize that settlers and people who are not part of First Nations or Indigenous groups, are here on Indigenous peoples' land. Acknowledging relationships to space and place is an ancient Indigenous practice and a tradition that has dated back centuries for Indigenous people. Indeed, as early explorers traversed the expanse of Canada and its waterways, recognizing the territory or lands of the people was a respectful protocol observed solemnly by all.

In modern times, for non-Indigenous people acknowledging the people, their history, relationships and land upon which meetings are taking place or in which institutions are operating is a relatively recent concept and practice.

The practice of land acknowledgement serves as a reminder of accountability to treaty and other relationships and, in this case, that the post-secondary education systems are accountable to the Indigenous communities on whose territory they are operating. A land acknowledgement also serves as a signal of intent to continue the learning journey concerning these historical relationships and the current contemporary realities of the people who are being acknowledged. Honouring and acknowledging the Indigenous homelands upon which the University operates is therefore critical. For many Indigenous people this represents a small but essential step toward reconciliation.

The Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce therefore wishes to recommend that Laurentian University exercise leadership in showcasing land acknowledgement as a visual expression of a small step towards recognition of Indigenous peoples and reconciliation. The Taskforce recommends that there be a:

>> Recommendation #1.1

Formal acknowledgement of the land at entrance to the University

Land acknowledgements at formal meetings and in tangible signage at key locations are a helpful starting point for signaling the importance of the respectful relationship with Indigenous communities.

It must also be recognized that, however, more recently there is a strong sentiment emerging that land acknowledgements have become merely hollow without accompanying action.

The Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce wishes to see this recommendation reframed and enhanced to honour the people and their relationship to the land along with their history, stories and teachings.

Moreover, the emphasis should be on strengthening relationships with the communities and peoples of this land and reclaiming space through visual representations of their stories, history and identity.

This can be done, through art and imagery. For example, a digital display projecting words, stories, art and historical photos on campus buildings and walls in high traffic areas would better amplify this effort. The display should be visual, appealing, dynamic and continually refreshed with new information.

This effort should also be integrated and aligned with overall institution-wide cultural competency. To effectively acknowledge land and community, those who are sharing land acknowledgements should also spend time on the land and in the local communities about whom they are speaking.

This is integral to their cultural competency and serves also as a means of establishing and strengthening relationships with local First Nations such as the Atikameksheng Anishnawbek.

The Taskforce therefore recommends that the University:

>> Recommendation #1.2

Anishnaabemowin acknowledgement

The rights of Indigenous peoples are recognized and affirmed in section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 including rights related to Indigenous languages. Recently in February 2019, the Government of Canada introduced Bill C-91, the Indigenous Languages Act, to reclaim, revitalize, strengthen and maintain Indigenous languages in Canada. The intent of the bill is to support the meaningful implementation of Calls to Action 13, 14 and 15 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, as well as elements of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (8). The relevant article expressed in UNDRIP is outlined as follows:

Article 13

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.

Indigenous languages are an integral part of the culture and identity not only of Indigenous Peoples' but a rich and vibrant component of Canadian society. Currently, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has identified that 75% of the 90 different living Indigenous languages in Canada are endangered (9).

Action must be taken to begin to address this concerning trend.

Recent efforts at Laurentian University which aim to recognize and support local Indigenous languages include tri-lingual signage on campus inclusive of Anishnaabemowin as a signal of support for the reclamation, revitalization, strengthening and maintenance of the local Indigenous languages.

In fact, Outcome 8 of **Ensemble – Together – Maamwi**, Laurentian University's strategy plan (2) 2023 expresses a key outcome as follows:

Laurentian students will become more familiar with **Indigenous ways of being** and principles of **reconciliation** through various aspects of campus culture;

Trilingual signage is a tangible sign of university support and promotion of public awareness, a critically important aspect of culture, i.e. the richness and diversity of Indigenous languages. To further enhance this effort, the Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce recommends the University:

>> Recommendation #2

Make Anishnaabemowin more prominent.

To accomplish this, the TRTF recommends that there be an overall framework for the way in which Anishnaabemowin is offered, recognized and promoted on the University campus. Elements of this framework could include:

- establishing a Department of Anishnaabemowin which includes a language centre and fortifying the connections to community which will enrich and enhance Anishnaabemowin research, curriculum and teaching
- ensuring libraries on campus dedicate space to resources and holdings in the Anishnaabemowin language
- developing an Anishnaabemowin translation policy and ensuring an appropriate budget is set aside to implement this policy
- conducting land acknowledgement in Anishnaabemowin as well as in English and French
- formalizing a policy to recognize Anishnaabemowin as on par with English and French
- ensuring that French language studies recognize, acknowledge and also teach the Michif language

Land and spaces for teaching, learning & research

The importance of Indigenous spaces for teaching and research is both a symbolic and practical symbol of the welcoming environment for Indigenous students, faculty and community. Appropriate and dedicated space is central to the Indigenous experience on campus and within course content. Such space supports the recruitment, retention and flourishing of Indigenous students, faculty and inclusion of community partners so vital to the authentic and appropriate creation and translation of Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous-focused research.

In particular, spaces which emphasize a connection to the land are critical for Indigenous content delivery, language teaching and ceremonial practices. In fact, TRC Call to Action 48 (ii) calls for a commitment to “respecting Indigenous people’s right to self-determination in spiritual matters, including the right to practice, develop and teach their own spiritual and religious traditions, customs, and ceremonies”.

Not only should emphasis be placed on physical locations and teaching spaces on campus but also on facilitating land based teaching approaches which infuse experiential learning and local Anishinabek culture. In this regard, these approaches should be based on advice from local communities, elders and knowledge keepers.

The Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce therefore recommends, the University:

>> Recommendation #3


Increase land based learning sites available for teaching, learning and research and support land based teaching approaches.

This recommendation is closely aligned with a corresponding recommendation related to Maamwizing Indigenous Research Institute.

>> Recommendation #4

Provide physical space for the Maamwizing Indigenous Research Institute

The Anishinaabe word maamwizing describes the concept of “people collaborating together” and is part of the name Maamwizing Indigenous Research Institute to reflect the aim of Maamwizing which is to:

 to bring together researchers to pursue research that embraces Indigenous worldviews, provides a decolonial critique, privileges the voices of Indigenous communities, benefits Indigenous peoples and develops Indigenous peoples as researchers.¹⁰


An appropriate physical space is a key avenue to support this. The TRTF recommends that space be provided as an integral part of the University of Sudbury where a hub for research and the necessary administrative activities of Maamwizing can be established. At a conceptual level, the space envisioned would support Maamwizing as both a “living lab” to cultivate the Indigenous research ecosystem and as an “incubator” to open dialogue with partners who support translation of Indigenous knowledge into action.

Indigenous content that is authentic and appropriately taught

The TRC calls on institutions of higher learning to provide programs and curriculum that integrate Indigenous knowledge for Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners (4). These recommendations align with Article 15 of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (8), which states that, “Indigenous peoples have the right to dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information” (p.7).

Teaching and learning define the mission and identity of Laurentian University as outlined in the **Imagine 2023 - Ensemble – Together – Maamwi strategic plan**.

In particular, Laurentian with over 25 Indigenous faculty, is actively seeking to carve out a niche in Indigenous curriculum and content as expressed in one of its strategy outcomes.

 We will be a **national leader** in Indigenous education because of expanded **Indigenous curriculum offerings** across all faculties.”

As of September 2017, all new Bachelor of Art students are required to complete at least 6 credits of Indigenous content courses during their degree program. In addition, almost all departments and schools in the Faculty of Arts offer courses with Indigenous content. Laurentian proudly claims that there are currently over 100 Indigenous content courses available in French or English.

Such large scale efforts to create and deliver Indigenous curriculum and content is not without challenges according to taskforce members.

Developing Indigenous content or “Indigenizing” curriculum requires collaboration between Indigenous knowledge holders and non-Indigenous stakeholders as well as strong relationships with local Indigenous community partners who must be consulted and engaged in this process as sources of local expertise.

Faculty are central to the Indigenization of curriculum within an institution. They must not only understand the benefits of and advocate for Indigenous content, but work to incorporate Indigenous theory and pedagogy into their classrooms and instruction methods. It is the opinion of the Taskforce that more Indigenous faculty are needed to develop and deliver such curriculum.

Indeed, a real challenge is in the institution’s current demographic - there simply are not enough academically-trained Indigenous faculty. Furthermore, the responsibility of Indigenization does not belong solely to Indigenous faculty. This must be an expectation and commitment across all programs within the institution. Support from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous faculty for the development and delivery of Indigenous content in the course curriculum is crucial.

In this regard, faculty must be willing to self-situate as allies and “non-Anishinaabe in Anishinaabe territory” and understand the benefits of and crucial role they play in promoting social justice, and the impact this has on broader society. Moreover, allies who are teaching Indigenous content must consider how they are using their privilege to mentor new Indigenous scholars.

Faculty development and capacity-building in the form of training and support for cultural competency are therefore a cornerstone for the Indigenization of curriculum. Critical self-reflection is also required to recognize how Indigenous knowledge and pedagogy can be appropriately used in the classroom. Including local elders and knowledge holders in the teaching of such curriculum is central to this effort.

Consideration must be given to ensuring the provision of professional development opportunities for faculty, encouraging ongoing learning, and ensuring the consistent delivery of high quality curriculum to Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners.

Indeed, TRC Call to Action 62 ii) exhorts the federal, provincial and territorial governments to:

“Provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms.”

Ostensibly, the recommendation is aimed at teachers in K-12 but the need is similar for post- secondary instructors and faculty.



In contemplating these various factors, the Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce have prioritized the following two recommendations:

>> Recommendation #5

Ensure those who teach Indigenous content have the necessary qualifications or receive specialized training before teaching such content; and

Hand in hand with Recommendation 5 is a companion recommendation related to the content and quality of the curriculum itself.

Given that Laurentian is situated on the traditional territory of the Atikameksheng Anishnawbek, it is important to first privilege these local stories, teachings and values before then considering those of the wider Anishnaabe territory and First Nations beyond.

This move away from “pan-Indigenous” content is critically important. In recognition of the history and identity of the Anishinaabek people in this territory, whose presence on this land predates colonial contact, the focus of recommendations related to Indigenous course content as well as cultural competency training should prioritize and reflect the Anishinaabek people of this territory as a starting point.

This entails the co-creation of content alongside local knowledge carriers and Elders with acknowledged expertise and lived experience. A process or way to engage with such knowledge holders, perhaps via a council of Elders, is envisioned as key to this development work.

All of these considerations compel the TRTF to recommend that Laurentian University:

>> Recommendation #6

Ensure that the teachings or knowledge comes from the local Anishnaabe people and that such content is developed in collaboration with the people with whom it's associated

Cultural competency - Indigenous Knowledge Sharing & Lifelong Learning

Over the past several years, Laurentian University's staff and faculty have embarked on a journey towards cultural competency. The expression of this commitment is outlined in Outcome 21 of Laurentian's Ensemble. Together. Maamwi. 2018-2023 Strategic plan.



We support the **Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action** and will respond by creating a task force to identify priority actions, beginning by offering **cultural safety** training and opportunities to learn the **Anishnaabemowin language** to faculty, staff, and students;”

Cultural competency is about understanding how ingrained beliefs, attitudes and biases may affect relationships with Indigenous people, families, communities, and nations. This knowledge and reflection is critical to personal growth and societal change and influences how one respectfully engages with Indigenous peoples. Cultural competency is therefore a lifelong process. A number of self-study resources, workshops, seminars and training efforts have been offered to staff and faculty to aid in the learning journey.

The TRTF recognizes the efforts thus far in this area and proposes the following enhancements:

The TRTF suggests that cultural competency training be re-conceptualized as Indigenous knowledge sharing and continuous life-long learning. This learning journey would be premised on critical self-reflection and a progression through identified tiers or stages of learning. Learners would move through such tiers based on their assessment and completion of prerequisites as identified. The learning approach and format for delivery would be grounded in cultural practices. A blended learning model comprising in person, online learning, self-study and self-reflection is proposed.

Further, the knowledge around which this would be framed would emanate from the perspectives of the Anishnaabe people and land and, in particular, the communities of the Robinson-Huron Treaty territory. Therefore, it should be grounded in local historical context, traditional knowledge, cultural practices and teachings.

This content and approach should be developed in collaboration with the Indigenous Sharing and Learning Centre, the Laurentian University Native Education Council (LUNEC), the local Indigenous communities and Indigenous programs. Furthermore, the TRTF recommends that there be an accountability mechanism back to these groups as this knowledge sharing and learning is implemented.

To summarize, the Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce makes the following recommendation:

>> Recommendation #7

Ensure that cultural competency training grounded in the knowledge and culture of the local Anishinaabek people is provided for Laurentian University's senior leadership, faculty, staff and students and that proof of completion of competency training is part of all onboarding (organizational orientation) processes.

This training should be directly linked to an understanding of the goals which have been expressed by the Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce.

Implementation of Recommendations of the Truth & Reconciliation Taskforce

The Taskforce's recommendations are meant to engender meaningful, systemic and sustained institutional change over time. Systemic changes that are required for reconciliation will take time as institutions disrupt and unlearn colonial ideologies and begin to make space for more equitable systems and approaches.

Resources to support the Taskforce Recommendations

In addition to this longer-term vision and mindset, a commitment of ample resources will be required. Meaningful engagement with Indigenous community partners and consultative processes to support the development of Indigenous content and curriculum will require substantial human and financial resources.

In particular, Recommendation 7 which outlines cultural competency in the form of Indigenous knowledge sharing and a lifelong learning process be embedded in the University for all senior leadership, faculty, staff and students will necessitate the allocation of a development and training budget.

With this in mind, the Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce advocates strongly that appropriate resources be allocated to implementation of the recommendations from within existing University budgets. They stressed that:

>> Recommendation #8

Efforts at Reconciliation are not to be funded out of Indigenous program funds

Community engagement is critical to this work

As an essential starting point, the Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce recommends that processes be developed and enhanced to increase community engagement and involvement.

This recommendation is framed around an understanding that a continual commitment to ongoing engagement with Indigenous Elders, students, staff, faculty and communities is needed to support this work.

With this in mind, the Taskforce recommends that Laurentian University:

>> Recommendation #9

Increase community engagement and involvement

Taskforce goals linked with onboarding (organizational orientation)

Moreover, the recommendations should be linked within an accountability framework for faculties, schools and departments to ensure the monitoring of achievement of the reconciliation recommendations.

The Taskforce recommends this be linked to human resources processes such as performance appraisal and be a formal part of every new hire's orientation and onboarding.

In this regard, the Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce recommends that the University:

>> Recommendation #10

Ensure that goals associated with the Truth and Reconciliation Taskforce are connected to hiring and onboarding processes



Conclusions and next Steps

The final meeting of the TRTF was held on May 24th, 2019. Throughout the course of the four planning meetings, the Taskforce members shared wide ranging perspectives, ideas and insights for advancing a vision of reconciliation at Laurentian University.

In many ways, the planning processes undertaken at each of these meetings and the development of an overall report represent only the beginning of the journey to strengthening relationships between Laurentian and the Indigenous community.

A clear next step could entail convening an implementation taskforce who can ensure that concrete and actionable steps emerge from the recommendations shared.



Appendix A

Members of the Truth & Reconciliation Taskforce

Academic and Indigenous Programs
*Pamela Toulouse, Carole Perreault,
 Mélanie Roque, Sheila Cote-Meek*

Facilitator/Consultant
Mariette Sutherland

Faculty of Arts
*Lynne Gouliquer, Pascale Roy
 Léveillé, Alternate: Rosanna Langer*

Faculty of Health
Joey-Lynn Wabie, Laura Hall

Faculty of Science, Engineering and
 Architecture
*David Fortin
 Alternate: Thomas Strickand*

Maamwizing Research Institute
Celeste Pedri-Spade

School of Indigenous Relations
Susan Manitowabi, Daniel Côté

University of Sudbury -
 Indigenous Studies
Will Morin, Mary Recollet, Sarah Rice

Indigenous Social Work Council
*Mathew Dueck
 Alternate: Eric Chappell*

Laurentian University Teaching Fellow
 (Indigenous Focus)
*Charles Daviau
 Alternate: Darrel Manitowabi*

NOSM
Lorrilee McGregor

Canada Research Chair
 (Indigenous Health)
Jennifer Walker

Indigenous Student Affairs
*Shelly Moore-Frappier,
 Gail Charbonneau*

Traditional Knowledge Keeper
Juliette Denis

Laurentian University Students
*Justice Seidel, Melissa Martin-
 Chouinard, Ashley Nadjiwon,
 Adam Babin, Theresa Anderson
 Butcher, Annette Vermette,
 Maria Duarte*

Dean of Faculty of Arts
*Joël Dickinson
 Alternate: Meredith Teller*

Dean of Faculty of Education
*Lace Marie Brogden
 Alternate: Nahid Golafshani*

Dean of Faculty of Health
*Céline Larivière
 Alternates: Liz Carlson, Line Tremblay*

Dean of Faculty of Management
*Bernadette Schell
 Alternate: Hugo Chen*

Dean of Faculty of Science,
 Engineering and Architecture
Rachel Trudeau, Hélène Joly

Dean of Faculty of Graduate Studies
David Lesbarrères

Library/Archives
Brent Roe

Chief of Staff
Alex Freedman

Registrar

Diane Roy

*Alternates: Melissa Ouimette,
Iman Ricard*

Laurentian University

Administration

Brad Parkes

Student Life

Erik Labrosse

Residence & Food Services

Ben Demianiuk

Alternate: Joseph McGibbon

Equity, Diversity and Human Rights

Shannon Goffin

Student Associations Rep (GSA)

Mia Bourque

Research & Creativity Office

Stephanie Harris

Maamwizing Research Institute Ally

Liz Carlson

Indigenous Student Affairs Ally

Rena Daviau

Call to Action Specific

(reconciliation forensics –
justice/child welfare/education
for reconciliation)

Scott Fairgrieve

President at the University of

Sudbury

Sophie Bouffard

President at Thornloe University

Robert Derrenbacker

Alternate: Jennifer Heywood

President at Huntington University

Dawn Noel de Tilly

LUNEC Community Members

Grace Fox, Kim Nootchtai,

Marnie Yourchuk, Nicole McDonald

Education - Indigenous Principal or
Teacher form one of the FN Schools
Hazel Fox-Recollet

Environment - Wahnapiatae First
Nation

Craig Tyson

Language - Anishinaabemowin Teg

Jim Eshkawkogan

Alternate: Michelle Manitowabi

Ojibwe Cultural Foundation

Frank & Julie Ozawagosh

Justice - Anishinabek Police Services

John Syrette

Business - Sage Management

Suzanne Shawbonquit

Appendix B

Meeting Agendas



LUNEC TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION TASK FORCE (TRTF)

Friday, September 28, 2018 • 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. • Fielding Park, Lively ON

Objective: *To know where we are as it relates to Indigenous presence on campus at Laurentian and the federated universities.*

- 10:00 a.m. Opening Prayer (ISA Knowledge Keeper)
- 10:10 a.m. Reviewing of Agenda and Introduction of Facilitator (Associate Vice-President, Academic & Indigenous Programs)
- 10:15 a.m. Introduction Activity for the Group (Facilitator: Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
- 10:30 a.m. Oral and Visual Presentations on Indigeneity at Laurentian and the federated universities:
 - 1. ISA – 15 minutes
 - 2. Indigenous Studies – 10 minutes
 - 3. School of Indigenous Relations – 10 minutes
 - 4. Northern Ontario School of Medicine – 10 minutes
 - 5. Maamwizing Indigenous Research Institute – 5 minutes
 - 6. Associate Vice-President, Academic & Indigenous Programs – 5 minutes
 - 7. Other – 5 minutes (Various Contributors)
- 11:30 a.m. BREAK
- 11:45 a.m. Presentations on LUNEC - past strategic plan and insights to current strategic plan (Associate Vice-President, Academic & Indigenous Programs)
- 12:15 p.m. RECAP of Morning Activities for the Group - key insights and information gained (Facilitator – Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
- 12:30 p.m. LUNCH
- 1:15 p.m. TRC and the Calls to Action Presentation (Associate Vice-President, Academic & Indigenous Programs)
- 1:45 p.m. Visioning Activity for the Group – What does truth and reconciliation look like at Laurentian and the federated universities? (Facilitator: Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
- 2:45 p.m. Review the Terms of Reference for the TRTF – responsibilities and next meeting (Facilitator: Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
- 3:00 p.m. Closing Prayer (ISA Knowledge Keeper)

LUNEC TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION TASK FORCE (TRTF)

Friday November 23, 2018 • 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Indigenous Sharing and Learning Centre (ISLC) Round Room, Parker Building

Objective: *To identify activities that we “currently engage in...or are proposed... or that we are proposing” for the Indigenous community (faculty, staff, students, externally) at Laurentian and the federated partners/universities.*

- 10:00 a.m. Opening Prayer (ISA Knowledge Keeper)
- 10:10 a.m. Reviewing of Agenda and TRTF Group Processes (AVPAI)
- 10:15 a.m. Introduction Activity for the Group (Facilitator: Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
- 10:30 a.m. Recap of the 1st Meeting on September 28
(Facilitator: Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
- 11:15 a.m. BREAK
- 11:30 a.m. Individual to Pair/Triad to Small Group – See T-Chart Called
“Current, Proposed & Proposing”. The “Current” refers to your present activities that you do for the Indigenous community here at Laurentian and at the federated partners/universities. The “Proposed” refers to activities that are part of your strategic plan, action plan or revised workplan. The “Proposing” refers to new activities that are not part of the current or proposed ideas of anyone.
(Facilitator – Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
- 12:30 p.m. LUNCH
- 1:15 p.m. Small Group Sharing from 11.30 a.m. -
Fill in the gaps as small groups present – “As you are listening, you may have something to add to their presentation that was missed.”
(Facilitator: Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
- 2:15 p.m. Interactive Sharing of Key Take-Aways from Today
(Facilitator: Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
- 2:45 p.m. Review the Terms of Reference for the TRTF – responsibilities and next meeting – these notes from today will be placed under categories from the TRC Calls to Action Headings
(Facilitator: Mrs. Mariette Sutherland)
- 3:00 p.m. Closing Prayer (ISA Knowledge Keeper)

LUNEC TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION TASK FORCE (TRTF)

Friday, February 22, 2018 • 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Indigenous Sharing and Learning Centre (ISLC) Round Room, Parker Building

Objective: *To finalize the draft recommendations of the TRTF and identify the Laurentian Strategic Plan Outcomes that align with these proposed TRTF recommendations.*

- | | |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10:00 a.m. | Opening Prayer (ISA Knowledge Keeper) |
| 10:10 a.m. | Reviewing of Agenda and TRTF Group Processes (AVPAI) |
| 10:15 a.m. | Introduction Activity for the Group
(Facilitator: Mrs. Mariette Sutherland) |
| 10:30 a.m. | Recap of the 2nd Meeting on November 23rd – Presentation of the Draft TRTF Document (TRTF Report Template) with the Recommendations under appropriate areas/themes.
(Facilitator: Mrs. Mariette Sutherland) |
| 11:00 a.m. | Formation of Small Groups for Review of Draft Recommendations – This is based on the areas/themes in the Draft TRTF Document (TRTF Report Template). Participants will select an area/theme that they are interested in and sit at that Small Group (ex. health, education, justice, media and so on). This is the starting point for their contributions. (Facilitator: Mrs. Mariette Sutherland) |
| 11:15 a.m. | BREAK |
| 11:30 a.m. | Small Groups for Review of Draft Recommendations – Each Small Group will now review the draft recommendations in the TRTF Document (TRTF Report Template) coming from the November 23rd meeting. They will edit these as they see relevant (add, enhance, delete). (Facilitator: Mrs. Mariette Sutherland) |
| 12:30 p.m. | LUNCH |
| 1:15 p.m. | Laurentian University Strategic Plan for 2018-2023 and the 7 Indigenous Outcomes – The AVPAI will review the 7 Indigenous Outcomes that emerge from the LU Strat Plan. The AVPAI will provide one example of how to do the next task in the Small Groups – Taking a TRTF recommendation and linking the Indigenous Outcomes that are relevant to it. (AVPAI) |
| 1:30 p.m. | Small Groups for Review of Draft Recommendations – Each Small Group will now do a final review of the TRTF recommendations and identify the Indigenous Outcomes from LU's strat plan that align with those outcomes. (Facilitator – Mrs. Mariette Sutherland) |
| 2:30 p.m. | Interactive Sharing of Key Take-Aways from Today (Facilitator – Mrs. Mariette Sutherland) |
| 2:50 p.m. | Review the Terms of Reference for the TRTF – responsibilities and next meeting – these notes from today will be placed under categories from the TRC Calls to Action Headings
(Facilitator – Mrs. Mariette Sutherland) |
| 3:00 p.m. | Closing Prayer (ISA Knowledge Keeper) |

LUNEC TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION TASK FORCE (TRTF)

Friday, May 24, 2019 • 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Indigenous Sharing and Learning Centre (ISLC) Round Room, Parker Building

10:00 a.m.	Opening prayer
10:10 a.m.	Welcoming & introductory remarks – Sheila Cote Meek
10:15 a.m.	Review process and outcomes of meetings held to date
10:30 a.m.	Presentation Overview of Draft Report Interactive discussion/ Q & A Substantive feedback on structure of report - are there sections or information you wish to see further developed?
11:30 a.m.	Small group discussion - Recommendations Based on the work to date, do these recommendations capture the key directions the Taskforce wishes to see in their Reconciliation Plan. Are there areas missing? Which of these are of highest priority?
12:00 p.m.	LUNCH
1:00 p.m.	Room share - small group discussion further direction and refinement of recommendations
1:30 p.m.	Organizational Framework for report Two models were proposed as a starting point for framing the recommendations of the report – large group discussion to provide feedback and identify a preferred model or framework will be animated
2:00 p.m.	Vision statement, a proposed name for the TRTF report
2:30 p.m.	Process for further development and finalization of report How would you like to see the report validated? Are there volunteers for in depth review and refinement of the report?
2:45 p.m.	Acknowledgements, next steps, closing prayer

References

1. Laurentian University. Together-Ensemble-Maamwi
Laurentian University's 2018-2023 Strategic Plan Imagine2023.
laurentian.ca/planning/strategic-plan
2. Laurentian University.
Outcome 8: Student Success Is Our Success. Imagine2023.
laurentian.ca/strategicplan/outcome8
3. Laurentian University.
Outcome 16: Curiosity Drives Our Research. Imagine2023.
laurentian.ca/strategicplan/outcome16
4. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.
Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action
Winnipeg MB; 2015.
trc.ca/assets/pdf/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf
5. Laurentian University.
Outcome 21: Relationships Are Our Priority. Imagine2023.
laurentian.ca/strategicplan/outcome21
6. Government of Canada. Statement of Apology to Former Students
of Indian Residential Schools. 2008 06 11.
aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/statementofapology_eng.pdf
7. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Honouring the Truth,
Reconciling for the Future: Summary Report of the Final Report of the
Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. 2015.
nctr.ca/reports2.php
8. UN General Assembly. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of
Indigenous Peoples: resolution / adopted by the General Assembly.
2007 Oct 2. A/RES/61/295.
refworld.org
9. Government of Canada. Let's celebrate Indigenous Languages in
Canada. 2019.
canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage
10. Laurentian University. Maamwizing Indigenous Research Institute. 2019.
laurentian.ca/research/centres/maamwizing



Laurentian University Native Education Council (LUNEC)

Please visit our website at:

laurentian.ca/lunec

or contact us at: lunec@laurentian.ca

705-675-1151 ext. 3437



Laurentian University
Université Laurentienne

935 Ramsey Lake Road, Sudbury, ON P3E 2C6

laurentian.ca