

## **Personal & Institutional Reflections on Indigenizing the Academy**

### **Workshop Breakout I**

#### **Breakout Group 5 (UFV Caucus)**

##### **Indigenizing Challenges**

- It's easy to underestimate the challenges involved

##### **Family function and influence**

- Can we make education a better experience by understanding how the family has evolved, and what it takes to make the families functional?

##### **Balancing curriculum for aboriginal students**

- How can we make the curriculum more balanced for aboriginal students?

##### **Sense of community?**

- Has the University become selfish and lost its sense of community?

##### **Staff training and development**

- Is there a way to incorporate and promote understanding through staff training and development?

##### **Inclusivity**

- How do we become all-inclusive? Can we change education to benefit the community, not just the individual? (Getting the individual to change the community would be transforming)

##### **Challenges students face**

- Need to know what you don't know about the challenges students face before you can help.

##### **Ceremonial activities**

- Ceremonial activities, like sweats, are important to indigenizing the academy, because they convey the spiritual component and basis for "good heart & good mind". They can be healing for participants, overcoming fears.

## **Allies and Champions**

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## **Stakeholders**

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## **Decolonization**

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## **Settler mentality**

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## **Transformative change**

- Need to be mindful and be ready to challenge where we see the need for change; it must be transformative change.

## **Blank stare**

- Walk the talk when you go back home; get past the blank stare, don't just talk to the other person, move to action.

## **Aboriginal participation in program development**

- Can we incorporate aboriginal participation into the program development process, from the beginning?

## **Segregation**

- Segregation between aboriginals and others is very strong in interior communities.

## **Aboriginal and non-aboriginals**

### **Immigrants and aboriginals**

- Immigrants in particular can find it very hard to understand what's going on for aboriginal people when they (immigrants) haven't personally learned about the history in Canada
- Need for personal as well as institutional engagement.

### **Personal engagement**

- Need for personal as well as institutional engagement.

### **Institutional engagement**

#### **Human Resources**

- Working in Human Resources area, there's often an institutional expectation that HR will "have the answer", but on this they don't. From HR point of view, how can we help share learning, with each other, with new hires?

### **Population**

- Aboriginals comprise 3% of Canadian population (BC is almost half of that total)

### **Poverty**

- 85% are below the poverty line

### **Levels of education**

- 47% complete K – 12 system

### **Foster care**

- 53% of children in foster care system are aboriginal

### **Prison population**

- 40% of prison population is aboriginal

### **Rebuilding Extended family crucial**

- In the past, grandparents, aunts & uncles raised the children. Rebuilding extended family is crucial.

### **Family structure and Preparedness for university**

- Maybe white society needs to rebuild its family structure too. Get away from 'me' and back to 'we'. Not just in the aboriginal community, but wider community as well. Do kids have a strong foundation when they start education? Do college students struggle financially and resist asking for help? Do kids get taught that when you have work to do, you get it done?
- Helping students learn to be away from home is an important form of support for those going on to post-secondary education. This can go right to the level of familiar food, activities, in first steps away from home.

### **Knowledge of one's culture important**

- (Combined from several people) It's hard to hold dear what you haven't had handed down to you – several participants had grown up without knowing their background or learning their culture.

### **Tokenism/rethink the system/University as part of community**

- How do we get past tokenism and rethink the system? Maybe viewing the university as contributing to the community will help break down the barriers

### **Feminist and aboriginal research methods**

- The shift in feminist & aboriginal research methods is an important shift from working on people to working with them and for them, learning from their qualitative experience.

### **Audience engagement**

- The quality of speech and the audience engagement in the traditional space this morning was impressive.

### **Practicality of working groups/content experts**

It's easy to underestimate the challenges involved

- Think about working groups as a practical step, bringing together people who can apply their content knowledge to solve problems in that area.