

The Constitution of the Indigenous Graduates Students' Council

As Amended: Sept. 20 2017

Mission Statement: The Indigenous Graduate Students' Council (IGSC) exists to represent, serve and support the academic and non-academic needs of Aboriginal and Indigenous graduate students within The University of Saskatchewan (U of S).

Vision: The IGSC aims to offer its members opportunities to get involved in academic, social and political realms on campus and within the broader community, promote Indigenous advancement and worldview, provide a voice for Indigenous graduate students, and forward the goal of decolonization within the University.

Values: The IGSC will be guided by mutual respect, transparency, participation, teamwork, trust, professionalism, and social and environmental responsibility. Furthermore, the IGSC will operate based on these core values:

- Interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary scholarship
- Innovation and academic and personal excellence among students and faculty
- Student growth and success
- Collaboration in teaching, research, and engagement
- Personal self-determination informed by respectful group discussion
- Respectful and substantive engagement with communities
- Inclusion of different ways of knowing
- Supporting sustainable and healthy communities
- Support for faculty and administration in Indigenous initiatives
- Engage in processes of decolonization on a personal and institutional level
- Making a difference through public discourse, deliberative processes, and informed citizenship

Purpose:

- to serve as the administrative and representative body of Aboriginal and Indigenous graduate students within the College of Graduate and Post-Doctoral Studies (CGPS);
- to promote the unity and welfare of Aboriginal and Indigenous graduate students within (CGPS);
- to further the intellectual and social activities of Aboriginal and Indigenous graduate students within (CGPS);
- to promote and maintain communication with other graduate students as well as Aboriginal students groups on campus.

Section 1: Interpretation

Section 1.01 Definitions

1.01.01 In the following parts of this document, unless context indicates otherwise:

- i. “Aboriginal” refers to an Aboriginal person as identified by Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, which allows for a broad definition, including:

- a) Aboriginal ancestry,
 - b) Self-declaration of identity as a status or non-status Indian, Inuit, or Métis person, and
 - c) Recognition or affirmation of that identity by the appropriate Aboriginal community.
- ii. “Indigenous” refers to Indigenous peoples of the world as discussed in the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs Workshop On Data Collection And Disaggregation For Indigenous Peoples *The Concept of Indigenous Peoples* (New York, 2004), including:
 - Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, or parts of them.¹
 - iii. “IGSC” refers to the Indigenous Graduate Students’ Council.
 - iv. “Constitution” means the constitution of the IGSC.
 - v. “Council” means the council of the association as described by subsection 2.01.01 (the council).
 - vi. “Core Council” means the core council of the association as described by subsection 2.02.01 (the core council).
 - vii. “Council membership” means the total members of the IGSC that meet the requirements of subsection 3.01.01 (membership).
 - viii. “University” means the University of Saskatchewan.
 - ix. “Professional colleges’ student bodies” means: the Indian Teacher Education Program (ITEP), Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP), Aboriginal Business Students (ABSS), Native Access Program to Nursing/Medicine Students’ Society, Northern Administrative Students’ Association (NASA), Indigenous Law Student Association (ILSA)

Section 2: The Council and Core Council of the IGSC

Section 2.01 The Council

2.01.01 The name of the Council shall be the Indigenous Graduate Students’ Council (the abbreviation of which is IGSC)

2.01.02 The objectives of the Council shall be:

- i. to serve as the administrative and representative body of Aboriginal and Indigenous graduate students within the College of Graduate and Post-Doctoral Studies (CGPS);
- ii. to promote the unity and welfare of Aboriginal and Indigenous graduate students within the U of S;
- iii. to serve and promote the intellectual, spiritual, physical, and social activities of Aboriginal and Indigenous graduate students within the U of S;
- iv. to promote and maintain communication with other graduate students and the

¹ UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs Workshop on Data Collection and Disaggregation for Indigenous Peoples *The Concept of Indigenous Peoples* (New York, 2004).

- Graduate Students' Association (GSA), University of Saskatchewan Students' Union (USSU), and other Indigenous students' groups on campus
- v. to promote Indigenous advancement and worldview in all its endeavours including recruitment of Indigenous students into graduate studies at the U of S
 - vi. to promote decolonization in all its endeavours, particularly at the U of S.

2.01.03 The association shall offer activities to its members, personal advancement extra-curricular programs, and increase the awareness of matters related to Indigenous worldview and decolonization within its membership and the University community.

2.01.04 The council shall practice zero-based budget accounting for all activities. Any profits or accretions to the council shall be used solely to promote the objectives of the association as stated in subsection 2.01.02 (council objectives).

2.01.05 All activities and initiatives of the IGSC shall be performed in a manner which adheres to the values of the Council.

Section 2.02 The Core Council

2.02.01 The Core Council of the IGSC shall consist of a 2 Co-Chairs, and 4 Executive Council who are members as defined by subsection 4.01.02 (elections).

2.02.02 The Core Council must be a graduate student during the academic year in which they are in Office, reside in the province during their term, and attend 75% of meetings. Members and other graduate students are invited to become Core Council members through an elective process. However, their eligibility will be subject to the approval of the sitting members of the Core Council. Core Council must be satisfied that the member will abide by the Mission Statement, Values, and Purpose of the IGSC Constitution in a positive and productive manner. This will be decided at a meeting of Core Council where the interested member will introduce himself or herself, stating their interest in the Core Council position. The sitting Core Council will then hold a brief discussion circle and private vote to determine the member's eligibility for Core Council. The member will be considered eligible for candidacy by vote of 2/3 of sitting Core Council members.

2.02.03 In the absence or unavailability of any one member of the Core Council, the remaining Core Council may appoint a replacement, who is a Council member, subject to the approval of two-thirds (2/3) of the present members and voting at a general meeting, where notice of a motion of approval has been duly given. Should the nomination of the Council member be rejected, the Council membership and the remaining Core Council members may nominate other members to fulfill the position.

2.02.04 In the event that any or all of the Core Council members are unavailable to fulfill their duties, the Council members shall nominate other members to fulfill the positions. Each position must be voted in separately with the approval of two-thirds (2/3) of the Council members.

Section 2.03 Removal of Core Council

2.03.01 The Core Council members may be removed from office separately or together given the nature of the reason of removal. Core Council members will only be removed based on non-confidence or evidence provided by other members that proves that person or people in question directly contravenes aspects of the IGSC Mission Statement, Values, Vision and Purpose.

2.03.02 Removal will occur by a non-confidence vote of the Council members. Such a vote must be the result of a motion circulated to all Council members one week prior to a general meeting in which the vote will occur. If one member is removed, subsection 2.02.03 (absence or unavailability of a member) shall be used to fill the vacancy. If all of the Core Council members are removed subsection 2.02.04 (unavailability of any or all Core Council) shall be used to fill the vacancies.

2.03.03 If any Core Council members resign, elections may be held at any subsequent general meeting. When possible, Core Council members are expected to give two weeks' notice prior to resignation.

Section 2.04 Duties of the Core Council

2.04.01 The duties of the elected shall be divided into 2 categories:

1. The Chairs (2)
2. The Executive Council (4)

The duties of the Co-Chairs shall include the following, but are not necessarily limited to:

- i. coordination and creation of IGSC meetings
- ii. ensure that the activities of the organization follow IGSC's purpose, mission, vision and values;
- iii. Liaise with the GSA by attending GSA Executive meetings and other meeting deemed appropriate including, but not limited to, Presidents' Executive meetings, CGPS coffee meetings and other meetings where Aboriginal and Indigenous graduate students should be well-represented and heard that are normally attended by GSA Executive members.
- iv. ensure that the activities of IGSC follow the University of Saskatchewan's standards of behavior (http://www.usask.ca/university_secretary/honesty/nonacdishonesty.php);
- v. act as the secondary signing authority of the IGSC's bank account;
- vi. ensure that the IGSC's constitution and other governance policies or documents are up to date and relevant; and
- vii. coordinate IGSC elections.
- viii. the Co-Chairs must be Aboriginal as defined by subsection 1.01.01(1) (definition of Aboriginal).

2.04.02 The duties of the Executive Council shall include the following, but are not necessarily limited to:

- i. fulfill the duties and responsibilities of the Co-Chairs if needed; and

- ii. ensure the financial accountability of the IGSC
- iii. Maintaining and updating regularly social media accounts and timely communication all members;
- iv. attend IGSC meetings and prepare minutes of those meetings;
- v. find a IGSC member to fulfill secretarial duties; and
- i. maintain the documents of the IGSC including the constitution, history and communications materials (pamphlets, posters, etc).

Section 3 Memberships

Section 3.01 Membership

3.01.01 All graduate students enrolled at the University of Saskatchewan and self-declare as Indigenous or Aboriginal shall automatically be considered members of IGSC. Membership is free.

Section 3.02 Membership Rights, Privileges and Obligations

3.02.01 The rights and privileges of regular members of the Council shall include the ability:

- i. to vote in all Core Council position elections;
- ii. to hold any position, except Chair, on Core Council subject to section 2.02.02 (Core Council requirements);
- iii. to attend any general meetings;
- iv. to second any motions brought to general meetings;
- v. to speak for or against any motions;
- vi. to gain admission to any activity, program, and/or event hosted by IGSC subject to the restrictions of the particular activity, event or program.

Section 4 Elections and Referendum

Section 4.01 Elections

4.01.01 Elections will be held during the first IGSC meeting of the fall semester or the first opportunity to meet.

4.01.02 During the election of any member of council the following procedures shall be followed:

- i. Members may nominate themselves or others for any of the Core Council positions;
- ii. Those nominated will introduce themselves and make a statement of intent;
- iii. If more than one member accepts nomination for a position, IGSC members will vote (by anonymous ballot) for the member of their choice;
- iv. All Core Council members will be elected by simple majority of election meeting attendees unless otherwise agreed upon also by simple majority, previous to the vote by all members present;

- v. No campaigning shall occur. Furthermore, no provisions guiding such an action are to be recognized, or constructed, until such time as the membership of IGSC exceeds 100 sitting members.

4.01.03 In the event no candidate presents themselves for any given position then the duties of the vacant position(s) shall be redistributed amongst council members at their discretion, so long as the duties of said position(s) are not compromised.

4.01.04 If a position goes vacant, an election may be held at any subsequent general meeting, AGM, or SGM until the positions is filled.

Section 4.02 Referendum

4.02.01 A motion can be brought to a general meeting by any member as outlined in subsection 4.01.02 (election procedures). All members will have an opportunity to have their opinions heard by the rest of the council and Core Council. Once a satisfactory assessment has been made of the opinions of all members present, a simple majority vote will be held (majority equals half plus two).

4.02.02 In the event a vote is split, the final decision will reside with the Relations Manager or Event Planner who has been the main momentum behind the decision/event. If several individuals claim final responsibility for a decision, the other Core Council members who are not directly involved will vote on the member to make the final decision.

4.02.03 Exceptions to subsection 4.02.01 (motions) will occur when the motion in question takes a stance and/or action on a politicized issue. In such instances a two-thirds (2/3) majority will be required to pass a motion.

4.02.04 Quorum shall be no less than attending membership at any general meeting, annual general meeting, or special general meeting.

Section 5 Meetings

Section 5.01 General Meetings

5.01.01 General meetings will be held for the IGSC when membership or core council express interest in holding a meeting.

5.01.02 Core Council meetings will be held when membership, executive or council express interest in holding a meeting.

5.01.03 A general framework for meetings shall be:

- i. adoption of the agenda;
- ii. introductions and/or announcements;
- iii. amend and approve minutes from the previous meeting;

- iv. discuss business arising from the minutes;
- v. receive updates from executive members;
- vi. bring forward and discuss any new business;
- vii. leave adequate time for pertinent questions and comments;
- viii. other.

5.01.04 All meetings shall adhere to a voting system of simple majority, unless otherwise stated in this document or agreed upon by the attendees through simple majority.

Section 5.02 Annual General Meetings and Special General Meetings

5.02.01 Annual general meetings (AGM) will be held during either the spring or fall months of each year.

5.02.02 Only at AGMs may motions that amend IGSC governance documents (e.g., constitution) be approved. In such instances:

- i. Attending members will be quorum;
- ii. Approval of amendments require at least two-thirds (2/3) vote

5.02.03 A special general meeting (SGM) may be held at any point throughout the year if an amendment to an IGSC governance document is proposed by a member of the association. An SGM follows the same procedures as an AGM. To initiate an SGM a member must bring forward a motion at a general meeting outlining a proposed date which is then voted on based on the procedure of subsection 5.02.01 (AGMs).