



TOGETHER
WE ARE STRONGER

peyak aski kikawinaw

***University of Regina's
Statement of Commitment
in Response to the
Truth and Reconciliation Commission***

The University of Regina is situated on Treaty 4 lands with a presence in Treaty 6 territory. These are the territories of the *nêhiyawak* (Cree), *Anihšīnāpēk* (Saulteaux), and *Dakota, Lakota, and Nakoda*, and the homeland of the *Métis*. Today, these lands continue to be the shared territory of many diverse peoples from near and far. We recognize the contribution that engaging in Reconciliation brings to our life as a campus community that is situated on these lands. The University is committed to making Reconciliation a part of all interactions amongst Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, staff, and faculty and with our neighbours off-campus.

To address Reconciliation at the University of Regina, we rely on the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC). Its Report discusses the history of colonialism in Canada and how this history continues to operate and inform Canadian society and its institutions. The TRC was born of the resilience and courage of Indian Residential School survivors. It provided a safe space for survivor and inter-generational survivor truth-telling and to memorialize the many children who did not survive. It also asked the nation to listen and bear witness to these truths. The TRC forced this nation to cease ignoring the history of the Indian Residential School system and the continued impacts that this system has ingrained into the daily lives of all Canadians. The TRC also offers a vision of Reconciliation based on hope – a vision which is held alike by many survivors and intergenerational survivors, Indigenous peoples, and non-Indigenous populations, that we can address the resulting systemic colonialism together. The TRC's 94 *Calls to Action* provide a framework to transform this hope into reality through the concrete actions of Reconciliation, which is a responsibility of all Canadians.

Much like other post-secondary institutions, the University has a history of developing and applying knowledge, constructing space, and interacting with Indigenous peoples and communities in ways that have been framed by Western-based practices. Today, many universities are addressing these practices in an effort to transform themselves so that non-Indigenous populations can study, work, and live in a good way with Indigenous peoples. To address this history and shift these practices, the process of Indigenization has been implemented at the University. Our institution understands Indigenization as the inclusion of Indigenous ways of knowing, voices, and critiques in our practices such as teaching, research, governance, and in our physical spaces. This includes, especially, those Indigenous nations upon whose lands the University is situated. In addition to Indigenization efforts, Reconciliation will require new, complementary, and additional efforts for the University to meet its collective and campus-wide responsibility.

As we did in December of 2016 in a joint response with the University of Saskatchewan, we at the University of Regina acknowledge the TRC's Calls to Action. The Calls were addressed to all who live in Canada, especially those in positions of privilege and power resulting from colonialism.

The *Calls* require two parties – Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples – to come together to form mutually respectful relationships and transform practices that exclude Indigenous peoples and knowledge systems, a practice that creates barriers to respect and mutuality. The *Calls* are an invitation to join Reconciliation. The *Calls* beckon us to respond, listen, engage, and live together. They are an invitation to learn together and from each other. It asks all non-Indigenous peoples across Canada to follow the generous lead of the First Peoples whose lands they share. Georges Sioui of the Wyandot-Huron nation and past Associate Professor of Indian Studies and Dean of Academics of the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College reminds us that since European nations first began to settle, sign treaties, colonize, and claim the lands, Indigenous peoples have offered knowledge and goodwill, shared land and resources, and stood resilient in the face of European and later Canadian colonialism.

In response to the *Calls to Action* we recognize that, at this point in time, Reconciliation is in larger part a treaty responsibility of non-Indigenous peoples. Specifically, non-Indigenous peoples are asked to take part in Reconciliation because many Indigenous people have already been conciliatory. The TRC's *Calls to Action* seek to address this imbalance in commitment and respect that has, to date, framed the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

The University's commitment to Reconciliation is based on five goals. The members of the Response to the University of Regina's Truth and Reconciliation Commission Working Group suggest that every faculty, unit, and division also commits that each and every student, staff, or faculty member will have the tools for Reconciliation, or mutual respect, through:

- Knowledge of treaties, specifically of Treaties 4 and 6;
- A basic understanding of Canada's history with and the continuance of colonialism, including of the Indian Residential Schools and the Indian Act;
- An awareness of Indigenous ways of knowing and how these relate to their program of study;
- Knowledge of the key elements of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and its *Calls to Action*, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; and
- An understanding of the role they can play in Reconciliation on the basis of the knowledge and skills they will have acquired at the University of Regina.

With any responsibility comes a requirement for accountability. To assist in the creation of such initiatives, the University's TRC Working Group has prepared *A Guide to Implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action at the University of Regina*. All faculties, units, and divisions share this common responsibility of Reconciliation and must take it upon themselves to take up one or more *Calls*. A list of initiatives toward Reconciliation will be created and will be maintained as faculties, units, and divisions report their activities associated with Reconciliation to the President's Office. Above all, the members of the University's TRC Working Group invite every faculty and staff member, every student, and everyone who interacts with the University to take up this responsibility – these *Calls to Action* – as their own.

Released December 2018 with the support of University leadership.