

INDIGENIZATION ACTION PLAN | 2023–2028



Eye? Sqâ'lewen

The Centre for Indigenous Education
& Community Connections

TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Eyē? Sqā'lewen, The Centre for Indigenous Education and Community Connections at Camosun College, acknowledges with deep respect and gratitude that our Centre serves the traditional territories of the lək'wəŋən (Songhees and Kosapsum), Malahat, Pacheedaht, Scia'new, T'Sou-ke, and WSÁNEĆ peoples (Tsartlip, Pauquachin, Tseycum, and Tsawout First Nations). Learners, faculty, staff, are all enriched by the friendship and gracious welcome extended by the stewards of the land and by the beauty of the land on which we live, work, and learn.

This image is captured from our first QĆÁSET Culture Camp looking on FIELS, meaning "cliffs", in Narvaez Bay, Saturna Island, within the territories of the Tsawout and Tseycum Nations

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



As the Executive Director of Eyē? Sqā'lewen, I am proud of our work delivering award-winning, nationally-recognized Indigenous programs and support services to students. We carry forward the vision of trailblazers like Janice Simcoe, former Director of our Centre, as we advocate for Indigenous leadership and strong relationships between the college, students and local Indigenous communities.

Today, we have the responsibility of moving Indigenous education forward and being the place of choice for Indigenous students, as they begin their post-secondary education journey. As Songhees Elder Dr. Skip Dick often emphasizes, it used to be that our people would run away from school; now, they are running to school—underscoring a significant change in how our Indigenous communities view and engage with post-secondary education.

We have been able to live and share Eyē? Sqā'lewen—a lək'wəŋən term offered to us by Songhees Elder Elmer George, which references “good heart, good mind, and good feelings”—with so many students. Whether as educators, advisors, or administrators, we nurture students’ well-being in all aspects of their journey.

With a dedicated team and through the advice from our Indigenous Advisory Committee, I am honoured to share our five-year Indigenization Action Plan to guide our efforts in becoming self-determining and further reflective of Indigenous values. We continue to grow, providing Indigenous awareness, knowledge and understanding for all people, in our continued journey of walking together in a good way.

As we navigate this journey, we acknowledge our ancestors and predecessors, striving to tread lightly and forge paths for future generations. Together, we’re committed to Indigenous student success, recognizing that in education, we are all teachers and we are all learners.

Mahsi Cho,

Dr. Todd Ormiston, Northern Tutchone/Tlingit
Executive Director

Eyē? Sqā'lewen – the Centre for Indigenous Education and Community Connections

OUR WAYS OF BEING

We walk together.

We believe that Indigenous learners, including us, reach our fullest potential and greatest joy when our connections with land and water, identity, and tradition are integrated into the ways we learn and teach.

Our Ways of Being honours Kirkness and Barnardt's 4 R's and reflects the principles of the *Circle of Courage* by Dr. Martin Brokenleg: We seek and hold values of generosity, belonging, mastery, relationality, responsibility, and respect. Through this, we bloom a Camas concept map to represent the values that guide our work alongside students to encourage in them—and in ourselves—Eyē? Sqā'lewen, good heart, good mind, good spirit.



OUR PLAN

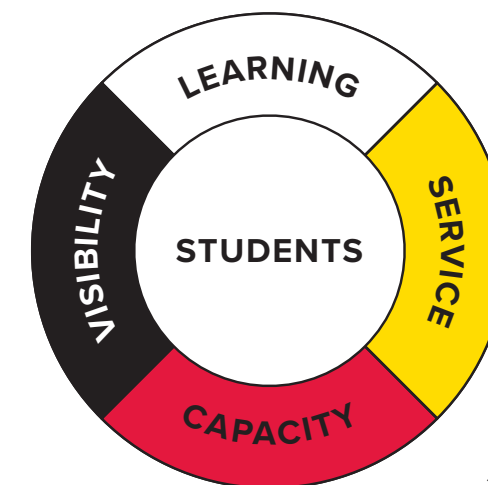
In alignment with Camosun College's five-year Strategic Plan, released in February 2023, our Indigenization Action Plan positions *Honouring Indigenous Resurgence* as a pivotal focus. It embodies Camosun College's renewed commitment and Eyē? Sqā'lewen's significant efforts to integrate Indigenous perspectives and practices across all facets of our institution.

This plan serves as a guide for Eyē? Sqā'lewen, and for the rest of the college. Indigenization, reconciliation, and resurgence requires a concentrated effort from all corners of our institution, community, and beyond. This plan references four priority areas that focus our collective efforts towards enhancing hiring processes, improving staff learning, enhancing the Indigenous student experience, and streamlining internal event planning processes.

By addressing these key areas, we aim to foster an environment where Indigenous cultures, traditions, and knowledge systems not only flourish but are also respected and integrated into every aspect of the college.

OUR PRIORITIES

Our action plan is deeply rooted in our mission to engage in Indigenous education, services, and leadership, enhancing student learning and enriching relationships with communities. This commitment is reflected across four interconnected priority areas, each embodying our Ways of Being and placing our students' well-being and growth at the heart of our endeavours. By integrating these priority areas with our individual and collective responsibilities, we strive to create an enriching environment that fosters academic excellence, cultural understanding, and personal development for all students and staff at our college.



LEARNING

We seek to further enrich learning opportunities at Camosun College with local Indigenous knowledge to deepen understanding and respect for Indigenous cultures, traditions, and relations.

INCREASE LAND AND WATER BASED LEARNING

On The Land Spaces ●●
Expand Camosun and collaborative community outdoor spaces for cultural and ceremonial use, to include proposals for cultural spaces, gardens, and revitalization of camas fields.

Padding Together ●●
Develop opportunities to learn together on the water, such as increased use of the Camossung canoe as an education tool and participation in Tribal Journeys.

Language Learning ●●
Offer local and other Indigenous language learning opportunities for staff and students to foster cultural understanding and support language revitalization efforts within our community.

STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Indigenous-Focused Educational Programs ●●
Develop a range of culturally based courses, Indigenous electives, micro-credentials, and community programming to expand our comprehensive offerings in Indigenous education.

Community Engagement and Wellness ●
Establish seasonal culture camps throughout the year and develop pathways for the Indigenous Community Wellness Program to promote health, well-being, and immersive learning.

Urban Indigenous Networks ●●
Incorporate, reflect, and respect the voices and diversities of urban Indigenous organizations and communities through active participation, representation and consultation.

SERVICE

We are dedicated to enriching Indigenous activities and programming on campus and within our community, aiming to foster wholistic experiences and a supportive environment.

AMPLIFY INDIGENOUS STUDENT SERVICES

Strengthen Connections ●
Diversify our communication channels and strengthen our forms of personal engagement to maximize connections with Indigenous students.

Boost Recruitment ●
Increase the number of outreach activities specifically designed for Indigenous students, such as: information sessions, open houses, and tours.

Enhance Retention ●
Foster a sense of belonging and mentorship among Indigenous students by improving their experience with college processes and support services, nurturing their minds and hearts.

NURTURE INDIGENOUS ACTIVITIES

Event Planning and Engagement ●
Enhance our internal events through assessment, refinement, and development of new events that further engage students and our community to foster proactive engagement.

Wellness and Cultural Resources ●●
Provide updated workshops and resources for staff and student wellness, ranging from canoe borrowing or access to medicines to revising Our Ways of Being document.

Leadership in Event Management ●●
Encourage and support staff leadership in organizing and leading Indigenous events at Camosun; promote a broader involvement and understanding of Indigenous cultures within the college community.

● = Eyē? Sqā'lewen ● = Camosun



CAPACITY

We will ensure Camosun College's commitment to Indigenization through leadership, education, and collaboration. Together, we will expand the capacity within our Centre and across the college to honour and integrate Indigenous knowledge, supports, and perspectives.

ADVANCE INDIGENIZATION

Collaborative Staff Training ●●
Increase offerings to enhance staff learning of racism, colonization, and Indigenous ways of being through training, such as of TELFIN TFE WILNEW (TTW) and S̱W,ʔENENITEL: Doing Good Work Together

Share Roles and Responsibilities ●●
Indigenization is the responsibility of employees at the college. Eyē? Sqā'lewen will empower Camosun staff to both actively support and take the lead with Indigenous events, curriculum, and initiatives.

Community Engagement ●
Foster deeper connections between the college, post-secondary institutes, and local Indigenous communities by facilitating dialogues, partnerships, relationship agreements and shared projects.

STRENGTHEN INTERNAL CAPACITY

Comprehensive Onboarding ●
Develop an onboarding process that encompasses culturally informed job descriptions, mentorship, Indigenous perspectives, and cultural sensitivity training from the onset.

Staff Organization ●
Revise Eyē? Sqā'lewen's organizational structure to accurately represent current roles, responsibilities, and to improve supervision and mentorship practices

Staff Learning ●●
Provide the capacity and develop new ongoing learning opportunities for staff on college processes and Indigenous ways of being, knowing, and doing.

VISIBILITY

We are committed to amplifying the presence and awareness of Indigenous cultures at Camosun College, weaving the rich tapestry of Indigenous art and knowledge into the visual fabric at both of our campuses.

HONOUR THE PAST

A Living Archive ●●
Increase the visibility, care, and awareness of Indigenous artwork, architecture, and cultural items, enriching campus-wide understanding and appreciation of Indigenous history.

Sharing Our Stories ●●
Launch interactive resources to highlight and share the stories behind the significant Indigenous sites, artworks, and structures on campus. This includes informational plaques, video stories, and an interactive art map.

Renaming ●●
Recognize local Indigenous names for campus spaces as a crucial step toward supporting resurgence of Indigenous cultures, languages and honouring those who have shaped our community.

EMBRACE THE FUTURE

Artistic Opportunities ●●
Establish new opportunities for Indigenous artistic expression on campus by launching innovative projects, inviting community collaboration and enriching the educational experience for all students.

Innovative Growth ●●
Support Indigenous self-determination and cultural resurgence by empowering growth through new funding opportunities and innovative forms of engagement, such as the Hearts and Hands pins campaign.

Indigenizing Spaces ●●
Identify new campus spaces designed to reflect the history and cultural traditions of all Indigenous peoples, creating environments where all Indigenous students feel enriched and welcome.

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CLOSING MESSAGE

We hold our hands up and honour the dedicated students, staff, Elders and Knowledge Keepers in Eyē? Sqā'lewen, and colleagues for their vital contributions to our Indigenization Action Plan. Special thanks to Carlie Chase at Nawaska Consulting for her exemplary leadership in guiding this pivotal project. This plan weaves together our key priorities with Camosun College's commitment to addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action, alongside embracing the principles of the BC and UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Through this plan, we acknowledge and celebrate the resilience, leadership, governance, and pursuit of self-determination by First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples. This journey towards Indigenization is a testament to the collective wisdom, strength, and vision of our Indigenous communities.

Eyē? Sqā'lewen's Indigenization Action Plan plan is a step towards a future where Indigenous knowledge, values, and systems of governance are integral to the fabric of Camosun College, guiding us towards a more inclusive, equitable, and respectful academic and community environment. Together, let's continue to walk this path of learning, understanding, and growth.

ABOUT THE LOGO

The logo for the Centre for Indigenous Education and Community Connections was designed by the late Ditidaht artist, Tsa Qwa Supp (Art Thompson). The two wolves represent members of a governing traditional system called Tl'uu Kwala. This system is practiced within the Nuu-chah-nulth Nation. Certain members of this system are keepers of knowledge. Tsa Qwa Supp was extraordinarily generous to Indigenous students at Camosun College, leading the fundraising that developed our Cultural Centre at our Lansdowne Campus, which led to the Tsa Qwa Supp student award. We gratefully acknowledge Tsa Qwa Supp.





Na'tsa'maht

Working Together as One



For more information please visit: camosun.ca/indigenous