



miyo wahkohtowin

INDIGENOUS STUDENT SUCCESS STRATEGY

2018-2023



Treaty 6
Wanuskewin Heritage Park, Saskatchewan

“NOW IS THE TIME FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLE TO TAKE THEIR RIGHTFUL PLACE IN SASKATCHEWAN – IN BUSINESS, EDUCATION, TECHNOLOGY, LEADERSHIP, RESEARCH, INDUSTRY, HEALTH CARE AND COMMUNITY SERVICE. NOW IS THE TIME.

SASKATCHEWAN POLYTECHNIC PLAYS AN ESSENTIAL ROLE IN EDUCATION AND, IN THE SPIRIT OF RECONCILIATION, CAN HELP MAKE THAT HAPPEN BY PROVIDING EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE TO RECONCILE CONTEMPORARY KNOWLEDGE WITH LESSONS FROM THE PAST. DO IT RIGHT. DO IT NOW.”

Myrna Yuzicapi – Knowledge Keeper.

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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The 2018-23 Indigenous Student Success Strategy is informed by input from more than 750 people. Recommendations in this book are based on consultations with students, faculty, staff and Indigenous leaders from across Saskatchewan. The Indigenous Strategy team did their best to listen, honour and include provided ideas and perspectives, both general and specific. This strategy is both high level and detailed, as this is what the communities Saskatchewan Polytechnic serves asked for. For more information visit saskpolytech.ca/indigenous.

Welcome

SASKATCHEWAN POLYTECHNIC - SERVING CAMPUSES IN TREATY 4 TERRITORY, TREATY 6 TERRITORY AND HOMELAND OF THE MÉTIS PEOPLE.

Saskatchewan Polytechnic is an inclusive place of learning that embraces diverse cultures, heritages and opinions. Inclusiveness is a key part of respect, which is one of our core values. It goes to the heart of our mission, which is to educate students and provide skilled and successful graduates. Saskatchewan Polytechnic has more Indigenous students than any other post-secondary institution in Saskatchewan.

The Indigenous Student Success Strategy is designed to maximize success for this growing segment of our student population. We understand that all of our students are successful when they are able to realize their academic and employment goals.

The Indigenous Student Success Strategy builds upon efforts that trace their beginnings to more than a decade ago, and we are heartened by all that has been accomplished since we began implementation of those very first recommendations of the then SIAST Aboriginal Council so long ago. Not only has our Indigenous student enrolment increased, but we celebrate the dramatic rise in the graduation rate as well.

While the journey is not finished, the updated Indigenous Student Success Strategy will serve as a useful guide to support us in reaching our goals.

Dr. Larry Rosia
President and CEO



Committee Members Left to right: Julian Tomlinson, Deanna Speidel, Janet Korpan, Knowledge Keeper Judith Greyeyes, Student Representative Daniel Wayman, Student Representative Martha Petite, Dr. Dennis Johnson, Cory Amiskusees, Amy Briley, Lisa Shepard, Brianna Bergeron, Jason Seright, Faye McKay, Bob Daniels. Missing committee members: Terence Carswell and Debra Kemp-Koo.

At Saskatchewan Polytechnic, students are our main focus. We are committed to ensuring that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed.

The Indigenous Student Success Strategy was developed to provide all Indigenous students with a variety of services to enhance the student experience and remove barriers to success. Increasing Indigenous student enrolment and the Indigenous cohort graduation rate are cornerstones of the strategy.

The process to develop the most recent version of our strategy involved drafting a series of potential goals and actions for the next five years after taking into consideration the things we learned from extensive consultations and research. Consultations were critical to the strategy's development because we wanted to make sure we were focused on the right things, and we are proud that more than 760 people from within Saskatchewan Polytechnic and externally participated in our engagement efforts. The feedback received, from stakeholders in local communities and throughout Saskatchewan and Canada, helped us refine our final strategy so that it truly reflects students' needs and aspirations.

The result is a strategy that allows students to see themselves and their culture reflected throughout the entire institution—an institution that helps them succeed.

I am excited by the results. I hope you are too.

Jason Seright

Director, Indigenous Strategy



Edlanet'e

Anin Sikwa

tawâw

Hau Koda

Tanshi

miyo wahkohtowin*

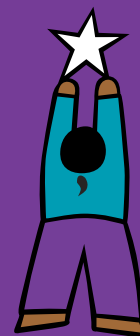
GOOD RELATIONSHIPS

*Cree (pronunciation: mee yoh wah coo toe win)



INDIGENOUS BELIEF STATEMENT

We indigenize by holistically integrating Indigenous ways of knowing, teaching, and learning within all of the institutional practices, procedures and services we provide to students, staff and communities. This results in Indigenous people seeing themselves and their realities reflected in our institutional practices. It also results in non-Indigenous people gaining the skills and knowledge that enable them to work with and live alongside their Indigenous neighbours knowledgeably and respectfully.



Saskatchewan Polytechnic is a signatory to the Colleges and Institutes Canada's Indigenous Education Protocol¹, which means we:

- Commit to making Indigenous education a priority.
- Ensure governance structures recognize and respect Indigenous peoples.
- Implement intellectual and cultural traditions of Indigenous peoples through curriculum and learning approaches relevant to learners and communities.
- Support students and employees to increase understanding and reciprocity among Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.
- Commit to increasing the number of Indigenous employees with ongoing appointments throughout the institution, including Indigenous senior administrators.
- Establish Indigenous-centered holistic services and learning environments for learner success.
- Build relationships and be accountable to Indigenous communities in support of self-determination through education, training and applied research.

¹ <https://www.collegesinstitutes.ca/policyfocus/indigenous-learners/protocol/>

**Treaty 4
Grasslands National Park, Saskatchewan**

miyo wahkohtowin GOOD RELATIONSHIPS

Situated on Treaty 4 and Treaty 6 territories, and Homeland of the Métis people, Saskatchewan Polytechnic is committed to the renewal of relationships—miyo wahkohtowin—with our Indigenous communities. For Sask Polytech, this means we must integrate Indigenous ways of being, knowing, teaching and learning in everything we do.

This Indigenous Student Success Strategy builds on the successes and lessons learned from the 2009 Aboriginal Student Achievement Plan (ASAP) and supports actions under both Tomorrow's Learning in the Making, Sask Polytech's academic model, and the Indigenization Framework. It aligns to IP2.2 in the Sask Polytech Strategic Plan: *Increase the participation and success of Indigenous, international, newcomers and other diverse learners.*

The Indigenous Student Success Strategy is not all encompassing and does not include indigenization of curriculum. Tomorrow's Learning in the Making, Sask Polytech's academic model, focuses on indigenization of curriculum.

The strategy's focus is Indigenous student success. As such, it contributes to Sask Polytech's efforts to meet the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action and to live up to its commitments under the Colleges and Institutes Canada's Indigenous Education Protocol. Together with other institutional plans and initiatives, it will help Sask Polytech meet the educational needs of our Indigenous communities and create an inclusive, welcoming place of learning.

The journey towards miyo wahkohtowin gained momentum in 2009 with the release of the Aboriginal Student Achievement Plan (ASAP). The plan outlined 21 recommendations to address barriers to Indigenous student recruitment and program completion, positively influence the recruitment and retention of Indigenous students and advocate for institutional change to improve the persistence of Indigenous students through to graduation. Since then, many of the plan's recommendations have been incorporated into everyday life at Sask Polytech, while work continues on advancing others. The Strategic Enrolment Management Plan, established in 2014, has also supported these efforts.

In addition to the Aboriginal Student Achievement Plan (ASAP), there have been a number of initiatives that have helped Sask Polytech to build miyo wahkohtowin with our Indigenous students and communities, including:

- Tomorrow's Learning in the Making, Sask Polytech's academic model (2016), which incorporates a commitment to indigenization of curriculum and instruction.
- The Indigenization Framework (2016), which offers a framework for indigenization of programs by answering the practical questions: 'What do I do?' and 'How do I do it?'
- The Indigenous Representative Workforce Strategy (2017) has helped shape Sask Polytech's approach to our workforce so our employees will be more representative of the communities Sask Polytech serves and will reinforce our commitment to culturally safe workplaces.

STEPS TO THE INDIGENOUS STUDENT SUCCESS STRATEGY

**INDIGENOUS
STUDENT SUCCESS
STRATEGY
2018**

**INDIGENOUS
REPRESENTATIVE
WORKFORCE
STRATEGY
2017**

**ACADEMIC MODEL
2016**

**INDIGENIZATION
FRAMEWORK
2016**

**STRATEGIC
ENROLMENT
MANAGEMENT
PLAN
2014**

**STRATEGIC PLAN
2014**

**ABORIGINAL STUDENT
ACHIEVEMENT PLAN
(ASAP)
2009**

HOW THE STRATEGY WAS DEVELOPED

CONTEXT SETTING

February to May 2017

Primary research including:

Internal

- Current state assessment including analysis of:
 - Aboriginal Student Achievement Plan (ASAP) progress and recommendations
 - Balanced scorecard key performance indicators and data
 - 'Soft' data – feedback and input gathered over the seven years of plan implementation

External

- Best practice scan and literature review encompassing:
 - Indigenization in post-secondary education (PSE)
 - Barriers to Indigenous student success in PSE
 - Indigenous student services and supports provided by PSEs in Canada
 - Federal and provincial government reports and priorities for education and indigenization
 - Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada
 - Strategic Enrolment Management

Information from the context setting phase informed stakeholder engagement

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

April to May 2017

Secondary research designed to gather input from communities including:

Internal

- Elders
- Students, faculty and staff at our four main campuses
- Aboriginal Student Achievement Plan (ASAP) steering committee
- Indigenous Strategy team
- Senior leadership

External

- Elders
- Assembly of First Nations
- First Nations Directors of Education National Forum
- Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations
- Principals of First Nations schools
- Indigenous communities in Saskatchewan
- Business and industry
- Post-secondary institutions

Analysis and synthesis of findings

RECOMMENDATIONS AND DRAFT GOALS AND ACTIONS

June 2017

REFINEMENT WITH KEY COMMUNITIES

October 2017

- Elders
- Students, faculty and staff
- Indigenous Strategy team
- Sask Polytech senior leadership
- Indigenous communities in Saskatchewan

FINAL STRATEGY

March 2018

In the early part of 2017, Sask Polytech conducted research to review leading practices in Indigenous student success to help us benchmark our service provision against other post-secondary institutions. Sask Polytech also examined our progress against the recommendations and targets set in the 2009 Aboriginal Student Achievement Plan (ASAP) and against the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action, identifying key successes and areas for improvement. This research is used to frame questions about how best to continue efforts to support Indigenous student success over the next five years.

In April and May 2017, Sask Polytech engaged with key leaders and gathered input on their priorities and expectations for the renewed Indigenous Student Success Strategy through a series of facilitated group sessions, one-on-one conversations, paper-based questionnaires and an online survey. In all, 763 perspectives were gathered.

Maintaining a focus on Indigenous student success, a series of potential goals and actions for the next five years were drafted with these perspectives in mind. To verify our work, we shared this draft with the consulted communities and incorporated their feedback to ensure our final plan truly reflects student and community need.



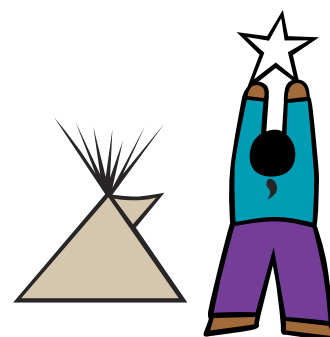
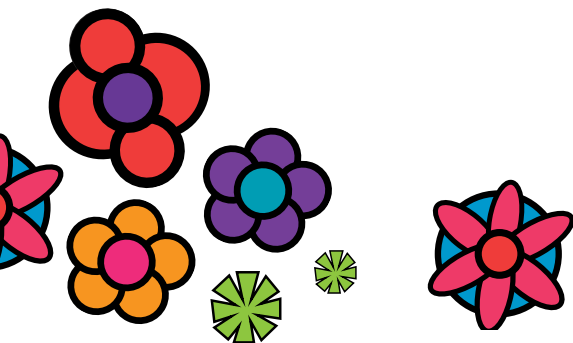


WHAT WE ACCOMPLISHED

In the nine years since Sask Polytech's first plan was established we've seen many notable successes:

- An Indigenous student success committee to provide clear vision and direction and a voice at the Sask Polytech senior leadership table.
- A director of Indigenous Strategy to lead and coordinate our Indigenous student success initiatives.
- Mitigation of many of the physical, environmental, financial and academic policy barriers to Indigenous student success identified in 2009.
- Total Indigenous student enrolment increased more than 29 per cent between the 2009-10 and 2016-17 academic years.
- Number of Indigenous graduates from Sask Polytech programs (not including continuing education) increased more than 44 per cent between the 2009-10 and 2016-17 academic years.
- Indigenous graduate employment rate of 85 per cent (*2017 Graduate Follow-Up Study*).
- High levels of satisfaction with the services and support provided by the Indigenous Students' Centres and student advisors.
- Memoranda of Understandings with:
 - the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) to set a framework to promote the inherent and Treaty Right to Education for First Nations students and implement the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada;
 - the Saskatoon Tribal Council for applied research collaborations in the areas of Indigenous food sovereignty through community-based food production systems and traditional plant species; and,
 - Piapot First Nation to develop alternative energy programming and a research station at Sask Polytech, Moose Jaw Campus.

MOST IMPORTANTLY, INDIGENOUS STUDENTS NOW MAKE UP 19 PER CENT OF OUR STUDENT POPULATION AND THIS PROPORTION IS GROWING STEADILY EACH YEAR (2016-17 ACADEMIC YEAR).





SUCCESS STORIES



Clarence Morin

Hometown: Hall Lake, SK

Band: Lac La Ronge Indian Band, SK

Program: Media Arts Production – certificate (2017)

If Clarence could go back in time and give himself one piece of advice it would be pretty simple: Work harder and keep going—you'll get through it.

"It gets easier when you kick it into gear," he says.

Going to Sask Polytech wasn't always easy for Clarence, and in December 2014, Clarence dropped out of the Media Arts Production program. But after finding a renewed sense of determination, he was able to make a comeback.

"No matter how hard you hit the ground, you'll always find a way to ascend and achieve what you put your mind to," he says.

He says without the help of the Indigenous student advisors and the support of dedicated instructors, he might not have found the confidence he needed to achieve his goals and find success.

"The people with the Indigenous Student Success Strategy are quick to assist you and don't take too long to help you figure things out," he says.

Looking forward to beginning a career in radio production, Clarence says future students need to know that they can't give up.

"If they quit, it will stay on their minds for a long time," he says. "Success means they will be lifting a huge weight off their shoulders and will have a better idea of what lies ahead of them."

**"IT GETS EASIER WHEN YOU
KICK IT INTO GEAR."**



Cristina Crowe

Hometown: Regina, SK

Band: Piapot First Nation, SK

Programs: Adult 12 (2009); Office Administration - certificate (2017)

Cristina had such great memories of attending Sask Polytech to upgrade her education in 2009, that when she started to explore her options to advance her career, it wasn't difficult to choose where to go.

"Being out of school for eight years, I was anxious and nervous about being a student again. By the end of the first week of classes, I could tell the instructors were on my side," she says. "Being an adult student is sometimes more difficult because there are so many other parts of life happening. But I felt supported at Sask Polytech."

Cristina says she attributes a lot of her success to having access to a number of services and programs, such as learning services and scholarship funding, to help her manage her time and create a balance between home life and school life.

"The life I have lived has lead up to me being in school. I have taken the opportunities I have been given and they have made me who I am today," she says.

Cristina says she'd like to find a job with an organization that values giving back to the community; and while she continues to pursue a job she values, she says she's proud to set an example for her children.

"Down the road, hopefully, my kids will follow their dreams and remember that I, their mother, could do it too!"

**"I FELT SUPPORTED AT
SASK POLYTECH."**



SUCCESS STORIES



Chantel Buffalo

Hometown: Saskatoon, SK

Band: Kawacatoose First Nation

Program: Hotel and Restaurant Management diploma (2016)

At the age of 28, with four young children, Chantel Buffalo headed back to school. She spent two years upgrading through the Adult Basic Education program before enrolling in Sask Polytech's Hotel and Restaurant Management diploma program in Saskatoon.

Chantel learned a variety of skills during her time at Sask Polytech, including financial management and what it takes to run a successful business. After graduation, when her life took some unexpected turns, Chantel found herself following a career in banking after some sound advice from an Indigenous student advisor.

"He told me to challenge myself to new opportunities and that Sask Polytech will always support me," says Chantel.

Now working for Affinity Credit Union, Chantel says that being a student at Sask Polytech provided her with more than good grades and a diploma.

"Sask Polytech helped me discover my true self. Not only did Sask Polytech boost my confidence, it also helped me become motivated and proactive within my community."

Since graduation, Chantel has received the Sask Polytech inaugural Young Alumnus Partnership Award (2017) and has shared her unique and inspiring story through speaking engagements and in a number of publications across Canada.

"I never thought I would ever receive such a high honour. It goes to show my work has made a difference and impact on students, communities and the way we lead our future," says Chantel.

**"SASK POLYTECH HELPED ME
DISCOVER MY TRUE SELF."**



Cameron (Cam) Koslowski

Hometown: Prince Albert, SK

Program: Integrated Resource Management diploma (2014)

Since graduating in 2014, Cam Koslowski has been able to work at his dream job, helping to repair and preserve the environment and build a sustainable future for generations to come.

"I have a fulfilling job with benefits and a pension. I am doing exactly what I wanted and I feel optimistic about my future," says Cam.

He says he chose the Integrated Resource Management program because he was able to get a quality, valuable education in less time than if he went to university.

"The curriculum looked a lot more interesting, provided technical hands-on experience and was an intensive two-year program instead of a four-year program at a university," he says.

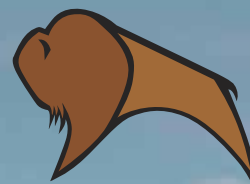
Now working for the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment Canada, Cam, who identifies as Métis, says Sask Polytech has left him with great memories, including meeting his wife. He also says his time at Sask Polytech taught him a lot about life.

"Every day has its challenges. Sometimes the only thing you can control is your outlook and attitude. Perseverance is the key to success and is your most powerful tool," he says.

**"I FEEL OPTIMISTIC ABOUT
MY FUTURE."**

“EDUCATION IS THE NEW BUFFALO. THE MOST POWERFUL EDUCATION ENABLES LEARNERS TO EMBRACE LESSONS FROM THE PAST AND TO RECONCILE THOSE LESSONS WITH CONTEMPORARY CIRCUMSTANCES, SKILLS, TOOLS AND KNOWLEDGE.”

Myrna Yuzicapi – Knowledge Keeper.





WHAT WE LEARNED

Sask Polytech is proud of the work accomplished by the Aboriginal Student Achievement Plan (ASAP). To make sure Sask Polytech is focusing on the right things in our new strategy, we reviewed leading practices in Indigenous student success and, more importantly, we reached out to our communities, to listen and learn from what they had to tell us.

Saskatchewan has a young and growing Indigenous population, these young people have lower rates of post-secondary educational attainment than non-Indigenous populations. Knowing that educational attainment is associated with higher levels of employment and income and that employment and income differences between individuals and groups tend to decrease as education increases, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Advanced Education has tasked post-secondary institutions with increasing the participation and success of First Nations and Métis students. Over time, the government's target is to match the educational attainment level of First Nations and Métis populations with that of the overall Saskatchewan population¹.

Many of the barriers to Indigenous student success identified during the development of the 2009 Aboriginal Student Achievement Plan still exist including:

- Lack of information about available post-secondary options and low awareness of training-related career paths².
- Academic preparedness and the inability of secondary schools in more remote areas to offer the necessary preparation and prerequisites for direct entrance into post-secondary³.
- Cultural and learning disconnects arising from colonial educational practices⁴.
- Adequate funding⁵ and high costs⁶.
- Programs of study that do not reflect Indigenous culture, history or worldview⁷.
- Language and lack of support for English language learners⁸.
- Complex admission processes.
- Family responsibilities⁹.
- Relocation to an unfamiliar urban environment leading to separation from family and community networks¹⁰.
- Lack of Indigenous faculty, staff and other role models¹¹.
- Racism and discrimination¹².
- Lack of confidence¹³.

Conversations with current Indigenous students, graduates and First Nation and Métis community leaders and members across the province reiterated many of these findings.



The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action¹⁴ was published in 2015. The Calls to Action informs the development of this strategy and other institutional plans. Of the 94 Calls to Action proposed, those that are most applicable in providing direction for this strategy are:

- Provide sufficient funding to close identified educational achievement gaps within one generation.
- Eliminate educational and employment gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.
- Improve education attainment levels and success rates.
- Develop culturally appropriate curricula.
- Protect the right to Aboriginal languages, including the teaching of Aboriginal languages as credit courses.
- Create university and college degree and diploma programs in Aboriginal languages.
- Share information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history.
- Build student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy and mutual respect.
- Respect and honour Treaty relationships.

¹ Ministry of Advanced Education, Government of Saskatchewan (2017). "Plan for 2017-18." <http://publications.gov.sk.ca/documents/15/101561-English.pdf>. [Retrieved December 11, 2017].

² Restoule, J. (2011). "Aboriginal Youth Talk About Access To University in Ontario." *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 31 (2).

³ Restoule, J., Mashford-Pringle, A., Chacaby, M., Smillie, C., Brunette, C. (2013). "Supporting Successful Transition to Post-Secondary Education for Indigenous Students." *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, 4 (4).

⁴ Rosenbluth, E. (2011). "Indigenous Issues in Post-Secondary Education." School of Policy Studies, Queens University <http://www.queensu.ca/sps/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.spswww/files/files/Events/Conferences/IIPSE/IIPSE2013report.pdf>. [Retrieved December 11, 2017].

⁵ Assembly of First Nations (2012). "Supporting First Nations Learners Transitioning to Post-Secondary" <https://www.afn.ca/uploads/files/education2/postsecondarytransitionsreport.pdf>. [Retrieved December 11, 2017].

⁶ Statistics Canada (2012). "Aboriginal Peoples Survey 2012." <http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/olc-cel/olc.action?objId=89-653-X&objType=2&lang=en&limit=0>. [Retrieved December 11, 2017].

⁷ Assembly of First Nations (2012). "Supporting First Nations Learners Transitioning to Post-Secondary" <https://www.afn.ca/uploads/files/education2/postsecondarytransitionsreport.pdf>. [Retrieved December 11, 2017].

⁸ Malatest, R. (2010). "Promising Practices: Increasing and Supporting Participation for Aboriginal Students in Ontario." Report prepared for the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario. <http://www.heqco.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Promising%20Practices.pdf>. [Retrieved December 11, 2017].

⁹ Statistics Canada (2012). "Aboriginal Peoples Survey 2012." <http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/olc-cel/olc.action?objId=89-653-X&objType=2&lang=en&limit=0>. [Retrieved December 11, 2017].

¹⁰ Universities Canada (Formerly Association of Universities and Colleges Canada) (2013) "Creating Opportunities in Education for Aboriginal Students." <https://www.univcan.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/aboriginal-students-report-2013.pdf>. [Retrieved December 11, 2017].

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Currie, C., Wild, T., Schopflocher, D., Laing, L., and Veugelers, P. (2012). "Racial Discrimination Experienced by Aboriginal University Students in Canada" *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 57 (10).

¹³ Statistics Canada (2012). "Aboriginal Peoples Survey 2012." <http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/olc-cel/olc.action?objId=89-653-X&objType=2&lang=en&limit=0>. [Retrieved December 11, 2017].

¹⁴ Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action (2015) <http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=905>. [Retrieved December 11, 2017].



WHAT WE HEARD

In early 2017, Sask Polytech engaged with communities about the 2009 Aboriginal Student Achievement Plan (ASAP), to determine what was working and what they believed was needed in the future to support our Indigenous students. In all, Sask Polytech gathered input from 763 people.

Feedback revealed that the services put in place under the 2009 Aboriginal Student Achievement Plan (ASAP) worked well and these are areas to maintain and strengthen moving forward. In particular, the one-on-one support provided and the welcoming attitude and caring nature of the Indigenous Strategy team is appreciated.

Sask Polytech asked our communities to identify what they would most like to see achieved over the duration of the new five-year strategy. The focus should be on:

- Creating a sense of belonging - having an inclusive campus where everyone feels welcome and supported to do their best.
- Reflecting an Indigenous world-view in what we teach, how we teach and where we teach.
- Increasing the number of Indigenous role models and decision-makers.
- Increasing the number of Indigenous students.
- Increasing the number of Indigenous students transitioning from academic upgrading studies into career training programs and on to successful careers.
- Reducing the attainment gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students—providing the right services and supports to retain students and help them be successful.
- Increasing Indigenous student graduation and employment rates.

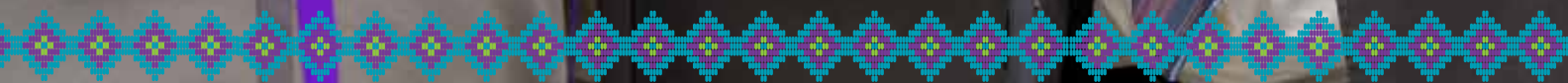
To help us do this, those we interviewed recommended Sask Polytech:

- Maintain a welcoming approach and promote a sense of belonging.
- Foster personal connections and provide one-on-one support.
- Have Indigenous role models and a more representative workforce.
- Advance Indigenous cultural awareness and presence on all campuses.
- Prepare Indigenous students for post-secondary studies.
- Provide supports for the transition to post-secondary, the transition from basic education to post-secondary programs and the transition from post-secondary to the world of work.
- Provide additional funding and resources for Indigenous student supports and services.
- Enhance data gathering and analytics to monitor progress and performance on the plan and to improve understanding of Indigenous student recruitment, retention and completion.
- Develop a clearer understanding of why Indigenous students leave programs and courses.
- Examine how Sask Polytech can better support Indigenous students who are experiencing difficulties.
- Continue to mitigate barriers to Indigenous student success.
- Take a holistic approach to Indigenous student support services and increase collaboration between academic schools and support services.
- Incorporate Indigenous knowledge and ways of learning into programs and curriculum.
- Develop partnerships and collaborate to support Indigenous graduate employment.
- More consistency in policy and practice across all four campuses.
- Continue communication, including awareness building and progress updates.
- Continue to foster buy-in from the community and commitment at all levels throughout the organization.
- Be more focused, with fewer goals and more realistic targets.

Based on this feedback, Sask Polytech drafted a new set of goals and actions. These were then brought back to Elders, First Nation leaders, students, faculty, staff, and senior leadership for additional input and prioritization. These recommendations will be the basis for the actions Sask Polytech will take over the next five years.



Eugene Arcand, a member of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Indian Residential School Survivor Committee, gifted a set of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission reports to Saskatchewan Polytechnic.





OUR PATH FORWARD

“JUST AS THE BUFFALO PROVIDED NOURISHMENT, SHELTER AND TOOLS – CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION MUST PROVIDE INDIGENOUS LEARNERS WITH THE MEANS TO LIVE AND TO MAKE A LIVING WHERE THEY LIVE, WITHIN THE ECOSYSTEM AND THE EXISTING ECONOMY; CREATING AN ECONOMIC BASE TO PROVIDE FOR THEMSELVES, THEIR FAMILIES AND THEIR COMMUNITIES.”

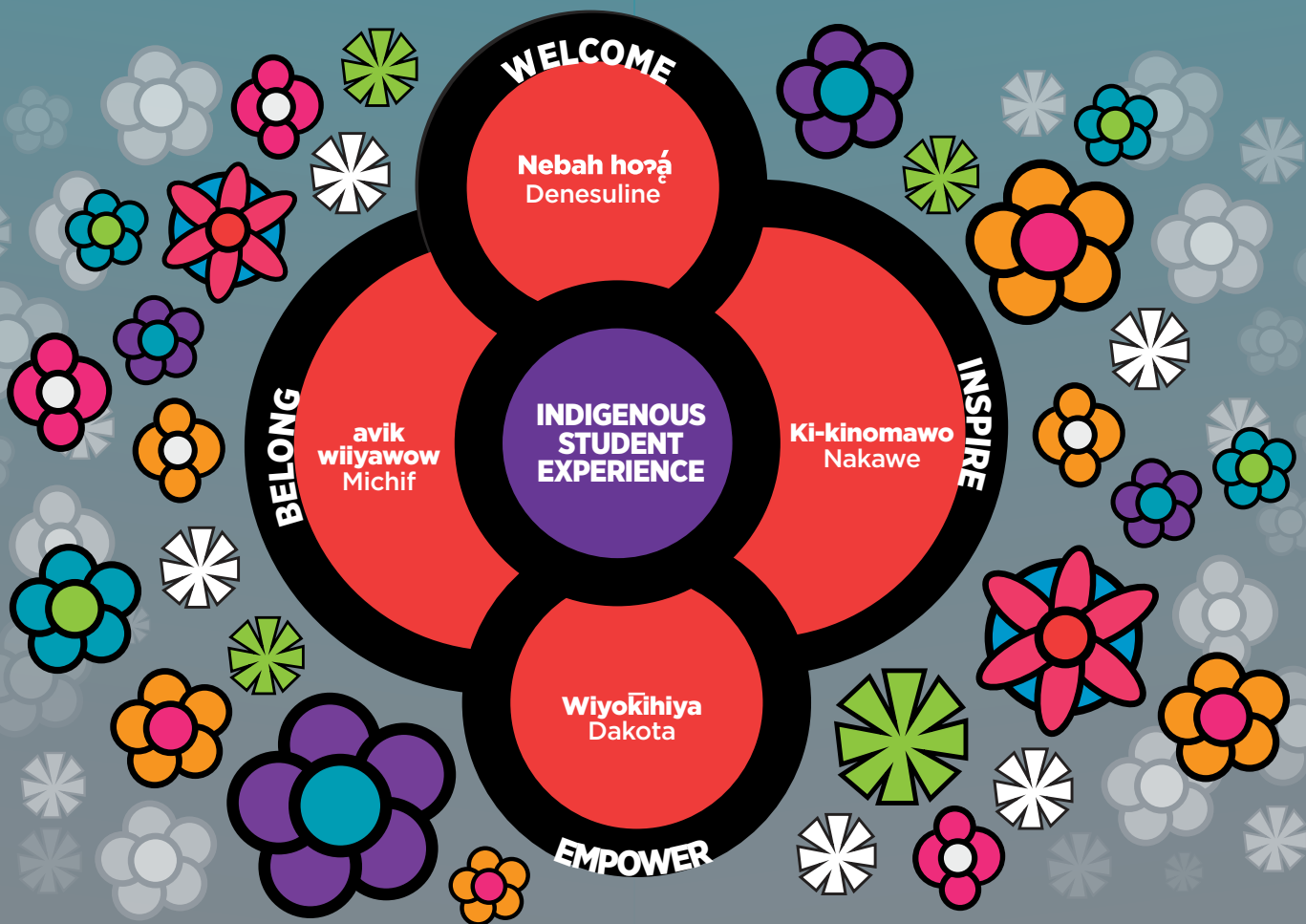
Myrna Yuzicapi – Knowledge Keeper.



WHAT WE NEED TO DO

Based on what we learned, Saskatchewan Polytechnic developed the Indigenous Student Success Strategy for 2018-2023.

This strategy represents another stepping stone in Sask Polytech's journey towards miyo wahkohtowin and reflects what we heard from our communities in terms of what we want to achieve together over the next five years - **our goals** and what we should do to help us get there - **our actions**.



THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

The Indigenous student experience at Saskatchewan Polytechnic is at the heart of this strategy. Indigenous students should feel welcome, inspired and empowered, but most of all they should feel like Sask Polytech is a place where they belong.

Sask Polytech's overarching goal is to continue to increase recruitment, retention and success of Indigenous students across all our programs.

Each of the strategy's four goals—belong, welcome, inspire, empower—contribute to achieving this overarching goal and to improving the Indigenous student experience.

- **Nebah hoꞑá (Denesuline) Welcome:** Ensure Indigenous students attending Sask Polytech are well prepared for post-secondary life and are set up for success.
- **Ki-kinomawo (Nakawe) Inspire:** Help Indigenous students thrive at Sask Polytech.
- **Wiyokihya (Dakota) Empower:** Celebrate Indigenous student success and prepare Indigenous graduates for successful careers.
- **avik wiiyawow (Michif) Belong:** Create inclusive, respectful and welcoming campuses, where Indigenous students have a sense of belonging.

Beneath each goal is a series of actions Sask Polytech will take to achieve that goal.

All four goals are priorities for Sask Polytech. Each focuses on a particular stage in a student's academic journey, but all work together and are interconnected. Actions taken under one goal will help to strengthen and reinforce the others. All four work together to help Sask Polytech achieve our overarching goal and to improve the Indigenous student experience.

Sask Polytech's success in achieving these goals will be monitored as we implement through a series of measurable outcomes. These outcomes will help us understand whether the things we are doing—our actions—are helping us achieve our overarching goal. For this reason the outcomes are focused on Indigenous student recruitment, retention and success.



Nebah ho?á (Denesuline)

pronunciation: nib nah hoe awh

WELCOME

Ensure Indigenous students attending Sask Polytech are well prepared for post-secondary life and are set up for success.

Many Indigenous students leave their families and communities to study with Sask Polytech and this transition can be difficult. The more Sask Polytech can help Indigenous students understand what campus life is like and provide a friendly face to help students navigate unfamiliar processes and systems, the easier this move will be.

Sask Polytech introduced a number of initiatives under the 2009 Aboriginal Student Achievement Plan (ASAP) that provide a solid foundation for this goal. As we move forward with this refreshed strategy, Sask Polytech will continue to:

- Pursue targeted Indigenous student recruitment and outreach activities.
- Offer post-secondary summer transition programs for Indigenous students at each campus.

ACTIONS 2018-2023

- Help prepare Indigenous students for post-secondary, so they can actively participate and succeed in their chosen program of study.
 - Develop post-secondary transition supports for Indigenous students based on a clear understanding of educational needs.
- Support Indigenous students applying to Sask Polytech, so they have the knowledge they need to be comfortable taking the first step on their post-secondary journey.
 - Develop proactive, high touch supports to help Indigenous students with the application process.
 - Develop customized, targeted information about finances and funding opportunities for Indigenous students coming to Sask Polytech.
- Provide personalized support, through transition coaches, for Indigenous students as they start out, move through and leave Sask Polytech, so students feel part of a supportive community that is invested in their success from day one.



Ki-kinomawo (Nakawe)

pronunciation: ky kin oh mah woh

INSPIRE

Help Indigenous students thrive at Sask Polytech.

To support Indigenous student academic success and encourage active participation in post-secondary life, Sask Polytech will embrace an Indigenous world-view by establishing Indigenous-centred holistic services and learning environments.

Sask Polytech introduced a number of initiatives under the 2009 Aboriginal Student Achievement Plan that provide a solid foundation for this goal. As we move forward with this refreshed strategy, Sask Polytech will continue to:

- Honour the important role Elders and Knowledge Keepers play as guides and teachers.
- Celebrate Indigenous culture on all four main campuses and foster a strong sense of identity among Indigenous students.

ACTIONS 2018-2023

- Integrate Indigenous knowledge and ways of learning in programs and curricula, so that an Indigenous perspective informs teaching and learning.
 - Provide opportunities for all students to learn about the history and culture of Indigenous peoples to promote intercultural understanding, empathy and mutual respect.
 - Support rollout of Sask Polytech's Indigenization Framework.
- Formalize an early intervention strategy for Indigenous students experiencing difficulties, so Sask Polytech can better support them through challenging times.
 - Investigate and understand Indigenous student participation and success patterns and learn from best practices.
 - Investigate and understand barriers specific to basic education Indigenous students.
- Provide specific supports to help Indigenous students overcome identified obstacles to learning success, so Sask Polytech can assist Indigenous students in being as successful as their non-Indigenous peers.
 - Offer student support modules in key personal and academic skills.
- Support faculty and staff knowledge development to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into curriculum and services.
 - Introduce professional development opportunities for faculty and staff in Indigenous cultural differences and Indigenous ways of knowing and learning.



Wiyokīhiya

(Dakota)

pronunciation: wee yoke key yah

EMPOWER

Celebrate Indigenous student success and prepare Indigenous graduates for successful careers.

Sask Polytech takes great pride in our students' achievements and wants all of our students, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to leave us ready to contribute to their communities, Canada and the world.

Sask Polytech introduced a number of initiatives under the 2009 Aboriginal Student Achievement Plan (ASAP) that provide a solid foundation for this goal. As we move forward with this refreshed strategy, Sask Polytech will continue to:

- Host honour ceremonies and Indigenous student graduation celebrations to showcase Indigenous students' achievements and honour success in its many forms, personal as well as academic.

ACTIONS 2018-2023

- Build supportive business and industry networks, so that Indigenous students have connections to the world of work.
- Foster an Indigenous alumni network so our Indigenous graduates truly feel part of the Sask Polytech family.



avik wiiyawow (Michif)

pronunciation: ah-vick wee yah wow

BELONG

Create inclusive, respectful and welcoming campuses, where Indigenous students have a sense of belonging.

This starts with the relationships and bridges Sask Polytech builds with Indigenous students and their communities before they begin their studies. It continues with the networks Sask Polytech nurtures, so we learn from each other while Indigenous students are with us and after they have left to embark on their careers or further study. Throughout, Sask Polytech must focus on improving upon those elements of our institutional culture, processes and practices that can inhibit Indigenous student persistence and success.

Sask Polytech introduced a number of initiatives under the 2009 Aboriginal Student Achievement Plan that provide a solid foundation for this goal. As we move forward with this refreshed strategy, Sask Polytech will continue to:

- Reflect Indigenous values, language and culture in our spaces, so we increase understanding and reciprocity among Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.
- Help Indigenous students mitigate barriers, so they are successful as they enter, learn with and graduate from Sask Polytech.

ACTIONS 2018-2023

- Develop close and trusted relationships with Indigenous communities in Saskatchewan, so we can respond to their specific educational concerns and needs.
 - Reach out to Indigenous communities to actively raise awareness and increase understanding of available post-secondary options.
 - Look at program offerings, to better understand how Sask Polytech programs may be a good fit for Indigenous students.
- Establish an Indigenous role model program, so Indigenous students see themselves reflected in Sask Polytech's people and graduates.
 - Work with Indigenous role models to encourage post-secondary participation.

HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS OF THE STRATEGY

We have identified outcomes to monitor as we implement the Indigenous Student Success Strategy. These outcomes focus on increasing Indigenous student enrolment, retention and graduation as well as on indigenizing curriculum as per Tomorrow's Learning in the Making, Sask Polytech's academic model.

We will be creating an Indigenous Student Success Strategy balanced scorecard as a complementary tool. The balanced scorecard will be reviewed, updated and progress monitored over the course of this strategy (2018-2023).

Results from the 2016-17 balanced scorecard form baseline data (see chart below). Additional measures to align with this strategy will be developed in the future.

BASELINE DATA (2016-17)		
WELCOME	Enrolment rates Assess success of Indigenous student recruitment and enrolment activities.	19.1% of Sask Polytech students are Indigenous (3,669 Indigenous students enrolled).
INSPIRE	Retention rates Assess success of Indigenous student persistence and retention activities. Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing Assess progress on Academic Model initiative to include a learning component within all programs regarding Indigenous history, culture and intercultural understanding.	76% of Indigenous students retained (173 Indigenous students retained).
EMPOWER	Graduation and completion rates Assess Indigenous student success in terms of persistence to completion. Employment rates Assess Indigenous student success in terms of employment following graduation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous graduate employment rate • Graduate employment rate differential (non-Indigenous to Indigenous graduates) 	GRADUATION RATES (CERTIFICATE-DIPLOMA-DEGREE) 57% of Indigenous students graduated (865 graduates).
		COMPLETION RATES (APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS) 81% Indigenous student apprenticeship completion rate (475 Indigenous apprenticeship completers).
		85% Indigenous employment rate.
		9% Employment rate differential.
BELONG	Indigenous student satisfaction Assess satisfaction with the overall environment at Sask Polytech as welcoming and friendly for Indigenous students (% Indigenous respondents Strongly Agree/Agree).	94% of Indigenous students were satisfied.

HOW WE WILL MAKE OUR STRATEGY HAPPEN

Execution of any strategy starts with deciding what to do first and how actions and initiatives can be best sequenced. The roadmap below provides a starting point for implementation of the Indigenous Student Success Strategy. Select actions will be implemented in year one and two with all other actions to be implemented in future years.

PRIORITIZED ACTIONS FOR YEAR ONE AND TWO	
	Review and refine the Indigenous Student Success Strategy balanced scorecard.
WELCOME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide personalized support, through transition coaches, for Indigenous students as they start out, move through and leave Sask Polytech. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Research best practices, socialize concept and identify resourcing requirements with a view to having coach(es) in place by end of 2020 if business case/resourcing allows.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help prepare Indigenous students for post-secondary by developing post-secondary transition programs for Indigenous students based on a clear understanding of educational needs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Assess needs and identify programming and resourcing requirements with a view to having programs in place by end of 2020 if business case/resourcing allows.
INSPIRE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate Indigenous knowledge and ways of learning in programs and curricula. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Provide opportunities for all students to learn about the history and culture of Indigenous peoples. <p><i>Note: this priority/initiative is part of Tomorrow's Learning in the Making, Sask Polytech's academic model. Implementation sequencing will align to that implementation plan.</i></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formalize an early intervention strategy for Indigenous students experiencing difficulties. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Research best practice and identify resourcing requirements with a view to having strategy in place by end of 2020 if business case/resourcing allows.
EMPOWER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build supportive business and industry networks, so that Indigenous students have connections to the world of work. • Foster an Indigenous alumni network, so our Indigenous graduates truly feel part of the Sask Polytech family.
BELONG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop close and trusted relationships with Indigenous communities in Saskatchewan, so we can respond to their specific educational concerns and needs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Look at program offerings, to better understand how Sask Polytech programs may be a good fit for Indigenous students.

In addition to the priority actions listed above, Sask Polytech will continue implementation of the following initiatives, which were part of the 2009 Aboriginal Student Achievement Plan:

- Reflect Indigenous values, language and culture in our spaces, so we increase understanding and reciprocity among Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.
- Help Indigenous students mitigate barriers, so they are successful as they enter, learn with and graduate from Sask Polytech.
- Pursue targeted Indigenous student recruitment and outreach activities.
- Offer post-secondary summer transition programs for Indigenous students at each campus.
- Honour the important role Elders and Knowledge Keepers play as guides and teachers.
- Celebrate Indigenous culture on all four campuses and foster a strong sense of identity among our Indigenous students.
- Host honour ceremonies and Indigenous student graduation celebrations, so we showcase our Indigenous students' achievements and honour success in its many forms, personal as well as academic.

kinanâskomitin (Cree) **Mahsi cho** (Denesuline) **Marsee** (Michif) **Miigwech** (Nakawe) **Pidamaya** (Dakota) **THANK YOU**

One of my key areas of responsibility is leading Saskatchewan Polytechnic's Indigenous strategy. The Indigenous Student Success Strategy is a key component of this overall effort. As an institution, we believe that building understanding is critical to progress.

I am fortunate to be associated with an exceptional and diverse group of individuals who place great value on helping students achieve their educational and career goals. I want to thank Jason Seright, director, Indigenous Strategy, for his leadership and express my gratitude to his team for their hard work on this project. I would also like to thank all the stakeholders involved—the over 700 Elders, students, community leaders, faculty and staff who took part in meetings, surveys and other engagement activities. Their input was incredibly valuable.

Much research, fact-gathering and time went into developing the Indigenous Student Success Strategy. The result is an impressive strategy that I believe will result in a positive student experience at Saskatchewan Polytechnic.

Dr. Dennis Johnson

Vice-President, Strategy and Business Development

wāpa kih ôtēh nīkāhn (Cree)

pronunciation: wah paw key ohtay nee kahn

Tomorrow in the making, looking forward to tomorrow.





GLOSSARY

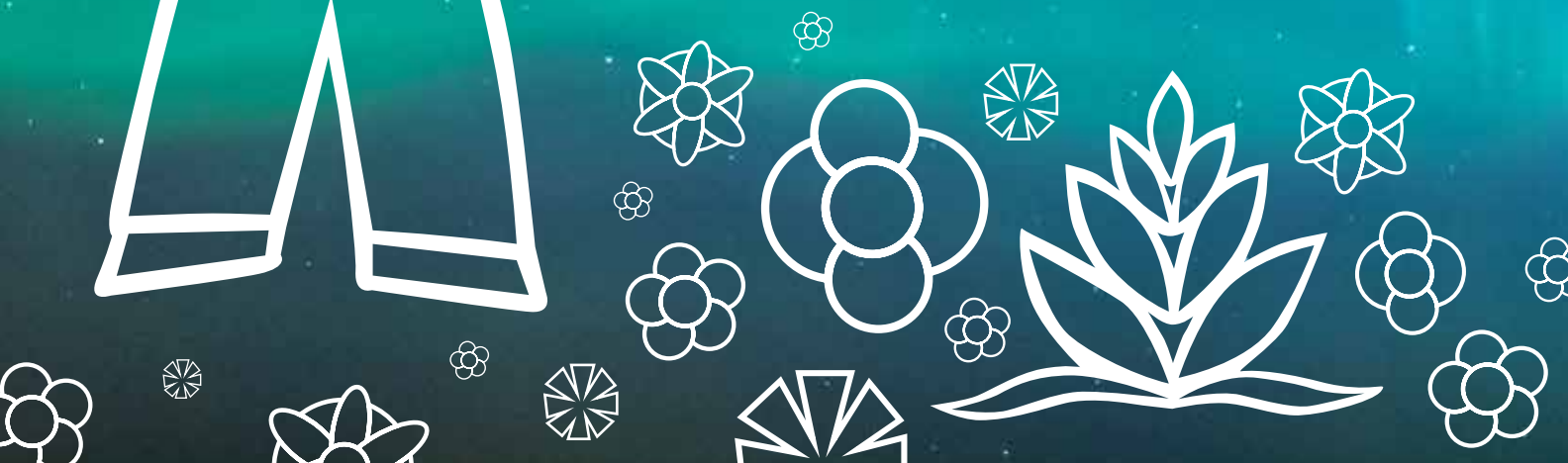
- **Aboriginal:** The term “Aboriginal” refers to the first inhabitants of Canada, and includes First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. This term came into popular usage in Canadian contexts after 1982 when the Constitution Act was passed. However, while a step in the right direction, the use of the word was met with resistance from some groups.
- **Aboriginal vs. Indigenous:** Indigenous is a word developed by First Nation, Métis and Inuit people for First Nation, Métis and Inuit peoples and is considered to be more inclusive than Aboriginal. The term Aboriginal was not chosen by any group it refers to. Sask Polytech uses the term Indigenous in everything it does, from the classroom to the administration offices.
- **Academic Model, Tomorrow’s Learning in the Making:** An academic model is the framework that guides the design and delivery of programs in a polytechnic institution. It is not the “what” of program content, but the “how” of learning and teaching. The Academic Model addresses the current and future learning and career development needs of our students, and adapts to business, industrial, technological and social advancements. It defines innovative ways to build on our existing structure, including the learning outcomes-based curriculum model and learning ecosystem, to create flexible modes of program delivery and learning pathways.
- **Completion rate:** is calculated based on the number of students who complete a program level compared to the number of students who are enrolled in the same program and level.
- **Elder:** In Indigenous cultures, Elders play a prominent, vital and respected role as custodians for traditional knowledge and ways of teaching and learning. They are leaders, teachers, role models, and mentors in their respective communities.
- **Employment rate:** Sask Polytech conducts an annual survey of graduates 6 to 12 months following graduation. The graduate employment rate is calculated as a percentage of graduates surveyed that are employed out of the total graduates available for work. Given the time period between graduation and survey administration, the results reported are based on the graduating class of the previous academic year.
- **English language learners:** For some Indigenous students, the language spoken in their homes may not be English and some of their formative school years may have been in their first language. The way mainstream curriculum is currently delivered does not completely reflect Indigenous ways of knowing and does not take cultural and linguistic differences of Indigenous ELL students into account. The Indigenous English Language Learner procedure allows ELL students to approach the curriculum in a way that reflects their Indigenous ways of knowing. Academic accommodations can be made in partnership between students and support staff at Saskatchewan Polytechnic.
- **Enrolment rate:** Numbers reflect a count of each enrolment in a program, including adult basic education, apprenticeship and certificate, diploma, degree programming. This is not a distinct headcount as a student may be enrolled in more than one program over an academic year. Enrolment rate is only calculated for students who either self-declare in a particular demographic (Indigenous, female, disability, visible minority) or are studying with a study visa.
- **First Nations:** The term First Nations came into common use in the 1970s to replace the offensive and inappropriate term, “Indian.” While no legal definition is available, many communities have also replaced “band” with “First Nation” in their names.
- **Graduation:** The cohort graduation rate measures the percentage of a group of first-time students (cohort) admitted to on-campus, full-time delivery certificate, diploma, degree programs, as at 1.5 years out (150%) from the expected time to complete (i.e., the graduation rate of a three-year-program is captured at five years out from intake). Data excludes the joint degree Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Collaborative Nurse Practitioner programs, for which Saskatchewan Polytechnic is not the credentialing institution.
- **Homeland of the Métis People:** The Homeland of the Métis People includes the three prairie provinces (Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta), northwest Ontario, northeast British Columbia, Montana, North Dakota and the Northwest Territories. Saskatchewan Polytechnic campuses are on the Homeland of the Métis People.

Definitions in this glossary were informed by Indigenous information from: the Assembly of First Nations, Carleton University, Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations, Gabriel Dumont Institute, Government of Canada, Saskatchewan Indigenous Cultural Centre, Saskatchewan Polytechnic, University of British Columbia and University of Victoria.

- **Indigenization:** The act of incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing, teaching and learning into the everyday life of an organization or community. It serves to recognize and validate Indigenous worldviews and perspectives and identified opportunities for Indigenous culture to be expressed.
- **Indigenous:** A collective noun for First Nations, Métis and Inuit people of Canada.
- **Knowledge Keeper:** Knowledge Keepers play a role in Indigenous cultures similar to an Elder and often a Knowledge Keeper is an Elder. Knowledge Keepers have and share knowledge regarding traditional ways of teaching, learning, healing and customs. Knowledge Keepers also keep and share Indigenous history.
- **Métis:** The Métis are a specific and distinct Indigenous nation with historical roots in Western Canada. Descending from the fur trade, the emergence of the Métis people began in the historic Northwest in the 18 and 19 centuries. They settled in what is currently known as the Homeland of the Métis People.
- **Non-status:** People who consider themselves as Indigenous or as a member of a First Nation, but are not registered under the Indian Act.
- **Retention rate:** The annual program retention rate measures the percentage of a group of first-time students (cohort) admitted to on-campus, full-time delivery, multi-year, certificate, diploma, degree programs who return to enrol in any term in the program.
- **Treaty 4 and Treaty 6 territories:** Between 1871 and 1907, First Nations in Saskatchewan signed a series of treaties with the Crown, known as the numbered treaties. Each of these treaties provided reserve land to be set apart by the Government of Canada for a First Nation. The size of reserve land was based on an Indigenous population and the per capita formula within the specific treaty. Saskatchewan Polytechnic campuses can be found on Treaty 4 and Treaty 6 territories, and Saskatchewan is home to a total of six treaty territories.
- **edlanet'e (Denesuline)**
 - pronunciation: It Lawn EE tay
 - definition: welcome
- **hai, hai (Cree)**
 - pronunciation: hi hi
 - definition: thank you
- **hau koda (Dakota)**
 - pronunciation: How Koda
 - definition: welcome
- **Ki-kinomawo (Nakawe)**
 - pronunciation: ky kin oh mah woh
 - definition: inspire, teach by example, teach by role modelling
- **kinanâskomitin (Cree)**
 - pronunciation: kin na nask coo moe tin
 - definition: thank you
- **Mahsi cho (Denesuline)**
 - pronunciation: mah see cho
 - definition: thank you
- **Marsee (Michif)**
 - pronunciation: mar see
 - definition: thank you
- **Miigwech (Nakawe)**
 - pronunciation: mee gwe tch
 - definition: thank you
- **miyo wahkohtowin (language)**
 - pronunciation: mee yoh wah coo toe win
 - definition: good relationships
- **Nebah hoᑭᑦ (Denesuline)**
 - pronunciation: nib nah hoe awh
 - definition: welcome, there is room for you, there is room for everyone
- **Pidamaya (Dakota)**
 - pronunciation: pee dah ma yah
 - definition: thank you
- **tanshi (Michif)**
 - pronunciation: Taun Shee
 - definition: welcome
- **tawâw (Cree)**
 - pronunciation: Ta Wow
 - definition: welcome
- **wāpa kih ôᑦēh nīkāhn (Cree)**
 - pronunciation: wah paw key ohtay nee kahn
 - definition: tomorrow in the making, looking forward to tomorrow
- **Wiyokīhiya (Dakota)**
 - pronunciation: wee yoke key yah
 - definition: empower, to empower someone, to make someone capable of accomplishment

PRONUNCIATIONS

- **Anin sikwa (Nakawe)**
 - pronunciation: Ah neen See qua
 - definition: welcome
- **avik wiiyawow (Michif)**
 - pronunciation: ah-vick wee yah wow
 - definition: belong, with them, to be part of them



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DREAMCATCHER

The dreamcatcher on the cover was printed with glow-in-the-dark ink. Dream catchers have a long history among First Nations people. They were given to children to hang over their beds to catch bad dreams. In the morning the sun would hit the dream catcher and burn the bad dreams away.



**SASKATCHEWAN
POLYTECHNIC**

Tomorrow
in the making

saskpolytech.ca/indigenous