



OKANAGAN COLLEGE INDIGENOUS STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

inspire



The Importance of Place

Places tell stories and our connection to the land and water is integral to help us survive. History and the stories of the Syilx Okanagan, Secwépemc, Ktunaxa, and Sinixt peoples teach us how to understand the living land and co-exist together. (Coyote) stories and his travels are a record of the natural laws. Teaching this to future generations is how we survive, thrive, and continue the learning journey. Honouring traditional knowledge, stories, teachings, and the land helps us to connect, respect, and build awareness of our surroundings. We all have a responsibility to care for and be responsible to the land and places in which we work, study, live, and play. Indigenous ways of being and knowing teach us about reciprocity, the importance of building relationships, embracing different perspectives and implementing a holistic framework to help guide us in educational processes and in our learning environment at Okanagan College.

In recognizing the importance of place, we offer the following acknowledgement of the land on which our campuses are located.

Acknowledgement

Okanagan College respectfully acknowledges that the Penticton, Kelowna and Vernon campuses are located on the lands of the Syilx Okanagan People and the Salmon Arm campus is located on the lands of the Secwépemc People. We honour our relations and hold up their knowledge, welcoming all to our house of learning.

*“Welcoming the fact that Indigenous Peoples are organizing themselves for political, economic, social and cultural enhancement and in order to bring to an end all forms of discrimination and oppression wherever they occur”
(UNDRIP- the General Assembly – Truth and Reconciliation)*

Four Pillars Model of Indigenization

The Four Pillars Model of Indigenization at Okanagan College represents a traditional Q'wci?, C7iskten (Pit House) that encompass Indigenous Principles, ways of being, and ways of knowing. The Four Pillars Model depicts the strength of many coming together as one. The Q'wci?, C7iskten framework reflects how Okanagan College is a house of learning for all to come and gather, connect, explore opportunities for growth and lifelong learning, inspire and empower individuals and communities, contribute to positive change and transform lives.

The Four Pillars represent the four priority areas to articulate the commitment and vision of Okanagan College in its ongoing work of Indigenization. Each pillar has equal weight of importance in order to hold up the overarching roof that represents community. Each pillar has four goals and each goal has been developed in accordance with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action, the United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Peoples, and the final report into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls. Okanagan College respects that Indigenization and Reconciliation is an ongoing process of collaboration, consultation, planning towards action, and as such, our goals will evolve and change as we walk the journey toward reconciliation, together.

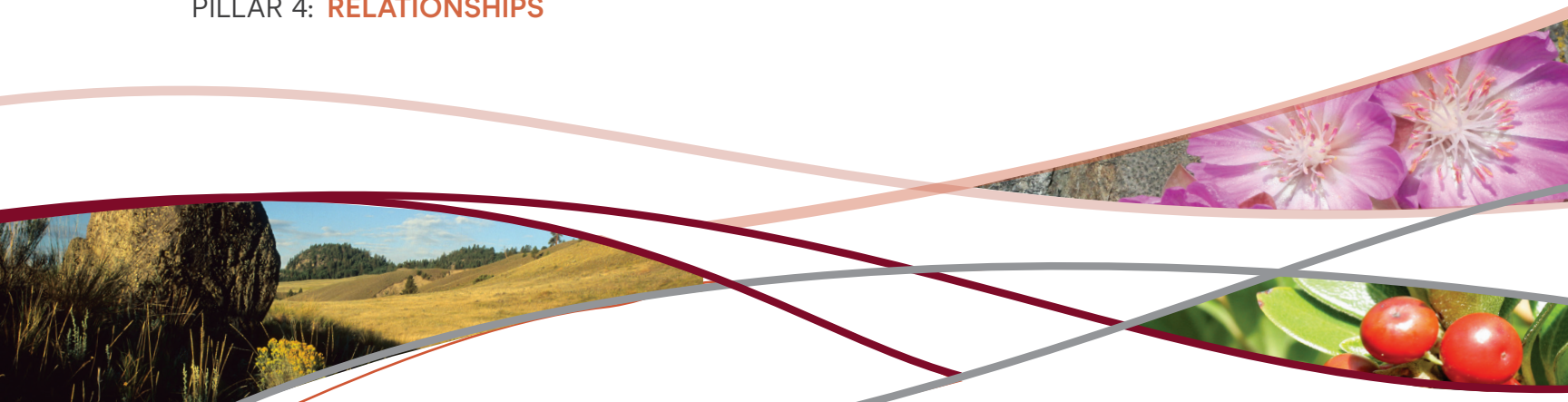
Four Pillars of Indigenization at Okanagan College

PILLAR 1: **TEACHING AND LEARNING DEVELOPMENT**

PILLAR 2: **GOVERNANCE, POLICIES, AND DECISION MAKING**

PILLAR 3: **INFRASTRUCTURE AND DESIGN**

PILLAR 4: **RELATIONSHIPS**



PILLAR 1:

TEACHING AND LEARNING DEVELOPMENT

Knowledge. Be a college where all students, staff, faculty, and visitors can recognize and appreciate Indigenous history and the fundamental contribution of Indigenous knowledge and relationships to the college. Be a college where Indigenous knowledge, languages, and cultures are respected and are valued elements of the college's culture grounded in an urgency to embed them in all elements of OC.

Language and Culture. Create opportunities for students, employees, and visitors to enhance individual and collective knowledge about Indigenous Cultural Protocols, Land Acknowledgement, Indigenous history and culture, and language that is inclusive of the traditional and unceded territories on which Okanagan College delivers services.

Programs and Courses. Working with Indigenous community focus groups, Mentors, and Knowledge Keepers, develop culturally appropriate programs inclusive of Indigenous language that transform learning into a collaborative process which enriches and promotes healing, a sense of belonging and identity that embraces diversity and improves education levels and success rates. Weave trauma informed teaching and learning practices into program and course development.

Experiential and Land Based Learning. Work with Elders and Knowledge keepers to engage OC students and employees in land-based learning experiences and protocols of the local Indigenous Peoples of the Syilx Okanagan and Secwépemc Territory.

PILLAR 2:

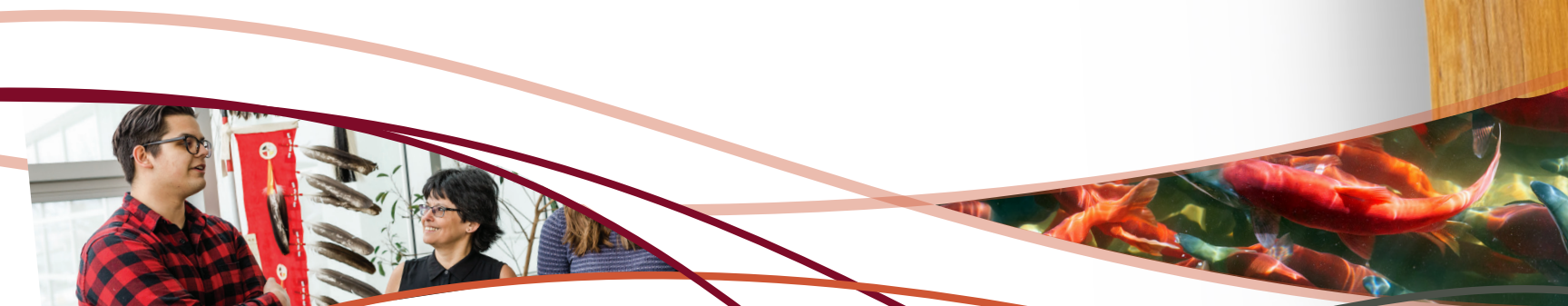
GOVERNANCE, POLICIES, AND DECISION MAKING

Indigenization of College Policy. Renew college policies and procedures bridging Indigenous and non-Indigenous world views and interweaving Indigenous ways of knowing and being within OC's policy framework.

Decision Making Processes. Increase Indigenous voice, guidance, and influence in college decision-making structures and processes to support Okanagan College in developing culturally relevant and responsive policies, structures, and processes.

Consultation. Build meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities, employees, and students grounded in reciprocity and mutual respect. Regularly receive and integrate input from Indigenous communities, Indigenous Student Services Team, the Indigenous Education Advisory Council, the Indigenous and Indigenous Ally Assembly, and other points of intersection with Indigenous peoples to inform tangible action plans for the college.

Representation. Ensure that Indigenous voice is present at all levels of the college and that a leadership team is representative of Indigenous peoples at the Board of Governors, Education Council, and Leadership Council.





PILLAR 3:

INFRASTRUCTURE AND DESIGN

Indigenization. Incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing into the college's educational, cultural, and social structures to build student, employee, and visitor capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect.

Physical Spaces. In consultation with Indigenous communities, weave Syilx Okanagan and Secwépemc language, culture, art, signage, and heritage throughout Okanagan College campuses that include parallel opportunities for educational engagement and awareness. Incorporate and reflect Indigenous design in future College buildings and campus improvements. Ensure that culture, art, and language are visible and viable across all aspects of the institution and students' experience.

Cultural and Spiritual Spaces. Improve space and place for Indigenous students to gather, learn, share, and teach others that embraces Indigenous traditional practices and ways of being and knowing. Promote the development of cultural projects that foster healing, wellness, opportunities to incorporate further learning and embrace traditional practices. Increases the visibility of Indigenous culture through gathering spaces.

Brand and Marketing Design/Media. Incorporate and weave Indigenous cultural diversity into Okanagan College communications, brand, and regional presence that reflects local Indigenous art, culture, and languages reflective of the unceded and traditional territories on which the College delivers services.

PILLAR 4:

RELATIONSHIPS

Partnerships. In partnership with local bands in the traditional and unceded territory of the Okanagan Syilx, Secwepmec, Ktunaxa, and Sinixt, develop, formalize, and foster sustainable partnership agreements grounded in reciprocity, respect, and knowledge sharing. Recognize that the agreements and other constructive arrangements, and the relationship they represent, are the basis for a strengthened partnership among Indigenous peoples.

Co-created Community-based Learning. Co-create community-based delivery learning opportunities, ensuring appropriate protocols are followed and culturally appropriate and trauma informed approaches are applied embracing an Indigenous lens to teaching, learning, and how to build upon relationships and making connections with Indigenous communities.

Community Engagement. Work together as a team unified and representing Okanagan College with clear open communication with community partners to establish and foster points of contact within Indigenous Communities across the region. Align our communication channels with Indigenous Communities for the purpose of accountability, sharing, and activating the partnership between the college and Indigenous Communities. Actively engage in community events together at Okanagan College and in Indigenous Communities ensuring reciprocity and balance in relationships.

Relationships based in listening. Work with meaningful Indigenous and non-Indigenous relationship partners to reject past colonizing patterns of homogenization, exclusion and erasure of Indigenous peoples' knowledge, languages, identities as well as cultural and educational aspirations and advocate for the resources to fulfil the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to action.

