



YOU CAN'T GET AN ELDER IN AN APP

Elder Engagement for Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey Post-Secondary Education

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Bras D'or Lakes, Unama'ki

Wela'lin – Woliwon – Thank You!

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This is a living document, consistent with the ongoing, evolving and collective nature of Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey Knowledge systems. Wela'lin, Woliwon to all those who shared their knowledge:

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ACRONYMS

AAEDIRP	Atlantic Aboriginal Economic Development Integrated Research Program
AAU	Association of Atlantic Universities
AFN	Assembly of First Nations
APCFNC	Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Secretariat
CBU	Cape Breton University
CCL	Canadian Council on Learning
Dal	Dalhousie University
ED	Education Director
FNEII	First Nation Education Initiative Inc.
MEW	Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch
MK	Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey
PSE	Post-Secondary Education
PSI	Post-Secondary Institution
StFX	Saint Francis Xavier University
UNB	University of New Brunswick
VUI	Vancouver Island University

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

Indigenous Education

Transforming Canada's education system so that Indigenous Knowledges are respected and recognized as valid ways of understanding the world is one of the many challenges in the process of decolonizing and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. The *Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* calls for new Aboriginal education legislation with the full participation and informed consent of Aboriginal peoples. This would include the development of culturally appropriate curriculum; enabling community responsibility, control and accountability over education; as well as respecting and honouring Treaty relationships. In Mi'kma'ki and in Wolastoqey homelands, Treaties with the British Crown were made based on the spirit and intent of peace, friendship, protection and alliance, as representatives of a sovereign nation, not as subjects (Palmer, 2016). Accordingly, the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) stress that Indigenous peoples must lead and control the processes of change for Indigenous education. Additionally, new legislation must recognize the importance of education in strengthening the cultural identity of Indigenous peoples and providing a stronger foundation for success.

As affirmed by many Indigenous scholars and other Knowledge Holders, learning about culture, language and traditions is critical to the well-being, identity, self-worth and empowerment of Indigenous peoples (Battiste, 2013; CCL, 2009a and b; Castellano, 2011; Couture, 2011). Learning is a lifelong, holistic process understood within four dimensions of learning: spiritual, emotional, physical and cognitive. Each teaching is situated within an interconnected knowledge web (Auger, 2001; CCL, 2009a and b, RCAP, 1996). As highlighted by *In the Words of Elders: Aboriginal Elders in Transition*, a publication that brings together Elders' perspectives from across Turtle Island (North America), Elders are the "historians of the Aboriginal past and the keepers of cultural events and ceremonies. They are teachers, healers, and experts in survival, sharing a worldview based on the knowledge that all things in life are related and are governed by natural laws" (Kulchyski, McCaskill & Newhouse 1999, xv). Part of Indigenous cultural resurgence is "the transmission of Indigenous culture, spiritual teachings and knowledge of the land between Elders and youth" (Alfred 2009, p. 56). Knowledge transfer from Elders is urgent because the Elders are passing away without having the opportunities to pass along their knowledges (APCFNC, 2011).

Some post-secondary institutions (PSIs) ground their educational approaches using a holistic framework that begins with Elders. However, many PSIs that say they are dedicated to Indigenous education are not yet creating spaces for Indigenous control and autonomy over Indigenous education or respecting, honouring and reinvigorating Treaty relationships. It is hoped that the understandings and experiences of those at PSIs with promising practices can augment the voices of Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik as they develop and enhance Elder engagement in Atlantic region universities.

RESEARCH FOCUS: DEVELOPING ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN MI'KMA'KI AND WOLASTOQEY HOMELANDS

In Mi'kma'ki (Mi'kmaw homelands), education is about making stronger Mi'kmaq. The multifaceted roles Elders play in educational success at the community level, at Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey (MK) schools and in PSE is well recognized by Mi'kmaq (MK, 2013). Elders are Knowledge Holders and spiritual and political leaders – teachers of Indigenous Knowledges, language, Mi'kmaw ways of knowing and learning. As mentioned, MK participated in the developing the concept of lifelong learning nationally. Elders are understood as key in fostering development at all levels, including identity development at the physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual level. Elders recognize and nurture the unique gifts of individuals. Elders also support the cultural challenges posed by finding one's way in a colonial system and the transitions youth undergo moving from education to employment. Engagement with Elders is a key component to becoming a responsible Mi'kmaw adult (CMM, 2007; MK, 2013). The roles and significance of Wolastoqey Elders are understood in similar ways (I. and D. Perley, Aroostook, NB, August, 2014).

Despite the wealth of Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey Knowledges across Mi'kma'ki and Wolastoqey homelands, there is no systemic involvement of Elders in which Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey Knowledges are embedded in the programming and curriculum in Atlantic region universities. Much work is needed to reach a stage in which communities have autonomy, control and responsibility over education as outlined in the TRC recommendations. The goal of this research is to help articulate the needs for Elder engagement in Mi'kma'ki and Wolastoqey homelands and outline a vision that can be used to create and enhance existing programming.

An Indigenist research approach, aligned with the beliefs, values and understandings of knowledge within Indigenous understandings grounded this work (Battiste 2013; Simpson 2004; Smith 1999; Wilson 2007). The research was guided by Indigenous frameworks, is intended to maintain relational accountability and support Indigenous cultural resurgence. In keeping with her positionality as an aspiring ally and settler scholar, Gillian Austin's approach involved being guided by and collaborating and with Ann Sylliboy, as well as other Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey Knowledge holders. Gillian and Ann aspire that the research contribute to decolonizing the Canadian education system and benefit Indigenous peoples. The frameworks, knowledges, voices, ways of knowing, learning and teachings of Elders and Knowledge holders are centred. All those who contributed to the report are considered research collaborators. The principles of ownership, control, access and possession (OCAP) were followed for the research, meaning that MK owns all research conducted. The Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch (MEW) gave approval for the research. A consent form was used with all research collaborators. Individual quotes were verified with research collaborators.

Two main research activities were undertaken. First, a national scan of Elder engagement at universities highlights promising practices. Secondly, consultation took place with a group of 14 Mi'kmaw and allied educators as well as a youth focus group. Most of the research collaborators are from Unama'ki. Two Wolastoqey Elders who work at the University of New Brunswick (UNB) were also consulted because of UNB's experience establishing the first Elder-in-Residence program in the Atlantic region.

Limitations of the Research

Consultation with Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey educators and allies was limited due to the scope of the volunteer practicum work, which was limited to five weeks and by travel constraints. Most of the research took place in Unama'ki, where MK's main office is located. Cape Breton University (CBU) and St. Francis Xavier University (StFX) were the main focus, as this is where most Mi'kmaw students from Unama'ki attend university. Dalhousie University was included but to a limited extent. Any errors, omissions or misinterpretations are attributable to the student researcher.

FINDINGS

ELDERS' POTENTIAL ROLES IN PSE

Research collaborators made suggestions for Elders' potential roles in relation to the following: students, faculty and staff, administration and in research. They also highlighted the relationships between Indigenous communities and PSIs. While the focus is on the contributions of Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey collaborators, insights from the national scan are also included. In a broad, university context, Elders are considered Knowledge Holders and teachers as well as spiritual and political leaders. They are part of living Indigenous Knowledge systems and essential to the transmission of Indigenous Knowledges. They are role models and mentors. They are cultural navigators¹ who provide a link to being L'nu (the people) and create an Indigenous community at PSIs. Elders are most commonly involved at PSIs in Canada as part of Elder-in-Residence programs and as visiting Elders; however, many are course instructors and professors based on their Indigenous Knowledge. Elders are also found in administrative positions as deans, program directors and department chairs in PSIs across Canada. Elders' potential roles can be explored but should not be definitive or prescriptive (VIU, 2011). Elders' roles are "**simple and complex**" (Brock University, 2016).

The connection between Elders and younger generations is central to intergenerational knowledge transmission. Elders are Knowledge Holders and teachers in relation to students, and students learn about all aspects of culture, language, stories, Traditional teachings and protocols from them. Elders are knowledgeable concerning many interconnected topics, including but not limited to Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey cultural and social, spiritual, economic and political systems. They are a link to living ancestral knowledges and histories based on oral traditions. Elders are cultural navigators who provide a link to being L'nu.

Elders provide leadership and mentor students, and are role models for them. They operate in ways consistent with Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey values. They are people with whom students can identify culturally, and who provide acceptance for Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey ways. Elders also function as counselors and healers, providing spiritual and emotional support and guidance. They are often called in times of crisis to support students, staff or the university community. Many of them are healers, skilled in

¹ The term "cultural navigator" was put forward by Patricia Doyle-Bedwell. She learned this from Patricia Monture.

various modalities. Elders are able to recognize and nurture people's unique gifts. Elders are available to talk to non-Indigenous students, faculty and staff, as well as Indigenous ones. They are often very skilled and interested in transcultural sharing.

Elders are essential to the governance of Indigenous education and are important teachers or educators, spiritual and political leaders, role models, mentors, advisors and cultural navigators for faculty and staff as well as students. As noted above, many Elders are course instructors and some are professors, based on their Indigenous Knowledges. Elders can co-create or guide others in creating curriculum and programming, for language programs or anything with Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey content. Elders can be included as part of advisory and departmental committees. Elders can provide cultural training with faculty and staff to help them develop a solid cultural foundation.

The presence and participation of Elders in PSIs honours Indigenous Knowledges. As mentioned above, Elders serve in administrative positions as deans, program directors and department chairs in PSIs across Canada. There is potential for the systemic transformation of mainstream education through the enactment of Indigenous governance of Indigenous education. To develop the foundational relationships and understandings needed to create spaces for Indigenous governance, presidents and senior administration could start by nurturing relationships with Elders one-on-one and/or through regular, small group meetings. As a starting point, this could lead to mutual and collaborative relationships in which Elders are consulted on all issues concerning Indigenous education. The responsibility to nurture these relationships is part of reconciliation for settler society and a small step towards fostering Indigenous governance of Indigenous education.

Beyond guiding the academic aspects of Indigenous education, Elders can also guide the development of programs and services that support Indigenous learners. Additionally, they can guide the development of Indigenous communities and cultural activities around campus. They can support and guide Indigenous-university relations and transcultural initiatives, as well as community outreach activities. They are a connecting bridge to Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey communities and are very important in terms of creating and maintaining good relations for the whole university. They are always communicating between the communities and the university and serve as ambassadors for the university. Elders can promote the university and its programs. At formal university events, Elders are not purely symbolic – they embody diplomatic and spiritual relations.

Research collaborators also stress that Elders should be integral parts of any research related to Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey peoples. Through [*The APCFNC Elders Project: Honouring Traditional Knowledge*](#) (APCFNC 2009–2011), which engaged twenty-three Mi'kmaw, Wolastoqey, Innu and Inuit Elders, Elders recommended that an Elders Council be created that would advise on protocols and ethics, as well as the promising practices for sharing Indigenous Knowledges and for working alongside Elders in the Atlantic Region. Unama'ki College of CBU administers the [*Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch*](#), which promotes community guidelines for working with Mi'kmaw peoples.

STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT ELDER ENGAGEMENT: PEPSITE'TIKOW

("Don't be Disrespectful" in Mi'kmaq)

A. Creation of Guiding Principles in Collaboration with Elders

To nurture Indigenous PSE initiatives, research collaborators recommend guiding principles for Indigenous Education and Elder engagement. Principles would be guided by:

- The spirit and intent of the Treaties of peace and friendship based on mutual respect, peace and prosperity;
- Frameworks of decolonization and reconciliation that recognize we are all Treaty peoples;
- The spirit of trust, responsibility, reciprocity, collaboration and nurturing;
- Seven generation thinking: Develop long-term relationships with Elders and communities and do strategic planning that looks seven generations ahead and honours ancestors by looking seven generations back;
- Transcultural frameworks such as co-learning.

B. Nurture Collaborative Indigenous Education & Elder Engagement in PSE: Design & Operationalization

- Develop policies and processes
- Develop collaborative governance for Elder engagement & programming
- Prioritize sustainable funding for Indigenous education & Elder engagement
- Promote ongoing collaborative discussions around promising practices for Elder engagement & Elders' Roles
- Develop protocol guides for Elder & community engagement
- Provide Elders with infrastructure, administrative and logistical supports
- Provide fair compensation for Elders and Knowledge Holders based on Indigenous Knowledges
- Create spaces and make a visible commitment to Indigenous education and Elders
- Raise awareness and promote Elders & Elder programming

Develop Policy & Processes

Elder engagement should be guided by a terms of reference (TOR) built upon guiding principles as suggested above. Develop policies and processes in collaboration with Elders, Knowledge Holders and communities.

Develop Collaborative Governance

PSIs need to collaborate with Indigenous communities in the governance of Indigenous education. They need to support the resurgence of Indigenous governance in keeping with Treaty relationships and values. In terms of Elder engagement, this goes beyond having only one Elder or Knowledge holder on an advisory committee. The process

needs to be collective. An Elders Advisory Committee that is linked to a departmental committee and the senate can be a starting place.

Prioritize Sustainable Funding for Indigenous Education & Elders Engagement

Sustainable funding is needed to create and nurture Indigenous governance and Elder programming, and to implement the TRC calls to action at PSIs.

Nurture Ongoing & Collaborative Discussion around Promising Practices for Elder Engagement & Elders' Roles

Ongoing, collaborative discussion concerning promising practices needs to take place, as opposed to institutionalizing Elder engagement. Elders have multiple roles in PSE in relation to students, faculty, staff and administration and in research. It is important not to be prescriptive about their roles but to create opportunities for relationships to develop. When relationships with Elders are being established, a collaborative process to determine what the Elders want to do should be initiated.

Develop Protocol Guides for Elder & Community Engagement

Basic guidelines and protocols concerning how to engage with Elders, Knowledge Holders and communities are needed.

Provide Elders with Infrastructure, Administrative & Logistical Supports

Elders should be given the same treatment professors receive and provided with the infrastructure, administrative and logistical supports they need. The use of communication technology such as video conferencing through the First Nations Help Desk can be maximized to support engagement with and among Elders.

Fair Compensation for Elders based on Indigenous Knowledges

Elders and Knowledge Holders should be compensated based on their Indigenous Knowledges.

Create Spaces & Make Visible Commitments to Indigenous Education & Elders

PSIs need to honour and value their commitments to Indigenous education by creating designated and visible spaces for Indigenous education, in both natural and built environments.

Raise Awareness & Promote Elders & Elder Engagement

Elders and Elder programming should be recognized and promoted throughout the university using a communication strategy. Education about who Elders are in an Indigenous education context could be initiated based on Elders' direction.

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS

Indigenous peoples emphasize the need for culturally based education rooted in Indigenous Knowledge systems. This supports Indigenous peoples in coming to know who they are and encourages academic success among Indigenous students (Battiste, 2013; RCAP, 1996). Research collaborators stress that in order for this to occur, administration, faculty and staff at PSIs need to have some understandings of Indigenous Knowledge systems and how they can be part of mainstream PSE. There are many systemic and structural institutional barriers at PSIs that need transformed in order for Indigenous peoples to have autonomy and control over the creation, transmission, production, legitimization and dissemination of their own knowledges. Most non-Indigenous educators need to develop understandings that Indigenous and Western Knowledges are equally significant paradigms and to develop respect for Indigenous Knowledges.

Historically, there has been a suppression of Indigenous Knowledges based on racist assumptions and practices that Western Knowledges and scientific thinking is superior (Battiste, 2013; Castellano, 2011; Couture, 2011; RCAP, 1986; Simpson, 1999). Central to this issue are fundamental differences in the ways knowledge is understood – in other words, beliefs about what can be known and ways of knowing – in an Indigenous context and in mainstream Canadian society. Indigenous Knowledges are vulnerable to being objectified, misrepresented, appropriated, coopted, taken out of context and taught by non-Indigenous people claiming expertise (Alfred, 2004; Battiste, 2013; Corntassel, 2012; Simpson, 2014). Compounding this challenge, “a Eurocentric education system has taught [Indigenous peoples] to distrust their Indigenous Knowledge systems, their Elders’ wisdom, and their own inner learning spirit” (Battiste, 2013, p. 24). There are ethical considerations at stake concerning how to respectfully engage with Indigenous Knowledge systems.

Indigenous Knowledges are part of complex, rigorous systems that acknowledge a world in which everything is alive, infused with spirit and interconnected. They are based on thousands of years of acquired ancestral knowledge. In an Indigenous worldview, everything comes from the land – all beings, languages, stories, songs, ceremonies and traditions. In other words, knowledge is rooted in place. Knowledges are continually being created and are always transforming. Knowledge Holders control the methods of transmission in their specific homelands (Battiste, 2013; Couture, 2011; Ermine, 1995; Metallic, 2011; Newhouse, 2008; Simpson, 2011). Language, which is fundamental to one’s worldview, plays a critical role in the transmission, understanding, recording, and expression of Indigenous Knowledge systems (Johnson, 2013; Metallic, 2011; Noori, 2013; Simpson, 2011). This is a point of entry for understanding the tensions between Indigenous and Western Knowledge systems. It is not possible to translate certain Indigenous understandings into English or Western, Eurocentric understandings (Bartlett, Marshall & Marshall, 2012; Metallic, 2011; Noori, 2013).

Indigenous Pedagogies

Another consideration regarding inclusion of Indigenous Knowledges in the academy concerns how they are taught and who teaches them. The use of Indigenous ways of teaching, or pedagogies, is critical to supporting Indigenous education. Indigenous pedagogies are transformative and encourage holistic development. Indigenous pedagogies are grounded in learner-centered teaching, collaborative relationships and experiential learning. This includes learning by observation and by doing; participating in Traditional and contemporary land-based practices; and learning from plants and animals, from spirit beings, through stories and songs, through ceremony and feasting, through collaboration and community work, and through dreaming and self-reflection (CCL, 2009; Johnson, 1995; Miller, 2013; Simpson, 1999). Through ceremony, Mi'kmaq spirituality is the foundation that ensures peace and harmony and guides relations. Mi'kmaq spirituality must draw from the Mi'kmaq creation story (Cavanagh & Metallic, 2002).

In mainstream education, where Elders and other Knowledge Holders may not have a university degree or other education and there isn't a full understanding of what an Elder is and what they bring with them, education is needed on who Elders are and how they teach.

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION – CREATING SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Engaging with Indigenous Elders and Indigenous Knowledges means undergoing transformation, making paradigm shifts and creating new understandings. The main barriers to engaging with Indigenous Knowledge systems at PSIs are systemic and institutional. These include a lack of shared governance and consultation with Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik. Elders and other community Knowledge Holders know the way forward. Research collaborators acknowledge the challenges of transforming consciousness and making the systemic shifts needed in relation to Indigenous education, particularly change that involves more than one university department. Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqiyik and their allies feel a sense of extreme urgency to support the resurgence of Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey languages and cultures and to create a world that honours all our relations. They have found institutions very slow to change, colonial, conservative and unaware and often unconscious of individual and collective needs for settler society to be accountable for their responsibilities in terms of reconciliation. Many are disappointed in how little change they have seen over their long careers. They say leadership has no goals to commit beyond moving from a superficial and politically correct level of engagement. They describe a feeling of complacency that needs to be shaken up. It is recognized that institutions are driven by financial priorities and operate like businesses. Research collaborators see a need to advocate and fight for Indigenous programming, created and guided by Elders and communities; that embeds Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey Knowledges in the programming and curriculum, as well as in physical spaces around the university. Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqiyik and settlers all point to universities having responsibilities to make changes within Indigenous frameworks of reconciliation in order to live up to their Treaty responsibilities. This involves nurturing relationships and creating meaningful partnerships.

Non-Indigenous/settler faculty recognize ways to use their privilege and power to support Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey goals. Some of these strategies include listening to community Elders, as well as those at MK, the First Nations Education Initiative (FNEI), Education Directors and other education organizations, and supporting the development of projects that Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey identify as being important – not pushing or imposing programming, but helping create what is wanted. In other words, aligning themselves with Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik peoples.

Promising strategies for change involve working with groups of Elders or Elders Councils, which can help sustain relationships and help coordinate interaction with upper administration. The transformative potential of Indigenous Knowledges, with Elders leading the way, offers hope for change. PSIs would do well to look to the promising practices used in the MK and Wolastoqey schools and Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey organizations where educators and staff are very experienced at engaging Elders. The models are strong in the communities. Those in Atlantic region universities need to nurture the respectful and collaborative relationships needed to transform mainstream post-secondary education and move towards Indigenous governance of Indigenous education.

PROMISING PRACTICES FOR ELDER ENGAGEMENT AT CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

In a PSE context, creating relationships with Indigenous communities and establishing long term relationships with Elders and other Knowledge Holders is a multifaceted effort that evolves over time. Métis scholar Adam Gaudry, at the University of Saskatchewan, cautions that “universities need to see this as a long-term process, as it is going to take decades for the Canadian public to unlearn colonial ideologies, and decades more to build an equitable relationship between the many peoples who now share this land” (Gaudry, 2016). Some promising practices that lead to institutional transformation include Elders being engaged in comprehensive programming that embeds Indigenous Knowledges within programs and throughout institutions.

Elders are most commonly involved at PSIs as part of Elder-in-Residence programs and as visiting Elders. There are growing numbers of Elders and other Knowledge Holders teaching as course instructors. While the numbers are small, Elders are engaged as professors and in administrative positions as deans, program directors and department chairs. Elders are also engaged on many types of advisory committees. Less frequently, Elders are members of Elders Councils, which offer more potential for Indigenous governance to be enacted. Another promising practice done by PSIs includes regularly reviewing Elder and Indigenous programming and strategic planning to implement recommendations for enhancing these.

Trent University is the only PSI to have appointed Elders and Traditional people to faculty positions, recognizing their Indigenous Knowledge, wisdom and skills. This practice goes far beyond granting Elders honorary doctorates – it recognizes Indigenous and Western Knowledges as equally significant paradigms. Wilfred Laurier University's Aboriginal Field of Study Master of Social Work program has an Elders program whose purpose is to uphold the integrity of Indigenous Knowledge systems. Program Elders “help in the union of Indigenous worldviews within the academy” (Sir Wilfred Laurier University, 2016). The oldest Elder-in-Residence program in Canada

was created by Vancouver Island University (VIU) in 1994. Elders are recognized for their spiritual roles and as being key to supporting Indigenous Knowledges and languages, and for assisting faculty, staff and administration to develop understandings.

In terms of promising practices for Indigenous governance, VIU's Indigenous initiatives are guided by an Elders Council composed of six Elders. Elders providing input at this level is key to Indigenous autonomy and control over education and reciprocal relations within the framework of reconciliation. Highlights of PSIs that do strategic planning include VIU, which has undergone two phases of an Aboriginal Service Plan, reviewed the value and impact of the role of Elders-in-Residence, and made recommendations on how to improve, clarify and acknowledge the important contribution Elders bring to PSE.

The Council on Aboriginal Initiatives at the University of Alberta has assessed the university's engagement with Elders and makes recommendations for future enhancements, such as designing, developing, and implementing an Elders Leadership and Resource Council. This council will provide guidance for the University of Alberta via the office of the provost and vice-president academic, as well as other enhancements.

A scan of Elder engagement across PSIs in Canada (starting on p. 47) outlines Elder engagement outside of academic programming. It includes Elders-in-Residence and visiting Elder programs, as well as and broader Elder engagement such participation on Elders Councils, university-wide and departmental advisory committees. It is meant to offer a picture of the diversity and uniqueness of what Elder engagement looks like at PSIs in different Indigenous homelands and to be useful for those seeking to create and/or enhance what they are doing. It is not an assessment of what is going on at each PSI and it has some gaps. There are countless Elders engaged in academic programming at PSI across Canada, each in unique cultural ways. It would be highly valuable to bring together information on what they are doing. Ongoing and updated scans to build on this one would be beneficial in terms of sharing promising practices.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Transforming consciousness and making the systemic shifts needed for Indigenous-led Indigenous education in Atlantic region PSIs involves relationships built on respect, trust, responsibility and reciprocity. Nurturing these kinds of relationships is essential for decolonizing, collaboration and reconciliation with Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey Elders and Indigenous communities. The transformation of PSE is a multifaceted, long-term process best guided by seven-generation thinking and the use of collaborative frameworks such as co-learning, two-eyed seeing and co-construction of Knowledges. PSIs would do well to look to the promising practices for Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey education used in Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey community-run schools and PSIs across Canada. Much work is needed to reach a stage at which communities have autonomy and control and responsibility over education as outlined in the TRC recommendations. Those in PSIs have Treaty responsibilities to work towards reconciliation.

Involving Elders in PSE can address many of the recommendations of the Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU) Working Committee on Aboriginal Education

concerning the implementation of the TRC recommendations. In their 2016 TRC Reconciliation Action Plan, the AAU Working Committee stress establishing an Indigenous advisory board for consideration of all matters related to Indigenous education. This builds on what Atlantic-region Elders asked for in 2011 – the creation of an Elders Council to advise on all matters related to Indigenous Knowledges and Elder involvement in all levels of Indigenous education, as part of the APCFNC Elders recommendations.

Elders are Indigenous leaders and are key people to engage in the governance and guidance of Indigenous PSE. Developing relationships with Elders is a key to promoting relations and partnerships with Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey communities. Elder engagement leads to the inclusion of Indigenous Knowledges and languages and the continued development of Atlantic Indigenous content. Elders have expertise in Indigenous pedagogies that promote student success. They are also the appropriate people to provide guidance for developing culturally based programs, services and initiatives, including the establishment social and ceremonial spaces within campuses.

In working towards implementing the TRC recommendations on Indigenous education, it is recommended that Atlantic region PSI:

- Learn how to work alongside Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey peoples on their terms and within Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey frameworks.
- Recognize the critical roles of Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey Elders as educators and leaders by developing and enhancing their involvement in PSE. Elder engagement in would be PSE based on:
 - The recommendations of Mi'kmaw, Wolastoqey and allied educators who contributed to this report;
 - Promising practices developed across Canada.
- Continue to gather input from Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey educators concerning promising practices for Elder engagement and engagement with Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey Knowledges.
- Review and implement the APCFNC Elders Recommendations, endorsed by the Atlantic region Chiefs in 2011, by supporting the creation of an Elders Indigenous Knowledge Council. The recommendations stress that Atlantic Indigenous communities are losing their Elders, their languages and their cultural knowledge very rapidly. It is therefore urgent to learn to work alongside Elders and learn from their Indigenous Knowledges immediately. Elders have asked that an Elders Council, appointed by Elders that would advise on matters related to the sharing of Indigenous Knowledges, be formed for the Atlantic region. The Council would advise on matters related to protocols and/or ethics and the promising practices for the sharing of Indigenous Knowledges, as well as the promising practices for working alongside Elders and other Knowledge Holders. The Elders Council would engage in a process of co-learning with the Atlantic region universities to create a template for how the process of this knowledge transfer could occur.

YOU CAN'T GET AN ELDER IN AN APP: ELDER ENGAGEMENT FOR MI'KMAW AND WOLASTOQY PSE

PSIs should be compelled to seek guidance from an Elders Council to develop Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey education. The recommendations are accessible here:
<http://www.apcfn.ca/images/uploads/ResearchSummary-HonouringTraditionalKnowledgeResearchSummary.pdf>

BACKGROUND

Indigenous Education

Transforming Canada's education system so that Indigenous Knowledges are respected and recognized as valid ways of understanding the world is one of the many challenges in the process of decolonization and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. The *Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* calls for new Aboriginal education legislation with the full participation and informed consent of Aboriginal peoples. This would include the development of culturally appropriate curriculum; enabling community responsibility, control and accountability over education; as well as respecting and honouring Treaty relationships. In Mi'kma'ki, Treaties with the British Crown were made based on the spirit and intent of peace, friendship, protection and alliance, as representatives of a sovereign nation, not as subjects (Palmer, 2016). Accordingly, the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) stress that Indigenous peoples must lead and control the processes of change for Indigenous education. New legislation must recognize the importance of education in strengthening the cultural identity of Indigenous peoples and providing a stronger foundation for success. There must also be acknowledgement of Indigenous language rights to revitalize and transmit Indigenous languages as per the *United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (Article 13:1). Supporting this is Article 14:1: Indigenous peoples have the right to establish control of their education systems and institutions, providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning; and Article 15:1: Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in the educational and public information (United General Assembly, 2007).

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) heard from thousands of former students and family members across Canada. Elder Albert Marshall of Eskasoni First Nation, a former student of the Shubenacadie residential school in Nova Scotia, contributed his insights:

The current education system has been designed to completely eradicate who I am and to kill that Indian Mi'kmaq spirit that's in me. But I do know I need knowledge and I need education. But the kind of education I need has to be reflective of who I am as a Mi'kmaq. And that knowledge that I get, that I will receive, I have a responsibility with that knowledge to pass it down so others will benefit from it.... The kind of legacy that I want to leave my children in the future generations is one of which they will be able to excel, they will be able to compete without having to worry about is the education system going to further eradicate their selves. (TRC, 2015, p. 197)

The impacts of colonization have resulted in social, cultural, spiritual and economic devastation for Indigenous peoples. As recognized by Mi'kmaq scholar Marie Battiste, "a Eurocentric education system has taught [Aboriginal peoples] to distrust their Indigenous Knowledge systems, their Elders' wisdom, and their own inner learning spirit" (Battiste, 2013, p. 24). Indigenous students do not see themselves reflected in the programming, curriculum, ways of teaching (or pedagogies), nor in the professors and course instructors at most PSIs. The current reality is that the majority of Indigenous and

non-Indigenous students are learning about Indigenous peoples and Indigenous Knowledges through curriculum and pedagogies dominated by Western, colonial frameworks. While Indigenous peoples are working towards a resurgence and revitalization of their knowledge systems, many Indigenous and allied scholars feel that Canadian PSIs remain sites of hegemonic, colonial control, operating within asymmetrical power relations in which settlers and Canadian or Western Knowledge systems continue to dominate (Battiste, 2013; Corntassel, 2012; Coulthard, 2014; Simpson, A., 2014; Tuck & Yang, 2012).

The project of Indigenous resurgence extends beyond the borders of colonial institutions to reclaim Indigenous histories, homelands and lifeways. Spiritual, political and social relationships are renewed daily through multiple Indigenous practices and are the foundations of resurgence (Corntassel, 2012; Simpson, 2011 & 2014). As affirmed by many Indigenous scholars and other Knowledge Holders, learning about culture, language and traditions is critical to the well-being, identity, self-worth and empowerment of Indigenous peoples (Battiste, 2013; CCL, 2009; Castellano, 2011; Couture, 2011). Part of Indigenous cultural resurgence is “the transmission of Indigenous culture, spiritual teachings and knowledge of the land between Elders and youth” (Alfred, 2009, p. 56). The First Nations Holistic Lifelong Learning Model, developed through the Canadian Council on Learning, seeks to depict Indigenous ways of learning. Relationships are circular, rather than linear – holistic and cumulative, rather than compartmentalized. Knowledge is understood within the four dimensions of learning: spiritual, emotional, physical and cognitive; each teaching is situated

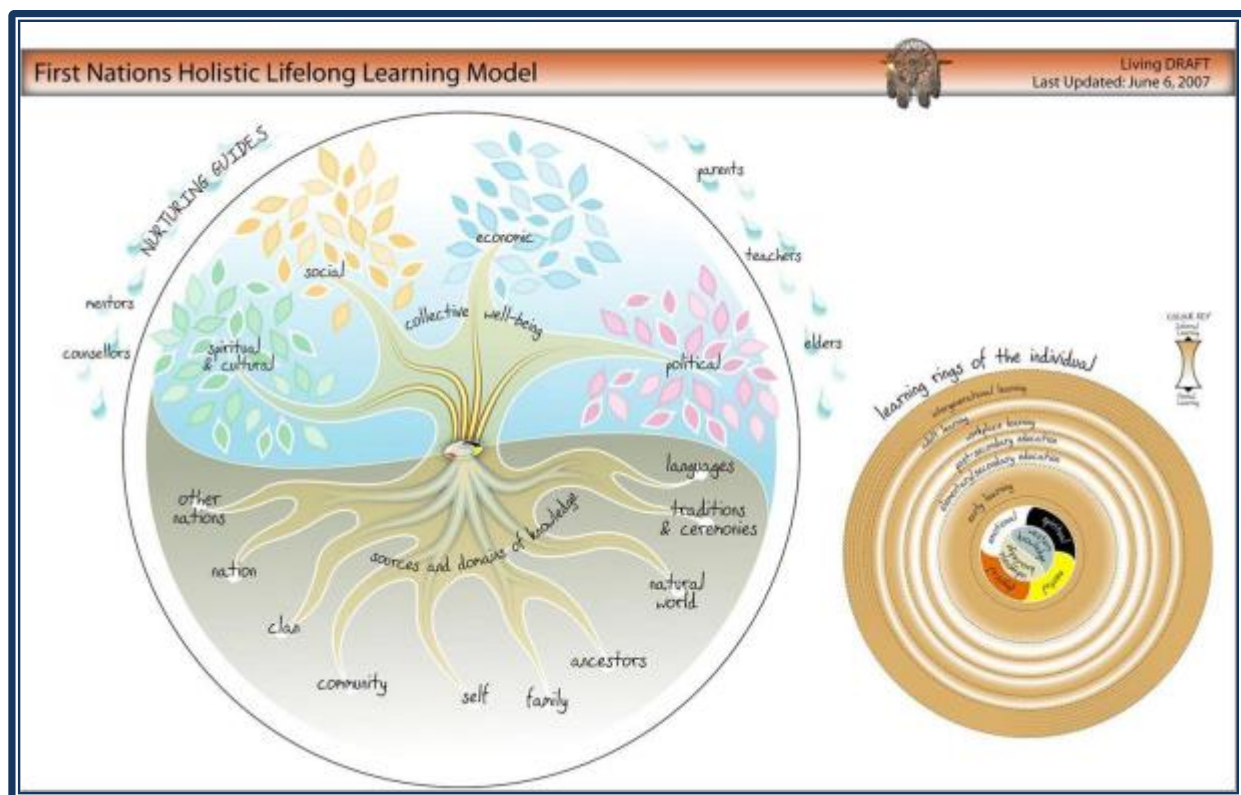


Figure A – Sources and Domains of Knowledge (CCL, 2009)

within an interconnected knowledge web (Auger, 2001; RCAP, 1996). MK participated in the development of this model.

Historically, the Traditional Indigenous classroom was made up of the community and the natural environment surrounding it. Mi'kmaw education is a covenant learned from the Creation stories and their teachings (Battiste, 2016). In this context, adults were responsible for ensuring that every child learned the specific skills, attitudes and knowledge they needed to survive in everyday life. Rather than sitting in a classroom, Mi'kmaq learned as they went. Education was a continuous process taking place wherever and whenever needed (CMM, 2007). Mi'kmaw control over education resides in Mi'kmaw families' rights to have their own education under their Treaties (Battiste, 2016). This is similar for Wolastoqiyik education.

In a Traditional Indigenous context, Elders are the most significant teachers. As highlighted by *In the Words of Elders: Aboriginal Elders in Transition*, a publication that brings together Elders' perspectives from across Turtle Island (North America), Elders are the "historians of the Aboriginal past and the keepers of cultural events and ceremonies. They are teachers, healers, and experts in survival, sharing a worldview based on the knowledge that all things in life are related and are governed by natural laws" (Kulchyski, McCaskill & Newhouse, 1999, xv). Learning from Elders and Traditional peoples takes many years and often comes through an apprenticeship. Teachings do not come in the prepackaged form students are used to in the mainstream system:

Traditionally teachings were not written down but rather given as a 'gift' by an Elder within a specific cultural context such as a ceremony, event, or time spent with an individual at a particular stage of his or her development. Frequently individuals receiving the teachings were expected to 'earn' them by performing a task or participating in a ceremony such as Fasting, the Longhouse, the Midewiwin Lodge, or the Potlatch. Elders sometimes determined the state of readiness of individuals to hear certain teachings, particularly spiritual teachings. (Kulchyski, McCaskill & Newhouse, 1999, xv)

Teachings come in the form of stories through voice, dance, music, and role modeling throughout a person's lifetime. An understanding of knowledge comes to maturity at the end of life when the two most important functions of one's lifetime are fulfilled – passing knowledge on to children and mentoring the middle aged as they transition to be the next generation of Elder teachers (AFN, 1993). The goal of Indigenous teaching methods is to learn more about one's self and one's role in the cosmos (Simpson, 1999).

Knowledge transfer from Elders is urgent because Elders are passing away without having the opportunities to pass along their knowledges. As part of the *Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Elders Project: Honouring Traditional Knowledge*, Elder Gwen Bear of Tobique First Nation addressed a group of 23 Mi'kmaw, Wolastoqey, Innu and Inuit Elders who gathered to discuss many issues concerning how to engage with Indigenous Knowledges in 2011: "Indigenous Knowledge isn't only for ourselves because if we keep that knowledge, it only becomes stagnant and it helps no one. How do we pass it along? We have to look at that question and share those universal ways that we are going to have to develop" (APCFNC, 2011, p. 113). Elders being able to pass on their knowledges is vital to the success of future generations.

What is the way forward for designing education systems that reflect Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey and other Indigenous peoples in PSIs? This is a critical question. In the context of the many mandatory Indigenous Studies courses being created across Canada since the TRC recommendations were released, questions related to course content, how courses are created and delivered, and who teaches them are highly relevant. Indigenous peoples seeking to "Indigenize" the academy put forward multiple strategies which involve "carving out a space where Indigenous values and knowledge are respected; creat[ing] an environment that supports research and methodologies useful to Indigenous nation building; supporting one another as institutional foundations are shaken; and compel[ling] institutional responsiveness to Indigenous issues, concerns and communities" (Mihesuah & Wilson, 2004). As articulated by Mi'kmaw scholar Patricia Doyle-Bedwell, "There is a need for a decolonizing process. Education is not about making us into nice white people. Education is about making us stronger Mi'kmaq. Education has always been about assimilation. I think one of the hardest things is to get people to understand Mi'kmaw culture and the need for it. It's not just a token thing; let's bring in an Elder for fun. It's fundamental to people. That's one of the things I don't think any university gets" (P. Doyle-Bedwell, Halifax, NS, August, 2014).

Many PSIs that say they are dedicated to Indigenous education are not yet creating spaces for Indigenous peoples to have autonomy and control and accountability over Indigenous education nor respecting, honouring and reinvigorating Treaty relationships. However, some PSIs ground their educational approaches using a holistic framework that begins with Elders. The First Nations University of Canada is one example. They offer inspiration in their recognition that the Elders' "presence, wisdom and counsel are the mainstay not only for students but also for the University as a whole... The Elders reinforce our respect for, and understanding of, the Creator's role in our lives" (FNUC, 2016). Vancouver Island University (VIU), the Northern School of Medicine, the University of Alberta, the University of Victoria, Simon Fraser University, the University of Regina, the University of Manitoba, Trent University and Carleton University, among others, have long-term experience in working with Elders. It is hoped that the understandings and experiences of those at PSIs with promising practices can augment the voices of Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik as they develop and enhance Elder engagement in Atlantic region universities.

RESEARCH FOCUS: DEVELOPING ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN MIK'MA'KI AND WOLASTOQEQY HOMELANDS

The multifaceted roles Elders play in educational success at the community level, at Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey (MK) schools and in PSE is well recognized by Mi'kmaq (MK, 2013). Elders are Knowledge Holders and spiritual leaders – teachers of Indigenous Knowledges, language, Mi'kmaw ways of knowing and learning. As mentioned, MK participated in the developing the concept of lifelong learning nationally. Elders are understood as key in fostering development at all levels, including identity development at the physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual level. Elders recognize and nurture the unique gifts of individuals. Elders also support the cultural challenges posed by finding one's way in a colonial system and the transitions youth undergo moving from education to employment. Engagement with Elders is a key component to

becoming a responsible Mi'kmaw adult (CMM, 2007; MK, 2013). The roles and significance of Wolastoqey Elders are understood in similar ways (I. and D. Perley, Aroostook, NB, August, 2014).

Elders are university deans, course instructors and guest speakers; are part of Elder-in-Residence programs, do workshops; serve on advisory committees; and are called upon to perform spiritual roles and officiate at formal events in Atlantic region universities. UNB established the first Elder-in-Residence program in 2009. Elder Gwen Bear was the first Elder involved. CBU established an Elder-in-Residence program in 2013, followed by Dalhousie in 2015. Comprehensive engagement with Elders took place through the collaboration of Elders and academics through Cape Breton University's Integrative Science program from the mid-90s until 2010. The program sought to bring together Indigenous and Western scientific Knowledges and ways of knowing. Ten Mi'kmaw Elders contributed to the program, developing curriculum and participating regularly as teachers. The conception of the program came from Elder Murdena Marshall, who was concerned that Mi'kmaw students were not participating in science education.

Despite the wealth of Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey Knowledges across Mi'kma'ki and Wolastoqey homelands, there is no systemic involvement of Elders in which Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey Knowledges are embedded in the programming and curriculum in Atlantic region universities. Much work is needed to reach a stage at which communities have autonomy and control and responsibility over education as outlined in the TRC recommendations, as per Treaty relations and values of mutual respect, peace and prosperity (Battiste, 2016). The goal of this research is to help articulate the needs for Elder engagement in Mi'kma'ki and Wolastoqey homelands and outline a vision that can be used to create and enhance existing programming. Two main research activities were undertaken. First, a national scan of Elder engagement at universities highlights promising practices. This focused on information available on university websites. The scan includes a folder of all university reports available for download. The scan is presented in the second half of this report. Secondly, consultation took place with a group of Mi'kmaw educators, mainly from Unama'ki. Wolastoqey Elders David and Imelda Perley at UNB were also consulted because of UNB's experience establishing the first Elder-in-Residence program in the Atlantic region. CBU's first Elders-in-Residence, MK Education Directors in Unama'ki, Aboriginal Student Advisors, as well as students and key professors, both Indigenous and allied, shared their visions for what they would like to see in terms of Elder engagement. Fourteen guided discussions, as well as a youth focus group, were conducted. The youth focus group was anonymous. The following people participated as research collaborators:

Dr./Sister Dorothy Moore – Membertou First Nation

Dr. Mary Ellen Googoo – Eskasoni First Nation (She currently lives in Membertou.)

Dr. Albert Marshall – Eskasoni First Nation, Unama'ki College Advisory Board, Co-Founder of CBU Integrative Science Program

Dr. Murdena Marshall - Eskasoni First Nation, Co-Founder of CBU Integrative Science Program

Imelda Perley – Tobique First Nation, Elder-in-Residence, UNB

David Perley – Tobique First Nation, Director - Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Centre

Molly Peters – Paq'tnkek First Nation - Aboriginal Advisor StFX (2010 - 2013)

Ann Sylliboy – Eskasoni First Nation - MK's Post-Secondary Consultant, Mi'kmaw Student Advisor

Amanda Johnson – Co-Manager of Potlotek Education

Noelle Doucette – Co-Manager of Potlotek Education

Elizabeth Cremo – Eskasoni Education Director

Brian Arthuthnot – Wagmatcook Education Director

Gordon McIver – We'koqma'q Education Director

Patricia Doyle-Bedwell – Potlotek First Nation. Director of the Transition Year Program (1998–2014) & Associate Professor, Dalhousie University

Dr. Jeff Orr – Dean of Education, StFX University

Dr. Jane McMillan – Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Communities, StFX University

The research approach for this practicum work is transdisciplinary and emergent, drawing on a combination of qualitative frameworks. It is situated within a co-learning framework that recognizes Indigenous and Western perspectives as equally significant paradigms and involves new learning by participants within a collaborative journey (IISH, 2016). An Indigenist approach, aligned with the beliefs, values and understandings of knowledge within Indigenous understandings grounded the work (Battiste 2013; Simpson 2004; Smith 2011; Wilson 2007). The research was guided by Indigenous frameworks, is intended to maintain relational accountability and support Indigenous cultural resurgence. It is also based on critical theory including decolonizing and participatory research approaches.

In keeping with her positionality as an aspiring ally and settler scholar, Gillian Austin's approach involved being guided by and collaborating with Ann Sylliboy, as well as other Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey Knowledge holders. The research seeks to promote understandings of the intrinsic value of Indigenous Knowledges and to honour and value its physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual dimensions. Gillian and Ann aspires that the research contribute to decolonizing the Canadian education system and benefit Indigenous peoples. The frameworks, knowledges, voices, ways of knowing, learning and teachings of Elders and Knowledge Holders are centred. All those who contributed to the report are considered research collaborators. The principles of ownership, control, access and possession (OCAP) were followed for the research, meaning that MK owns all research conducted. The Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch (MEW) gave approval for the research. A consent form was used with all research collaborators. Individual quotes were verified with research collaborators.

Limitations of the Research

Consultation with Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey educators and allies was limited due to the scope of the volunteer practicum work, which was limited to five weeks and by travel constraints. Most of the research took place in Unama'ki where MK's main office is located. CBU and StFX were the main focus, as this is where most Mi'kmaw students from Unama'ki attend university. Dalhousie University was included but to a limited extent. Any errors, omissions or misinterpretations are attributable to the student researcher.

FINDINGS

ELDERS' POTENTIAL ENGAGEMENT IN PSE

Introduction – Elders' Potential Roles

Research collaborators made suggestions for Elders' potential roles in relation to the following: students, faculty and staff; administration; and research. They also highlighted the relationships between Indigenous communities and PSIs. While the focus is on the contributions of Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey collaborators, insights from the national scan are also included. There is some overlap in terms of Elder engagement in relation to students, faculty and staff, administration, and research. While the focus here is on Elders' potential roles in universities, it is essential to recognize that Elders need to spend a great deal of their time in their communities and cannot be expected to be at the university or community college based on a 9 to 5 routine, even if employed by a PSI. Attending to their community responsibilities is integral to Elders' work.

In a broad, university context, Elders are considered Knowledge Holders and teachers, as well as spiritual and political leaders. They are part of living Indigenous Knowledge systems and essential to the transmission of Indigenous Knowledges. They are role models and mentors. They are cultural navigators² who provide a link to being L'nu (the people) and create an Indigenous community at PSIs. Elders are most commonly involved at PSIs in Canada as part of Elder-in-Residence programs and as visiting Elders; however, many are course instructors and professors based on their Indigenous Knowledges. At Trent University, for example, some Elders and Traditional people have been appointed to faculty positions recognizing their Indigenous Knowledges, wisdom and skills (Trent, 2006). Elders are also found in administrative positions as deans, program directors and department chairs in PSIs across Canada.

As expressed by one of CBU's first Elders-in-Residence, Mary Ellen Googoo, "We have been on this earth longer and hopefully are all the wiser for being here. I think having Elders in every university where there are Native students is so important. And it's a new thing that universities are starting to have, the same thing with community-based programs" (M. E. Googoo, Sydney, NS, July, 2014). Noelle Doucette, Potlotek's Education Co-Manager emphasizes, "Elders are a friendly face. Elders make you feel like you have your community behind you. So when you're at university, you're not alone. You feel like you have community support" (N. Doucette, Potlotek First Nation, August, 2014). It is challenging to try to breakdown Elders' potential roles, as Elders function in holistic ways. Professor Patricia Doyle-Bedwell explains that Elders' roles are "many different things and their value is not quantifiable and or surveyable" (P. Doyle-Bedwell, Halifax, NS, August, 2014). As summed up in the description of the Elder-in-Residence Program at Brock University, Elders roles are "**simple and complex**" (Brock University, 2016)

Elders' potential roles are explored here but are not meant to be definitive or prescriptive. Research collaborators stress that Elders have unique gifts, strengths and

² The term "cultural navigator" was put forward by Patricia Doyle-Bedwell. She learned this from Patricia Monture.

areas of expertise. One Elder would never claim to know everything related to Mi'kmaw or Wolastoqey Knowledges, and no one Elder holds all the knowledge in any given area. Each Elder has one piece of the puzzle (MK, 2013). Additionally, prescriptive guidelines and definitive codes concerning Elders have been found counterproductive to maximizing the number of people potentially engaging with them, based on research at Vancouver Island University concerning the impacts of their Elder-in-Residence program. They have found that “**unmediated** contact with Elders has the greatest positive outcome for the building of meaningful professional and academic relationships” (VIU, 2011).

Elders in Relation to Students

In relation to students, Elders are someone to talk to and someone to welcome them as they navigate unfamiliar environments. In her experience supporting and advising Mi'kmaw students for over twenty years, Patricia Doyle-Bedwell has found that “the basic thing is to have someone there who understands where students are coming from. It's a trust relationship. Elders are role models. They give support in what students are doing. They understand the struggles they are facing as a Mi'kmaw woman or man in a colonized environment” (P. Doyle-Bedwell, Halifax, NS, August, 2014). The connection between Elders and youth is central to intergenerational knowledge transmission. As Knowledge Holders and teachers, students learn about all aspects of culture, language, stories, Traditional teachings and protocols from Elders. Elders are knowledgeable concerning many interconnected topics, including but not limited to Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey cultural and social, spiritual, economic and political systems. Elders are a link to living ancestral knowledges and histories based on oral traditions, stories and teachings. Elders are cultural navigators who provide a link to being L'nu.

Patricia Doyle-Bedwell articulates how engagement with Elders is essential to the governance of Indigenous education, making a link to Elders' Traditional roles in Mi'kmaw society:

It is really important to have the Elders involved. If you look at the roots of Mi'kmaw education, before contact, it was the women and the Elders who taught the kids. It was the women's responsibility to take care of teaching them language, culture and really in the old days it was about, “How are we going to create a responsible Mi'kmaw adult?” What responsibilities do they have to learn, how are they going to carry those out as a parent as a hunter/gather etc. All of that was role modeled, stories, sharing...and now we are in the 21st century, but those elements are still relevant because you can have the Elders and parents find their Traditional roles in terms of guiding their kids and then teaching them how they're going to become responsible Mi'kmaw adults in this world. (MK, 2013, p.14)

Elders provide leadership, mentor students and are role models for them. They are people students can identify with culturally, and they provide acceptance for Mi'kmaki

and Wolastoqey ways. There are many dimensions to this. “We know that we are invisible in the curriculum and Elders help us become visible again,” says Patricia Doyle-Bedwell (P. Doyle-Bedwell, Halifax, NS. August, 2014). Elder-in-Residence Imelda Perley adds, “Better learning takes place when Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey students feel it is OK to be themselves,” relating the acceptance and acknowledgement Elders provide to Indigenous ways of learning and teaching (I. Perley, Aroostook, NB, August, 2014). Additionally, Albert Marshall emphasizes: “The Elders will always make sure when they are working with the youth that they nurture them and teach them to be critical in their thinking. They are very cognizant of the fact that they too have to ‘walk the talk’” (MK, 2013, p.16). In these ways, Elders enact Indigenous governance of education, operating in ways consistent with Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey Traditional systems and values.

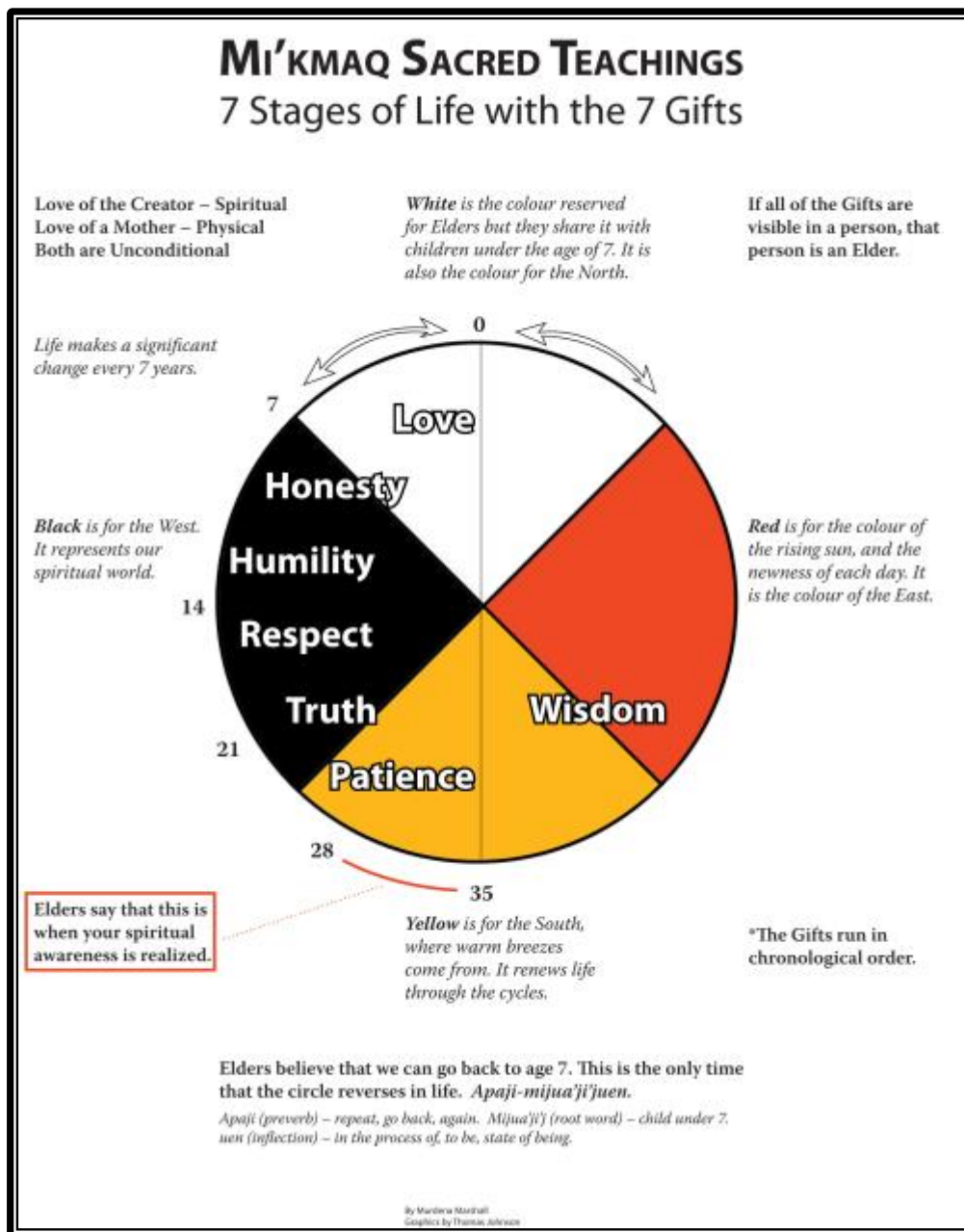


Figure B – Mi'kmaq Sacred Teachings (M. Marshall, n.d.)

Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey values are often referenced in terms of the Seven Sacred Grandfather teachings or gifts. A Mi'kmaw depiction of these are represented by Elder Murdena Marshall (Figure B). She relates these teachings to the cycles of life – from youth to Elder.

Elders also function as counselors and healers, providing emotional and spiritual support and guidance. They are often called in times of crisis to support students, staff or the university community. Many of them are healers, skilled in various healing modalities. Patricia Doyle-Bedwell elaborates: "That's part of having Elders is that you feel that comfort of back home and you have a place to go where you are safe and a place to go where you can talk about issues that affect our communities. I have counselled students with grief issues because people don't understand when you come from a community where eight people committed suicide in a week. Non-Indigenous professors don't get it. They think it's crazy. They think that can't even be true" (P. Doyle-Bedwell, Halifax, NS, August, 2014). At UNB, Elder Gwen Bear did healing with stones. Imelda Perley offers regular smudging and sweat lodge ceremonies.

Elders are able to recognize and nurture people's unique gifts. This supports students in their academic and career paths and broadly – as learners. "When we talk about lifelong learning, we are also talking about education from a spiritual perspective, we are talking about helping young people, or anyone, finding the spiritual purpose in their lives, that is the role of Elders. So, it is very important to have Elders involved with education, in supporting people in finding their spiritual purpose and their path. Everyone I know from my generation who has gone to university was given lots of advice on what to do and what they should be doing with whatever gifts they might have" (Doyle-Bedwell, 2013). Elders provide support, encouragement, compassion and nurturing for students. They also advocate for them in relation to the university and the education system. Elders are available to talk to non-Indigenous students, faculty and staff as well. They are often very skilled and interested in transcultural sharing.

Based on her experiences as a co-creator of the Integrative Science Program at CBU, Cheryl Bartlett reflects on holistic nature of Elder engagement in PSIs:

Because of the absolute importance of the language and Traditional Knowledge, there's got to be an Elders' component, Traditional Knowledge or a language in combination with the land component. It has to be an integral part of whatever you are trying to do. It can't be an add-on, lipstick kind of thing; it has to be there in a genuine and challenging way. The Elders want to be involved – they have told us that. They have told us that the health of the Elders is totally dependent upon being able to transmit their knowledge. That is part of the responsibility of being an Elder. Plus, the Elders can help steward the students when they might otherwise go off the rails. There is no way a single instructor or professor can do all that. You need the help that an Elders' or a community stewardship can bring. There has got to be a support network that helps here because there are so many challenges that just keep manifesting and coming up in the most wonderfully provocative ways all the time. (MK, 2013, p. 21)

Suggestions for Elder Engagement with Students

Research collaborators provided some concrete examples of the activities Elders could be involved with. Again, these suggestions are not meant to be definitive or prescriptive. They include the following:

- Involving Elders as professors, course instructors
- Having Elders-in-Residence and visiting Elders programs
- Bringing Elders in as guest speakers in classes
- Doing regularly scheduled talks and talking circles
- Doing cultural teachings and activities, ideally land-based. Some suggestions include hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering and growing of foods and medicines, basket-making, drum-making, beading, clothing and moccasin making, story-telling, singing, drumming, dancing
- Sharing protocols and ceremonies including smudging, sweat lodges, naming ceremonies, fasting, songs and prayer among others
- Offering counselling and spiritual guidance
- Making Elders part of regularly scheduled socials, potlucks and feasts, where students and others can come in and engage through food
- “Lunch and Learn” activities (At UNB, Imelda Perley does a themed lunch based on one of the Seven Sacred Teachings or Gifts)
- Holding regular office hours
- Doing university wide talks and key note addresses at conferences
- Participating in annual Elders Gatherings
- Introducing Elders in classes at the start of the year

Elders in Relation to Faculty, Instructors and Staff

As noted above, many Elders are working as course instructors and some are promoted as professors, based on their Indigenous Knowledges. However, research collaborators emphasize that the capacity of Elders goes beyond the roles of professors and course instructors. Elders are important teachers and educators, spiritual and political leaders, role models, mentors, advisors and cultural navigators for faculty and staff as well as students. In relation to faculty, course instructors and staff, Elders can guide those who work with Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey students. Their presence is important to Indigenous faculty, as Elders are people with whom they can identify professionally.

Elders can co-create or guide others in creating curriculum and programming, for language programs or anything with Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey content. This can be in the fields of science, medicine, environmental studies, history, political science, literature, etc. Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey Knowledges can be included in any field. Elders can be included as part of advisory and departmental committees. They can also provide or advise on cultural training for faculty and staff to help them develop a solid cultural foundation. In relation to faculty, instructors and staff, Elders are critical to Indigenous governance of education. To address this, as discussed in more detail below, PSIs need to expand their structures and processes, and support the resurgence of Indigenous governance of Indigenous education.

Elders in Relation to Administration and University

As noted above, Elders serve in administrative positions as deans, program directors and department chairs in PSIs across Canada. Elders are also part of advisory groups for Indigenous education. However, these roles for Elders are restrictive as they attempt to confine Elders within the structures and processes of Canadian mainstream PSIs. There is potential for the systemic transformation of mainstream education through the enactment of Indigenous governance of Indigenous education. To develop the foundational relationships and understandings needed to create spaces for Indigenous governance, presidents and senior administration could start by nurturing relationships with Elders one-on-one and/or through regular, small group meetings. As a starting point, this could lead to mutual and collaborative relationships in which Elders are consulted on all issues concerning Indigenous education. The responsibility to nurture these relationships is part of reconciliation for settler society and a small step towards fostering Indigenous governance of Indigenous education.

Beyond guiding the academic aspects of Indigenous education, Elders can also guide the development of programs and services that support Indigenous learners. Additionally, they can guide the development of Indigenous communities and cultural activities around campus. They can support and guide Indigenous-university relations and transcultural initiatives, as well as community outreach activities. They are a connecting bridge to Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey communities and are very important in terms of creating and maintaining good relations for the whole university. They are always communicating between the communities and the university, and serve as ambassadors for the university.

Elders can promote the university and its programs. At formal university events, Elders are not purely symbolic – they embody diplomatic and spiritual relations. Their presence and participation at graduation ceremonies honours Indigenous Knowledges and is part of a university's maintaining good relations with Indigenous communities.

An example of an Elder getting involved to promote culture on campus is at UNB, where Imelda Perley asked if she could have a mural developed to show Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey pride. The result is "The Water Spirit" in the Marshall D'Avray Building, created by Samaqani Cocahq-Natalie Sappier in 2013 (Figure C). Creating Indigenous presence through art, stories, song, ceremony or other acts on campus is part of decolonizing and cultural resurgence.



Figure C – The Water Spirit - Samaqani Cocahq-Natalie Sappier

Elders and Research

Research collaborators stress that Elders should be integral parts of any research related to Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey peoples. There are many examples of this across Atlantic Canada, too numerous to list here. The Atlantic Aboriginal Economic Development Integrated Research Program (AAEDIRP) of the Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nation Chiefs (APCFNC) did a research project that involved 23 Mi'kmaw, Wolastoqey, Innu and Inuit Elders. During [*The APCFNC Elders Project: Honouring Traditional Knowledge*](#) (APCFNC 2009–2011), Elders were consulted about how they would like to be engaged in the sharing of Traditional or Indigenous Knowledges. As Wolastoqey Elder Gwen Bear emphasized, “Indigenous Knowledge isn't only for ourselves because if we keep that knowledge it only becomes stagnant and it helps no one. How do we pass it along? We have to look at that question and share those universal ways that we are going to have to develop” (APCFNC, 2011, p. 113). The major outcome of the project is a framework for Indigenous Knowledges in research and education, which consists of eight Elders recommendations. The Elders want to engage in a co-learning journey with universities and see the need to create an Elders advisory council to provide direction on ethical engagement and transmission of their knowledges (APCFNC, 2011).

Before the Dam: Documenting Spoken Wolastoq/Maliseet in Educational, Spiritual and Cultural Context is another Elder-led project that recorded and documented the personal oral histories of Wolastoq speakers. The project aims to create and develop a data bank of spoken Wolastoq for school and community use, which can

serve as a record of spoken Wolastoq for future generations. (For more information about this project, contact the Mi'kmaq/Wolastoqey Centre at UNB.) The Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources has done much Elder-led research, and has protocols and promising practices for working with Elders from all five Unama'ki communities. Consultation concerning Mi'kmaq Knowledge is required by outside agencies. Work with Elders has resulted in publications such as *Malikewej: Understanding the Mi'kmaq Way*, *Kataq-Mi'kmaq Ecological Knowledge: Bras d'Or Lakes Eels* and *Tiam: This is Our Story*. The Mi'kmaqey Debert Cultural Center of the Confederation of Mainland Mi'kmaq is led by an Elders Council. An example of community-based participatory research using the Mi'kmaq principle of Etuaptmunk or two-eyed seeing and working with Elders is the [Pictou Landing Native Women's Association Boat Harbour Project](#), which seeks to answer – "Is Boat Harbour making us sick?" The Unama'ki College of CBU administers the [Mi'kmaq Ethics Watch](#), which promotes community guidelines for working with Mi'kmaq peoples.



**Figure D – The Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Elders Project:
Honouring Traditional Knowledge**

OVERVIEW OF ELDERS' POTENTIAL ROLES IN PSE	
IN RELATION TO STUDENTS	
Knowledge Holders – Teachers Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey Leaders Part of Living Indigenous Knowledge systems Essential for Intergenerational Knowledge Transmission Promote Indigenous Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share and teach culture, language, land-based understandings, including stories, songs, ceremonies, Traditional teachings, and protocols. • Transmit knowledge of social and cultural, spiritual, economic and political systems. • Function as keepers of living ancestral teachings, history • Share knowledge of Indigenous ways of being, knowing, learning and teaching (Indigenous pedagogies)
Role Models, Mentors, Advisors Cultural Navigators Provide a link to being L'nu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uphold cultural integrity and values • Support the development of Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey identity • Support, encourage, nurture, motivate and inspire
Spiritual Leaders Counselling and Healing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer ceremonies such as sweat lodges, smudging, do crisis work. • Work one-one-on or with families
Promote Holistic Understandings of Self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honour physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual aspects of the self • Nurture unique gifts of individuals • Can provide academic and career advice
Provide a Sense of Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a connection with relatives and ancestors, someone to identify with culturally and acceptance of Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey ways
Advocate for Students Facilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can facilitate discussions and circles for resolution, if difficult cultural or other issues arise
IN RELATION TO FACULTY, INSTRUCTORS AND STAFF	
Can function as Teachers and Educators, Spiritual and Political Leaders, Role Models, Mentors, Advisors, Cultural Navigators	
Course Instructors, Professors based on Indigenous Knowledges	
With Indigenous governance of Indigenous education as a goal, a starting point is to consult with Elders and ask them to participate in departmental advisory groups and committees	
Can co-create or guide others in creating curriculum and programming; advise staff on the development of programs and services	
Can lead and/or advise on cultural training	
IN RELATION TO ADMINISTRATION - UNIVERSITY	
Teachers or Educators, Spiritual and Political Leaders, Role Models, Mentors, Advisors, Cultural Navigators	
Program Directors, Chairs, Deans	
With Indigenous governance of Indigenous education as a goal, a starting point is to consult with Elders and ask them to participate in advisory groups and Elders Councils for Indigenous education, Indigenous-university relations and in the development of programs, services and curriculum.	
Guide development of Indigenous community and cultural activities on campus	
Ambassadors of university: Embody spiritual, political and diplomatic roles, officiate at formal events	
RESEARCH	
Elders are integral to Indigenous research and ethics processes, and have asked to be engaged through an Elders Indigenous Knowledge Council (APCFNC, 2011).	

Figure E

STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT ELDER ENGAGEMENT: PEPSITE'TIKOW

("Don't be Disrespectful" in Mi'kmaq)

A. Creation of Guiding Principles in Collaboration with Elders

To nurture Indigenous PSE initiatives, research collaborators recommend guiding principles for Indigenous Education and Elder engagement. Principles would be guided by:

- The spirit and intent of the Treaties of peace and friendship based on mutual respect, peace and prosperity;
- Frameworks of decolonizing and reconciliation that recognize we are all Treaty peoples;
- The spirit of trust, responsibility, reciprocity, collaboration and nurturing;
- Seven-generation thinking: Develop long-term relationships with Elders and communities and do strategic planning that looks seven generations ahead and honours ancestors by looking seven generations back;
- Transcultural frameworks such as co-learning.

Before Canada was created, the British Crown signed Treaties with the Mi'kmaq based on understandings of mutual respect, peace and prosperity. These are nation-to-nation Treaties that did not involve a surrender of land, sovereignty or independence to the Crown. Mi'kmaq agreed to be allied nations. The Crown has not lived up to its Treaty obligations (Palmer, 2016). Mi'kmaq lawyer Pam Palmer says the meaning of the Treaties is found in their spirit and intent, that true understanding of the Treaties "is a process that takes time because Treaties between nations are relationships that are unique, organic, evolving, adapting and enduring" (Palmer, 2016, p. 36). Mi'kmaq have rights to control their own education based on the Treaties. This is reinforced through the teachings of Mi'kmaq Creation stories. The Treaties did not grant the Crown or governments the right to interfere with Mi'kmaq education of their own peoples (Battiste, 2016). What do the Treaties of Peace and Friendship direct non-Indigenous/ settlers to do in upholding their end of them? Palmer suggests that "justice and reconciliation will require some sacrifice, effort, time and patience" and that it will take many generations to heal from injustice for Mi'kmaq and other Indigenous peoples (Ibid., p. 40).

As MK's Post-Secondary Consultant Ann Sylliboy emphasizes, developing relationships and partnerships for Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey education require shifts in what is valued by PSIs. She says working with Indigenous peoples and moving towards reconciliation isn't easy or quantifiable, as in, "I saw this many students...I did this many workshops.' It's a long process, and we won't get there overnight. Institutions especially need to be patient. They always just want numbers: 'Okay, we're spending x dollars on this, we want results. We want twenty more students enrolled next year,' and it might not happen that way. If institutions are really interested in education for our people, or even for anybody – they would invest in Elders" (A. Sylliboy, Halifax, NS. August, 2014). When PSIs and Indigenous communities come together, they bring together different worldviews and knowledge systems. Creating shared guiding principles based on the above, can help direct how relationships and initiatives unfold. These can help nurture and steer initiatives to work through issues and tensions as they arise. Returning to

collaborative guiding principles can ground initiatives, thereby maximizing opportunities for Indigenous education, and Indigenous peoples and communities.

Co-learning is a process that recognizes Indigenous and Western paradigms as equally significant while acknowledging that it almost always requires new learning by all participants and within a collaborative journey (IISH, 2016). It was recommended by the 23 Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqiyik, Innu and Inuit Elders as a way to work with Atlantic region universities through the APCFNC Elders Project (APCFNC, 2011). The Integrative Science program at CBU was based on a co-learning journey of bringing together Western and Indigenous Knowledges, and thrived from 1999–2010 with the direction of Elders. For more detailed understandings of co-learning, the Institute for Integrative Science and Health houses many articles and presentations on their website.

B. Nurture Collaborative Indigenous Education & Elder Engagement in PSE: Design & Operationalization

Develop Policies & Processes

Engaging with Elders, Knowledge Holders and communities will have a higher chance of success if it is not “ad hoc.” Before embarking on any initiatives, consultation should be sought on what cultural protocols are appropriate. As discussed above, moving towards Indigenous governance of Indigenous education will take effort, time and patience, and involve nurturing of relationships between PSIs and Indigenous peoples. As part of this journey, Elder engagement should be guided by a terms of reference (TOR) built upon guiding principles that are developed collaboratively. Policies and processes should be developed in collaboration with an advisory council that includes a number of Elders. One Elder cannot be expected to represent the voices of all Mi'kmaq or Wolastoqiyik, as Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey Knowledges are collective. During the initial stages, it is important to provide Elders with the resources to gather and discuss how they would like to move forward, and create a draft for the way they would like to work with the universities. Collaborative dialogue should take place, regarding what roles Elders see for themselves and what the institution sees Elders fulfilling. (This is expanded on below.)

Elder Albert Marshall, who is a member of many advisory committees (including the National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health, the Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources, the APCFNC Elders Project and the Unama'ki College Advisory Committee) suggests guiding principles and TOR are essential: “Everyone who is going to be part of an Elders initiative should know exactly what they are doing. This is a collective body. The objective and the directions have to flow from the Knowledge Holders, not from the institution. This initiative has to be bottom up. The challenge is how do we take that message to an entity that is well grounded in a top-down approach? How do we reconcile that enterprise so these two ways can work together?” (A. Marshall, Eskasoni First Nation, July, 2014). Having guiding principles and TOR for any initiative is fundamental to the foundation of any university program.

Develop Collaborative Governance

Autonomy and control over Indigenous education is linked to Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination. Ultimately, Indigenous peoples must be in control of Indigenous processes to realize Indigenous goals (AFN, 2010; Alfred, 2004; Cornthassel, 2012; Coulthard, 2014; Simpson, 2011 & 2014). Recent research that evaluates programs seeking to include Indigenous Knowledges makes recommendations for Indigenous-based governance structures; collective stewardship from Elders, educators and Indigenous communities; and an advisory council of stakeholders from both Indigenous communities and the educational institution (Rich, 2011; Bartlett, Marshall & Marshall, 2012).

PSIs need to collaborate with Indigenous communities in the governance of Indigenous education. As outlined above, in Mi'kma'ki and Wolastoqey homelands, PSIs need to support the resurgence of Indigenous governance. This means upholding Treaty values, and enacting the responsibilities and reciprocity required within Treaty relationships. At Laurentian University, Indigenous governance is part of the daily affairs of the university through an Associate Vice-President of Academic and Indigenous Programs. Similarly, the University of Winnipeg has an Associate Vice-President of Indigenous Affairs and Lakehead University has a Vice-Provost of Aboriginal Initiatives. These positions are all held by Indigenous peoples.

In terms of Elder engagement, Indigenous governance goes beyond having only one Elder or Knowledge holder on an advisory committee. The process needs to be collective. An Elders Advisory Committee that is linked to a departmental committee and the senate can be a starting place. For example, the Elder-in-Residence at UNB reports to the Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Centre's Advisory Committee, which is composed of four Elders. This committee reports to the Educational Council of the Faculty of Education. While there are many community-based Elders advisory groups across Atlantic Canada, this recently established Elders Indigenous Knowledge committee for the Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Centre is the only one at an Atlantic region university. Director David Perley says he "can't see how a public school or university can talk about Indigenous Knowledge without the incorporation of Elders" (D. Perley, Aroostook, NB, August, 2014). He uses an Elders committee model based on a precedent for curriculum development at the community level, used by the First Nations Education Initiative (FNEI) in Fredericton, NB.

Elders can provide spiritual support and guidance for committees they are on. Senior administration needs to check in regularly with Elders. Yearly follow-ups and reviews should take place to assess programming and seek Elders' feedback. (Refer to VIU's Aboriginal Service Plans.) Ann Sylliboy elaborates: "Institutions are not the most welcoming spots in the world with all of their rules and bylaws and endless meetings. But I've come to realize that those endless meetings are a way of acknowledging your colleagues' expertise, their knowledge and their input into decisions I'm planning on making. I'll change *my* schedule for people that I want to consult with. I see this as an important part of the decision-making process. I'll move things around to accommodate them. It's just showing respect and validation" (A. Sylliboy, Halifax, NS, August, 2014).

Prioritize Sustainable Funding for Indigenous Education & Elder Engagement

Sustainable funding is needed to create and nurture Indigenous governance and Elder programming, and to implement the TRC's calls to action at PSIs. This cannot be over emphasized. This could be started using seed money from various universities to facilitate a beginning-level consciousness. Universities would need to institutionalize the funding over time by putting together proposals for embedding Elder and Indigenous Knowledges.

Nurture Ongoing & Collaborative Discussion around Promising Practices for Elder Engagement & Elders' Roles

Ongoing, collaborative discussion concerning promising practices needs to take place, as opposed to institutionalizing Elder engagement (VIU, 2016). As highlighted, Elders have multiple roles in PSE in relation to students, faculty, staff and administration and research. It is important not to be prescriptive about their roles but to create opportunities for relationships to develop. Research at VIU has shown that unmediated contact with Elders is a promising practice for nurturing both professional and academic relationships. For example, creating experiential professional development opportunities for faculty and staff works better than workshops, seminars and conferences to facilitate understanding around the roles of Elders (VIU, 2016).

Engaging Elders should be process oriented, as Patricia Doyle-Bedwell emphasizes: "Sometimes with the students, it's a process. You can't just slot someone in there and then say, 'Oh here's an Elder now go talk to them,' and if they don't go over and talk to them in the way that they say they should... then it's a failure because it doesn't happen between 9 to 5" (P. Doyle-Bedwell, Halifax, NS, August, 2014). When relationships with new Elders are being established, whether with an Elder-in-Residence or visiting Elders, an ongoing, collaborative process to determine what the Elders want to do should be initiated. In this way, Elders have the opportunity to say what roles they see themselves having and what they can provide, whether it be teaching language, doing a regular story-telling circle, being involved in curriculum development or leading cultural workshops. The outcome of this could be used to draft an open and evolving "job description" for that Knowledge holder, to expand on as needed. It would not be a set template prepared independently by the university.

Elders and other Knowledge Holders may not have a university degree or other education. If there isn't an understanding of what an Elder is and what they bring with them, education is often needed on who Elders are and how they teach. Developing relationships with Elders and community people can help faculty become more knowledgeable about Mi'kmaq culture and protocols, leading to them becoming more comfortable in bringing Elders into classrooms (P. Doyle Bedwell, Halifax, NS, August, 2014).

Ann Sylliboy discusses how Elder Knowledge has value that cannot be compared with mainstream education qualifications and training. She says that while having PSE experience helps Elders navigate the system, Elders don't need to have degrees or learning from post-secondary institutions. "I think that if you have an Elder that's interested, that's basically all you need. They can learn! If we wanted someone that has

a degree and can tell people which courses to take or where to go in a university for this or that or for counselling, you can get that anywhere. You can get that from an app. You can't get an Elder in an app" (A. Sylliboy, Halifax, NS, August, 2014).

Develop Protocol Guides for Elder & Community Engagement

Respect is a foundation for working with Indigenous Elders and communities. Ann Sylliboy uses the term "pepsite'tikow," which means "don't be disrespectful" to describe the relationship needed between Elders and PSIs. She says that's the tradition, the custom for Mi'kmaq: "When you have Elders in your presence, you're respectful to them" (A. Sylliboy, Halifax, NS, August, 2014).

Basic guidelines and protocols concerning how to engage respectfully with Elders and communities are needed. This is particularly important for continuity so that there is a foundation for basic understanding in place when new administration, faculty and staff come on board. Some examples of protocols from universities include Carleton University's *Guidelines for Working with Elders*, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine's *Elders Handbook*, the University of Winnipeg's *Elder Protocol*, the University of Manitoba's *Kaaweechimoseawat Program: Walking with One Another – Mentor Guidebook*, the University of Alberta's *Elder Protocol and Guidelines* and Simon Fraser University's *Elders' Protocol Document*. These include everything from cultural protocols, to the supports and care needed for Elders, to honourariums for Elders and community people, and are included in the national scan. Protocol guides can be developed and enhanced on an ongoing basis. Again, it is important that any protocol guides are not prescriptive but nurture respectful relations.

Provide Elders with Infrastructure, Administrative & Logistical Supports

Elders should be given the same treatment professors receive. They should be courted to come to PSIs in the same way that professors are. They should be provided with the infrastructure, administrative and logistical supports they need.

Elder programming should be set up in advance and administered by staff etc. so that Elders do not have to do this work. Research collaborators stress that it puts a burden on Elders, and that it is disrespectful to expect them to create all of their own programming and do all of the administration. Not all Elders are familiar with the university system and need staff support.

Infrastructure Needed

- An easily accessible office space: A ground floor with window is preferable
- A space for doing ceremonies where smudging can occur
- A computer
- A pass for a designated parking spot

Administrative and Logistical Supports

- A budget for programming
- Dedicated staff support: A full time administrative assistant assigned
- Support for planning, coordination and promotion of events
- Elder helpers, especially for special events (can be staff or student volunteers)
- Communication technologies, such as but not exclusive to video conferencing through the Atlantic Canada First Nations Help Desk, to be maximized for teaching, consultation and advisory councils, etc.

Fair Compensation for Elders based on Indigenous Knowledges

Elders and Knowledge Holders should be compensated based on their Indigenous Knowledges. Their salaries should not be determined by the human resources department using mainstream education criteria.

Create Spaces & Make Visible Commitments to Indigenous Education & Elders

PSIs need to honour and value their commitments to Indigenous education by creating designated spaces for Indigenous education, in both natural and built environments. This includes Indigenous sacred spaces for ceremonies, which are critical to Indigenous ways of knowing and learning. Areas should be designated for land-based activities through the year. Land-based spaces might include teaching wigwams, tipis or other teaching areas, medicinal or food gardens, and sweat lodges, etc. Visible commitments to Indigenous education and Elders might include Indigenous architecture and design on campus, naming buildings and rooms after Indigenous peoples, showcasing portraits of Elders, and Indigenous art, as a few examples.

Raise Awareness & Promote Elders & Elder Engagement

Elders and Elder engagement should be recognized and promoted throughout the university. A communication strategy should be developed for this. Students may not know there are Elders in the university and/or don't have a sense of who an Elder is or what a program, event or initiative is. Education about who Elders are in an Indigenous education context could be initiated based on Elders' direction. Elders can be introduced in September through an event. They could also be asked to visit classes with high concentrations of Indigenous students.

<p align="center">STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT ELDER ENGAGEMENT: PEPSITE'TIKOW ("Don't be Disrespectful" in Mi'kmaq)</p>
<p align="center">A. Creation of Guiding Principles in Collaboration with Elders</p>
<p>Guiding principles for Indigenous Education and Elder engagement are recommended. Principles would be guided by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The spirit and intent of the Treaties of peace and friendship based on mutual respect, peace and prosperity; • Frameworks of decolonizing and reconciliation that recognize we are all Treaty peoples; • The spirit of trust, responsibility, reciprocity, collaboration and nurturing; • Seven-generation thinking: Develop long-term relationships with Elders and communities and do strategic planning that looks seven generations ahead and honours ancestors by looking seven generations back; • Transcultural frameworks such as co-learning.
<p align="center">B. Nurture Collaborative Indigenous Education & Elder Engagement in PSE: Design and Operationalization</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop policies and processes for Elder engagement • Develop collaborative governance for Elder engagement and programming • Prioritize sustainable funding for Indigenous education and Elder engagement • Nurture ongoing collaborative discussions around promising practices for Elder engagement and Elders' Roles • Develop protocol guides for Elder and community engagement • Provide Elders with infrastructural, administrative and logistical supports • Provide fair compensation for Elders and Knowledge Holders based on Indigenous Knowledges • Create spaces and make a visible commitment to Indigenous education and Elders • Raise awareness and promote Elders and Elder programming

Figure F

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS

This section includes a basic discussion of Indigenous Knowledge systems based on academic and grey literature. Acknowledging that understandings are much more complex, it could point the way for future learnings.

Indigenous peoples emphasize the need for culturally based education rooted in Indigenous Knowledge systems. This supports Indigenous peoples in coming to know who they are and encourages academic success among Indigenous students (Battiste, 2013; RCAP, 1996). Research collaborators stress that for this to occur, administration, faculty and staff at PSIs need to have some understandings of Indigenous Knowledge systems and how they can be respected in mainstream PSE. There are many systemic and structural institutional barriers at PSIs that need to be

transformed for Indigenous peoples to have autonomy and control over the creation, transmission, production, legitimization and dissemination of their own Knowledges. Most non-Indigenous educators need to develop understandings that Indigenous and Western Knowledges are equally significant paradigms and to develop respect for Indigenous Knowledges. Historically, there has been a suppression of Indigenous Knowledges based on racist assumptions and practices that Western Knowledges and scientific thinking are superior (Battiste, 2013; Castellano, 2011; Couture, 2011; RCAP, 1986; Simpson, 1999). Central to this issue are fundamental differences in the ways knowledge is understood – in other words, beliefs about what can be known and ways of knowing – in an Indigenous context and in mainstream Canadian society. Indigenous Knowledges are vulnerable to being objectified, misrepresented, appropriated, co-opted, taken out of context and taught by non-Indigenous people claiming expertise (Alfred, 2004; Battiste, 2013; Corntassel, 2012; Simpson, 2014). There are ethical considerations at stake concerning how to respectfully engage with Indigenous Knowledge systems.

Living Knowledge Systems

Indigenous Knowledges are part of complex, rigorous systems that acknowledge a world in which everything is alive, infused with spirit and interconnected. They are based on thousands of years of acquired ancestral knowledge. In an Indigenous worldview, everything comes from the land – all beings, languages, stories, songs, ceremonies and traditions. In other words, knowledge is rooted in place. Knowledges are continually being created and are always transforming. Knowledge Holders control the methods of transmission in their specific homelands (Battiste, 2013; Couture, 2011; Ermine, 1995; Metallic, 2011; Newhouse, 2008; Simpson, 2011). Language, which is fundamental to one's worldview, plays a critical role in the transmission, understanding, recording, and expression of Indigenous Knowledge systems (Johnson, 2013; Metallic, 2011; Noori, 2013; Simpson, 2011). This is a point of entry for understanding the tensions between Indigenous and Western Knowledge systems. It is not possible to translate certain Indigenous understandings into English or Western, Eurocentric understandings (Bartlett, Marshall & Marshall, 2012a; Metallic, 2011; Noori, 2013).

Mi'kmaw scholar Fred Metallic explains that the Mi'kmaw language is verb-based and that this requires Mi'kmaq to consider the relationships among things/beings. The emphasis on relationships means Mi'kmaq conceptualize beyond an individual (or object) and instead focus on the collective. This is different from English, which is noun-based (Metallic, 2011). Anishinaabe scholar Margaret Noori would have us consider that in Anishinaabemowin, there is no word, or noun, for "knowledge" or "truth." There are verb prefixes and suffixes which indicate what is known and who is knowing. Anishinaabe Elder and scholar Basil Johnson explains the notion of "truth" in Anishinaabemowin. He says when people say "w'daeb-awae," what is meant is that the speaker will "cast his or her voice as far as his perception and his vocabulary will enable him or her" (Johnson, 2013, p. 6). This idea that there are multiple perspectives and no one objective truth is often very difficult for people educated in Western Knowledge traditions to understand. Elders Albert and Murdena Marshall, collaborating with Cheryl Bartlett and Anna Marie Hatcher, through the Integrative Science program at CBU,

explain that the Western/Indigenous Knowledge dichotomy is a construct that comes partly from the Western practice of seeing knowledge as a singular noun – as independent from the teacher. As stressed above, in Indigenous languages, knowledge is a verb and the teacher and learner both play a part in. The Western concept of knowledge is better referred to as a “coming to know process” in an Indigenous context (Bartlett, Hatcher, Marshall & Marshall, 2009).

Many Indigenous people share the concept of a learning spirit, “an entity that emerges out of the complex interrelationship between the learner and his or her learning journey” (Battiste, 2013). In the words of Mi'kmaw Elder Albert Marshall:

First of all, you have to acknowledge that knowledge is alive – it has its own spirit. It will not only transform you, but you also have a responsibility with that knowledge. And most importantly, for that knowledge to manifest itself within you, you have to enter into a relationship with it. Because what constitutes wholeness is the spirit has to be intact in you. And where does that spirit get nurturing? It gets it from the language. Where does the language get its nurturing? It gets it from the land. Unless all those are in place, a person cannot be complete or whole. The education system has to be holistic. One way to transform it – the spirit should be nurtured, not compromised. (MK, 2013, p. 15)

These understandings that knowledge is not something to be possessed but part of living relationships that come from land-based and experiential learning is also difficult to honour within mainstream education. Cree Elder Joe Couture, a Chair of the Department of Indigenous Studies at Trent University in the 1970s, poses a critical question: “...how to make sense of Indigenous Knowledges that passes Elders' scrutiny in the academy?” (Couture, 2000, p. 160). The department has been grappling with how to include Indigenous Knowledges since the program's creation in 1969. Joe Couture says Indigenous Studies demands a “dialogical dialogue” as opposed to a “dialectical dialogue” of both academics and First Nations. He speaks of “an open, ecumenical positioning charged by a willingness to find complementary means of learning, understanding and interpreting the traditions of others” (Couture, 2013, p. 166). Trent's Department of Indigenous Studies currently seeks to make Indigenous Knowledges the foundation of their Ph. D. program. David Newhouse, current Chair, says this has transformed how research and inquiry, pedagogy, analysis and presentation of data are approached and “how we act as human beings” (Newhouse, 2004, p. 154). Through their engagement with Elders and other Knowledge Holders, the department has recognized that teaching Indigenous Knowledges requires a hands-on experiential approach, like an apprenticeship, with Elders. As articulated by David Newhouse:

Learning about Indigenous Knowledges is different than learning Indigenous Knowledges. The task of learning Indigenous Knowledges requires a mindful presence and a keen understanding of self as well as an ability to reflect. Learning Indigenous Knowledges is, in my view, akin to studying the Humanities. It requires not just knowledge of content but also knowledge of one's own values, perspectives, attitudes or at least a willingness to explore them. Learning Indigenous Knowledges is transformative. It changes you in ways that are unexpected. It makes you keenly aware that you are living in an interconnected world, that the world is alive, that there is an animating energy/spirit, and that we are only a small part of the universe. Learning Indigenous Knowledges teaches you humility and humbleness, gratitude and forgiveness, an awareness of the cycle of life and earth, and how to begin to live in a powered universe. (Newhouse, 2008, p. 10)

Besides intellectual or conceptual barriers for coming to value this type of learning, bringing in Elders or other Knowledge Holders or taking students out for land-based and community activities takes extra funding. As experienced by the research collaborators, this takes more effort and more time to accomplish. Part of the time required is developing the respectful and trusting relationships that are key to this learning. Jane McMillan, Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Communities at StFX, has observed:

It takes time to build relationships and a lot of people are unwilling to open up and to dive in and do things differently. I think it is an access problem. I don't know if the faculty have any comprehension of access nor do I think they understand the value of Indigenous Knowledge. I think there is an educational deficit on terms of mainstream faculty awareness. I think the concept of Indigenous Knowledge as a pedagogical advancement is something they haven't grasped. (J. McMillan, Antigonish, NS, September, 2014)

Indigenous Pedagogies

Another consideration regarding inclusion of Indigenous Knowledges in the academy concerns how they are taught and who teaches them. The use of Indigenous ways of teaching, or pedagogies, is critical to supporting Indigenous education. Indigenous pedagogies are transformative and encourage holistic development. Indigenous pedagogies are grounded in learner-centered teaching, collaborative relationships and experiential learning. This includes learning by observation and doing; participating in Traditional and contemporary land-based practices; and learning from plants and animals, from spirit beings, through stories and songs, through ceremony and feasting, through collaboration and community work, and through dreaming and self-reflection (CCL, 2009; Johnson, 1995; Miller, 2013; Simpson, 1999.) Through ceremony, Mi'kmaq spirituality is the foundation that ensures peace and harmony and guides relations. Mi'kmaq spirituality must draw from the Mi'kmaq creation story (Cavanagh & Metallic, 2002).

Indigenous Elders and other Knowledge Holders across Turtle Island are continually considering the best ways for passing their knowledges on to future generations. Since the Elders think tanks in the 1970s, Elders have been consistently bringing forward the generous position of being willing to share Indigenous Knowledges and willing to engage with Western Knowledge systems. Elders seek to avoid a Pan-Aboriginal approach while focusing on commonalities for the greater good. Cree Elder Willie Ermine asserts: "Aboriginal education has a responsibility to uphold a worldview based on recognizing and affirming wholeness and to disseminate the benefits to all humanity" (Ermine, 1995, p.116). He says Indigenous peoples' task is to do this for future generations. In terms of knowledge transmission from Elders, reading what Elders have said is no substitute for an ongoing relationship between learners and Elders and experiencing the living nature of Indigenous Knowledges (Kulchyski, McCaskill & Newhouse, 1999). Academic literature and other written sources that include Elders' voices are very scarce. Elders have their own peer-review processes based on ancestral knowledges and an understanding that knowledge is collective. Elders have traditionally transmitted their knowledges orally, using their own languages and controlling the transmission.

Elder Joe Couture explains that Elders and their teachings must be experienced in the context of the oral tradition, so that a “right” perspective and direction is maintained. He speaks about the “oral literate mind” and says that Elder teachings are visual or pictorial. He adds that an “oral literate mind displays a capacity to integrate [and] to form patterns, a process that penetrates and transforms the experiences obtained in and through a dynamic, non-print environment” (Couture, 2011, p. 90). Accumulated knowledge or “perennial experience” from the ancestors is carried forward through oral tradition, and the Elders are able to initiate others into this experience. Willie Ermine explains further. He says that Indigenous languages and cultures “contain the cumulative knowledge of our ancestors, and it is critical that we examine the inherent concepts in our lexicons to develop understandings of the self in relation to existence” (Ermine, 1995, p.110).

Finding respectful ways to include Indigenous Knowledges in PSE is something that PSIs are just beginning to explore. Molly Peters, former Aboriginal Advisor for StFX, raises the same concern as Joe Couture. She asks how we can use our Traditional teachings in an academic space in an appropriate manner. She suggests using a Mi'kmaw approach – Etuaptmunk, or two-eyed seeing. Mi'kmaw Elder Albert Marshall brought forward the concept of two-eyed seeing in 2004, as a guiding principle to make science education more responsive to the needs of Mi'kmaw students, as part of the Integrative Science Program at CBU. Two-eyed seeing is “learning to see from one eye with the strengths of Indigenous Knowledges and ways of knowing, and from the other eye with the strengths of Western Knowledges and ways of knowing ... and learning to use both these eyes together, for the benefit of all” (IIHS, 2016). In a two-eyed seeing framework, Western perspectives do not dominate Indigenous ones, but rather there is an attempt to weave back and forth between the two worldviews using a process of co-learning.

Another promising PSE program, unfortunately no longer operational, is the First-Nations Partnership Program (FNPP), which included the Meadow Lake Tribal Council (which consists of four Cree and Dene First Nations), and the School of Child and Youth Care at the University of Victoria. This program used the “generative curriculum model,” based a “co-construction of knowledge” involving “mutual learning, sharing of skills and collaborative construction of concepts and curricula ... to foster the well-being of children and families within their communities” (Pence & Ball, 1999, p. 5). What works in some situations might not work in others, and so the curriculum was “culturally resonant” and “generative,” based on the children’s needs in their specific community. Creators of the program say that its “ongoing dialogical, process-driven approach of participatory praxis ... has the potential for creating a new ‘generation’ at each delivery – a living, responsive, evolving curriculum” (Ibid., p. 13). The FNPP developed participatory programming that the communities felt was true to them. The model focused on creating “open” curriculum that “sits ‘between’ the two cultures” (Ibid., p. 12). Elders were key to the program’s development. One of the Elders at Meadow Lake described the model as “two sides of an eagle feather,” emphasizing that “both are needed to fly” (Ibid., p. 12).

As explored briefly above, the ways in which Elders and other Knowledge Holders share knowledges is very different from how most professors approach learners. Many professors consider themselves an “expert” in their specific field. The convention of academic freedom presents a challenge to including Indigenous Knowledges and content in PSE. Because professors are free to teach what they want

and how they want to teach about Indigenous peoples, this can result in non-Indigenous professors teaching inaccurate material that doesn't center Indigenous voices and perspectives, and that may take knowledge out of context or objectify it. There is also the danger of professors not creating culturally safe spaces for Indigenous students (Gaudry, 2016). There is a need for trauma informed approaches (OFIFC, 2016). According to Albert Marshall, because of the devastating impacts of the residential school system sometimes Indigenous Knowledge goes dormant. He says, "the knowledge has to be drawn out in a nurturing way. The only way that you are going to be able to do that is by constantly bringing people together. When something is dormant it is not evident in your conscious mind, but it is embedded there somewhere. So you need triggers. Where these triggers will come from could be in a talking circle" (MK, 2013, p. 16).

Elder Albert Marshall's concept of "knowledge navigators" is useful here. Rather than a hierarchy of professors over students, Albert would have everyone consider themselves knowledge navigators (A. Marshall, Eskasoni First Nation, July 2014). Patricia Doyle-Bedwell emphasizes that a personal connection with teachers and a collaborative approach is needed to support Indigenous learners. "One of the biggest things is accessibility. In a lot of the literature, in talking about Aboriginal students, one of the things that has been found is that students need to feel a connection to their professor. They need a relationship in which they know you and you know them," she says. "You are conducting the student's process of learning. It's collaborative. You're not telling them exactly what has to be learned or not learned" (P. Doyle-Bedwell, Halifax, NS, August, 2014). Patricia brings Elders into her classroom, as well as different ways of learning including film and music, and getting students to attend Mi'kmaw events.

In mainstream education, where Elders and other Knowledge Holders may not have a university degree or other education and there isn't a full understanding of what an Elder is and what they bring with them, education is needed on who Elders are and how they teach. Developing relationships with Elders and community people can help faculty become more knowledgeable about Mi'kmaw culture and protocols, leading to them becoming more comfortable in bringing Elders into classrooms (P. Doyle Bedwell, Halifax, NS, August, 2014). There are other related challenges in terms of having Indigenous Knowledge and content in PSE. Patricia Doyle-Bedwell emphasizes that to teach at a university, a Ph. D or at least a master's degree is required. Honourary degrees don't really count. It is difficult to find individuals to teach the Mi'kmaw language who also have a university degree. This results in a lack of language programming at the post-secondary level. Those who do work as contract-based course instructors, as per the Canadian Union of Public Employees, get paid roughly \$5000 per semester. This results in situations in which Knowledge Holders are underpaid (P. Doyle Bedwell, Halifax, NS, August, 2014). The situation is similar in a Wolastoqey context.

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION – CREATING SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Engaging with Indigenous Elders and Indigenous Knowledges means undergoing transformation, making paradigm shifts and creating new understandings. Patricia Doyle-Bedwell emphasizes that education is part of a healing process. She sees the process of reconciliation as being about institutions making space, and Indigenous

peoples taking the space to bring in our cultures and languages and ways of knowing – our Indigenous Knowledges (P. Doyle Bedwell, Halifax, NS, August, 2015). The main barriers to engaging with Indigenous Knowledge systems at PSIs are systemic and institutional. These include a lack of shared governance and consultation with Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik. Elders and other community Knowledge Holders know the way forward. Research collaborators acknowledge the challenges of transforming consciousness and making the systemic shifts needed in relation to Indigenous education, particularly change that involves more than one university department. Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqiyik and their allies feel a sense of extreme urgency to support the resurgence of Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey languages and cultures, and to create a world that honours all our relations. They have found institutions very slow to change, colonial, conservative and unaware and often unconscious of individual and collective needs for settler society to be accountable for their responsibilities in terms of reconciliation. Many are disappointed in how little change they have seen over their long careers. They say leadership has no goals to commit beyond moving from a superficial and politically correct level of engagement. They describe a feeling of complacency that needs to be shaken up. It is recognized that institutions are driven by financial priorities and operate like businesses. Research collaborators see a need to advocate and fight for Indigenous programming, created and guided by Elders and communities; this will embed Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey Knowledges in the programming and curriculum, as well as in physical spaces around the university.

Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqiyik and allied settlers all point to universities having responsibilities to make changes based on Indigenous frameworks of reconciliation in order to live up to their Treaty responsibilities. This involves nurturing relationships and creating meaningful partnerships. Jane McMillan emphasizes the importance of coming to understand the value of Indigenous Knowledges as an imperative project for reconciliation:

I think that it's essential for reconciliation, I think it's essential for decolonization, I think it's essential for shifting discrimination. I think there's so much that can be mobilized on everything from climate change to justice to economics. There is always a place for Indigenous Knowledge and I think that people need to start opening their minds to the potential and possibilities of that and I think that it's also really critical for communities to engage with Indigenous Knowledge on their own and think about what it means to reinvigorate and what does that resurgence require? What can the academy do to facilitate that? I think that has to be a project of decolonization as well, and I think that from a social justice perspective it's imperative. (J. McMillan, Antigonish, NS, September 2014)

Jeff Orr, Dean of Education at StFX, contributes to the discussion of how to move beyond the mainstream curriculum so that Indigenous Knowledges are woven into or embedded in the education system. He has found that Elders programs are mostly added on to the formal curriculum. To explain further, he references James Banks' stages of multicultural education. This model proposes that approaches for multicultural curriculum transformation range from slight curricular changes to fully revised social awareness and action conceptualizations. The model stresses that it is critical to get from the use of mainstream curriculum, which is Eurocentric and male-centric, to where there is structural reform in which new materials, perspectives, and voices are woven

seamlessly with current frameworks of knowledge to provide new levels of understanding. In this way, important social issues, including racism, sexism, colonization, and social and economic injustices are addressed explicitly as part of the curriculum (Banks, 1993). Jeff Orr would like to see Mi'kmaw, Wolastoqey and Western Knowledges and worlds dance together more closely and recognizes that we are a long way in most universities and in society from doing that. He acknowledges it is extremely challenging to work with Elder Knowledge:

There is such a bifurcated set of worldviews. Elders might get a warm reception in some parts but their ideas are very different than in the known university establishment. So how do we help, not soften those views but get them heard so that they seep into the fabric of what goes on in classrooms, what goes on in the consciousness, individual and collective, of faculty members and staff so that they get that and move it from this additive or contribution approach, to a higher level of deeper consciousness?" (J. Orr, Antigonish, NS, August, 2014)

In the education programs at StFX, Jeff Orr has found that the role of Elders is "primarily, practically and more realistically embedded in the communities than at StFX" (Orr, 2014). He would prefer to get individuals to engage with Elders in their communities in addition to having Elders teaching in the program:

It's not about building more culture on campus. It's about how we get more individuals to go to their communities with a sense of drawing upon Elder wisdom and knowledge as they are going about their daily work. Ninety percent of the B.Ed program and 98 percent of the M.Ed program happens off campus. The most important and embedded aspect of teacher and leadership education happens in a community context. So moving from that theorizing about Elder knowledge to the enactment of Elder Knowledge, that's the stage that I want to see us develop in education. (J. Orr, Antigonish, NS, August, 2014)

Developing meaningful engagement with Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey peoples and creating Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey education that Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey peoples have autonomy and control over takes time and requires dedicated and sustainable funding. As Jeff Orr reflects, "Mi'kmaw people are just asking – help us get access to PSE, we'll do the rest... It's relentless – you just have to keep at it. It's being touched and moved by people and realizing the precious, fragile, important responsibility you have when you are in a position with all this white privilege to use that in the right ways" (J. Orr, Antigonish, NS, August, 2014). He wonders why some people have a sense of urgency about change while others do not – "that's a big institutional question" (Ibid.). Ann Sylliboy has hope for change at the individual level – this can lead to change at the systemic level. She points out that "the institutions don't have hearts but the people who run the institutions do" (A. Sylliboy, Halifax, NS, August, 2014).

Non-Indigenous-settler faculty recognize ways to use their privilege and power to support Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey goals. Some of these strategies include listening to community Elders, as well as those at MK, the First Nations Education Initiative (FNEI), Education Directors and other education organizations, and supporting the development of projects that Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik identify as being important – not pushing or imposing programming, but creating what is wanted. In other words, aligning themselves

with Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqiyik. Implementing mandatory cultural competency and cultural safe keeping seminars, as well as educational development and professional development, is also recommended for non-Indigenous-settlers – both faculty and staff. Additionally, it was suggested that faculty have to get out into communities more. As Jane McMillan says, “You can't expect to stay up in your little tower and expect things to work out” (J. McMillan, Antigonish, NS, September, 2014).

Another critical question, raised by Albert Marshall, is how to work from a grassroots perspective within institutions that are top down. Promising strategies for change involve working with groups of Elders or Elders Councils who can help sustain relationships and help coordinate interaction with upper administration. The last section provides a brief summary of some promising practices for Elder engagement at Canadian universities. The transformative potential of Indigenous Knowledges, with Elders leading the way, offers hope for change. PSIs would do well to look to the promising practices used in the MK and Wolastoqey schools and other Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey organizations at which educators and staff are very experienced at engaging Elders. Eskasoni First Nation has a school board and a successful immersion program and does regular Elders programming. Eskasoni, Potlotek and the Unama'ki Institute for Natural Resources all have land-based camps for youth. The models are strong in the communities. Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik know how to create Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey education. Those in Atlantic region universities need to nurture the respectful and collaborative relationships needed to transform mainstream post-secondary education and move towards Indigenous governance of Indigenous education.

PROMISING PRACTICES FOR ELDER ENGAGEMENT AT CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

In a PSE context, creating relationships with Indigenous communities and establishing long-term relationships with Elders and other Knowledge Holders is a multifaceted effort that evolves over time. Métis scholar Adam Gaudry, currently at the University of Saskatchewan, cautions that “universities need to see this as a long-term process, as it is going to take decades for the Canadian public to unlearn colonial ideologies, and decades more to build an equitable relationship between the many peoples who now share this land” (Gaudry, 2016). Some promising practices that lead to institutional transformation include Elders being engaged in comprehensive programming that embeds Indigenous Knowledges within programs and throughout institutions.

As previously mentioned, Elders are most commonly involved at PSIs as part of Elder-in-Residence programs and as visiting Elders. There are growing numbers of Elders and other Knowledge Holders teaching as course instructors. While the numbers are small, Elders are engaged as professors and in administrative positions as deans, program directors and department chairs. Elders are also engaged on many types of advisory committees. Less frequently, Elders are members of Elders Councils, which offer more potential for Indigenous governance to be enacted. Another promising practice done by PSIs includes regularly reviewing Elder and Indigenous programming and strategic planning to implement recommendations for enhancing these.

Trent University is the only PSI to have appointed Elders and Traditional people to faculty positions, recognizing their Indigenous Knowledge, wisdom and skills. This practice goes beyond granting Elders honorary doctorates – it recognizes Indigenous and Western Knowledges as equally significant paradigms. In the Indigenous Studies Ph. D program, created in 1998, the cultural integrity of the program is based on Indigenous Knowledges through the guidance of an Elder who is the Director of Studies. Additionally, students are examined by the Traditional Council through an oral comprehensive exam on Indigenous Knowledges (Trent, 2016). Wilfred Laurier University's Aboriginal Field of Study Master of Social Work program, created in 2006, has an Elders program whose purpose is to uphold the integrity of Indigenous Knowledge systems. Program Elders "help in the union of Indigenous worldviews within the academy" (Sir Wilfred Laurier University, 2016). Additionally, they "foster culturally safe environments where the integrity of the medicines, sacred circle and sacred teachings are enacted and respected. The Program Elders will be able to ensure that the cultural integrity of the Aboriginal Field of Study is upheld" (Ibid., 2016). The idea that the integrity of Indigenous Knowledges are upheld by Elders is echoed by Elders Albert and Murdena Marshall, who assert that Elders uphold the "authenticity, accuracy and sacredness" of Indigenous Knowledges (A. Marshall, Trent University, December 2015). They say that no Elder would ever compromise on this, and that they have a vision for educational programming in Atlantic Canada based on Elder leadership.

The oldest Elder-in-Residence program in Canada was created by Vancouver Island University in 1994. The program is described as a multifaceted initiative intended to create support for the use of Indigenous Knowledges and Aboriginal languages; to support all learners by offering Traditional Knowledge and spiritual guidance; to assist in access for and retention of Aboriginal learners through Elders' presence within the institution; and to assist faculty, staff and administration to build capacity in areas of cultural knowledge and understanding. Elders being recognized as key to supporting Indigenous Knowledges and languages is notable, as these are foundations of Indigenous education. Elders guiding faculty, staff and administration is also a good indicator.

In terms of promising practices for Indigenous governance, VIU's Indigenous initiatives are guided by an Elders' Council composed of six Elders. Elders providing input at this level is key to Indigenous autonomy and control over education and reciprocal relations within the framework of reconciliation. In terms of strategic planning, the university has undergone two phases of an Aboriginal Service Plan, the first put forward in 2007 and the second in 2011. VIU has also reviewed the value and impact of the role of Elders-in-Residence and made recommendations on how to improve, clarify and acknowledge the important contribution Elders bring to PSE. Their report, *Elders-in-Residence at Vancouver Island University: Transformational Learning (2011)* is essential reading for those wishing to improve their understandings of Elder engagement. They have four main findings that VIU might consider in their continuing efforts to support and enhance the role of the Elders-in-Residence:

1. More time with the Elders would be beneficial for everyone.
2. Improved protocols and policies for the "care" of Elders would enhance their work.
3. Confirming at all levels that the Elders are present is important for the benefit of all.
4. Faculty and staff want to learn more about Elders (VIU, 2011).

The Council on Aboriginal Initiatives at the University of Alberta has also assessed the

university's engagement with Elders. Through interviews with Elders and others, they make recommendations for future enhancement in their report, *Elder Protocol and Guidelines*, 2012. They recommend that the university design, develop, and implement an Elders Leadership and Resource Council that will provide guidance for the University of Alberta via the office of the provost and vice-president academic; create a dispute management process for the Council to deal with internal disagreements, as well as external disagreements with the university; and create an ombuds position and process to deal with concerns and complaints about abuse of Elders within the university.

There are many Elders working in PSE who use their unique cultural frameworks to foster student success, create programming and other pathways for sharing knowledge, and to guide PSI administration and faculty concerning Indigenous ways. To integrate Wolastoqey Knowledges into her work, Elder Imelda Perley uses a four-directions or medicine-wheel approach to support students. She stresses that youth learn through role modeling. Patricia Doyle-Bedwell explains further: "Part of the Mi'kmaw ways of knowing and teaching, it's not just a technique that you apply to something. It flows from one's own personal experience and culture" (P. Doyle-Bedwell, Halifax, NS, August, 2014). Elder Morning Star, Elder-in-Residence at both the University of Ottawa and Concordia University, also seeks to support the emotional, physical, mental and spiritual well-being of Indigenous students and learners. Cat Criger at the University of Toronto also references a holistic, four-directions model as a basis for Elder support.

The scan of Elder engagement across PSIs in Canada (starting on p. 47) outlines Elder engagement outside of academic programming. A scan of Elder engagement across PSIs in Canada (starting on p. 47) outlines Elder engagement outside of academic programming. It includes Elders-in-Residence and visiting Elder programs, as well as and broader Elder engagement such participation on Elders Councils, university-wide and departmental advisory committees. It is meant to offer a picture of the diversity and uniqueness of what Elder engagement looks like at PSIs in different Indigenous homelands and be useful for those seeking to create and/or enhance what they are doing. It is not an assessment of what is going on at each PSI, and it has some gaps. The information has not been verified through primary research or interviews due to time limitations. There are countless Elders engaged in academic programming at PSIs across Canada, each in unique ways, and it would be highly valuable to bring together information on what they are doing. This information would take considerable additional research, as this information is not easily found on most PSI websites. Ongoing and updated scans to build on this one would be beneficial in terms of sharing promising practices.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Transforming consciousness and making the systemic shifts needed for Indigenous-led Indigenous education in Atlantic region PSIs involves relationships built on respect, trust, responsibility and reciprocity. Nurturing these kinds of relationships is essential for decolonization, collaboration and reconciliation with Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey Elders and Indigenous communities. The transformation of PSE is a multifaceted, long-term process best guided by Treaty values of mutual respect, peace

and prosperity, seven-generation thinking, and the use of collaborative frameworks such as co-learning, two-eyed seeing and co-construction of knowledges. PSIs would do well to look to the promising practices for Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey education used in Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey community-run schools and PSIs across Canada. Much work is needed to reach a stage in which communities have autonomy and control and responsibility over education as outlined in the TRC recommendations and Indigenous governance of Indigenous education. Those in PSIs have Treaty responsibilities to work towards reconciliation.

Involving Elders in PSE can address many of the recommendations of the Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU) Working Committee on Aboriginal Education concerning the implementation of the TRC recommendations. In their 2016 TRC Reconciliation Action Plan, the AAU Working Committee stress establishing an Indigenous advisory board for consideration of all matters related to Indigenous education. This builds on what Atlantic region Elders asked for in 2011 – the creation of an Elders Council to advise on all matters related to Indigenous Knowledges and Elders involvement in all levels of Indigenous education, as part of the APCFNC Elders recommendations.

Elders are Indigenous leaders and are key people to engage in the governance and guidance of Indigenous PSE. Developing relationships with Elders is a key to promoting relations and partnerships with Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey communities. Elder engagement leads to the inclusion of Indigenous Knowledges and languages and the continued development of Atlantic Indigenous content. Elders have expertise in Indigenous pedagogies that promote student success. They are also the appropriate people to provide guidance for developing culturally based programs, services and initiatives, including the establishment social and ceremonial spaces within campuses.

In working towards implementing the TRC recommendations on education, it is recommended that Atlantic region PSIs:

- Learn how to work alongside Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey peoples on their terms and within Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey frameworks.
- Recognize the critical roles of Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey Elders as educators and leaders by developing and enhancing their involvement in PSE. Elder engagement in would be PSE based on:
 - The recommendations of Mi'kmaw, Wolastoqey and allied educators who contributed to this report;
 - Promising practices developed across Canada.
- Continue to gather input from Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey educators concerning promising practices for Elder engagement and engagement with Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey Knowledges.
- Review and implement the APCFNC Elders Recommendations, endorsed by the Atlantic region Chiefs in 2011, by supporting the creation of an Elders Indigenous Knowledge Council. The recommendations stress that Atlantic Indigenous communities are losing their Elders, their languages and their cultural knowledge

very rapidly. It is therefore urgent to learn to work alongside Elders and learn from their Indigenous Knowledges immediately. Elders have asked that an Elders Council, appointed by Elders that would advise on matters related to the sharing of Indigenous Knowledges be formed for the Atlantic region. The Council would advise on matters related to protocols and/or ethics and the promising practices for the sharing of Indigenous Knowledges, as well as the promising practices for working alongside Elders and other Knowledge Holders. The Elders Council would engage in a process of co-learning with the Atlantic region universities to create a template for how the process of this knowledge transfer could occur. Post-secondary institutions should be compelled to consult an Elders Council to develop Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqey education. The recommendations are accessible here: <http://www.apcfn.ca/images/uploads/ResearchSummary-HonouringTraditionalKnowledgeResearchSummary.pdf>

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

This scan of Elder engagement across PSI in Canada outlines Elder engagement outside of academic programming. It is based on information found on the websites of PSIs. Please note that it is not an assessment of Elder engagement and has some gaps. Copies of the reports collected can be accessed through a drop box folder. You can either download the reports using the hyperlinks in this document or send an email to Ann Sylliboy at mkeducation@kinu.ca or Gillian Austin at gillianaustin@trentu.ca to access the Dropbox folder.

University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
Nova Scotia				
Cape Breton University – Unama'ki College	<p>Elders are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role models to students, faculty, and staff • Counsel and advise • Assist professors in curriculum delivery • Foster an atmosphere of pride among students • Reflect the benefits gained from guidance by Elders • Promote Mi'kmaw and First Nations cultural values <p>Since 2013.</p> <p>Current Elders: Mary Ellen Googoo and Lawrence Wells</p>	Numerous visiting Elders.	Elder Stephen Augustine helped create an online course Learning from Knowledge Keepers of Mi'kma'ki	Academic Plan 2012-2013 Responding to Challenges and Opportunities with Sustainable Growth
Cape Breton University Institute for Integrative Science and Health	<p>Elder Engagement</p> <p>The Integrative Science Program - Toqwa'tu'kl Kijijitaqnn Mi'kmaq for “bringing knowledges together.” This program brought together Indigenous ways of knowing and Western scientific knowledge in collaboration with Mi'kmaw Many Elders. Click here for a list of those involved: Elders</p>			

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Elders	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
Dalhousie University	Based within the Indigenous Minor program, the Elders are committed to being available to students for guidance, counsel and support, as well as provide smudging ceremonies at the Multi-Faith Centre on campus and conducting talking circles for students on request. There are five Elders available to students. Since 2015.	Geri Musqua-LeBlanc, Deb Eisan, Billy Lewis, Doug Knockwood, Muriel Rosevere	Numerous visiting Elders.		Dalhousie Elder-In-Residence Protocol

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Elders	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
New Brunswick					
<u>St. Thomas University</u>	<p>Provides direction, guidance and support to students from First Nations and assists them with participation. The Elder-in-Residence Program is an important link between the University and First Nations communities in New Brunswick. It will act as a source of advice to the President, senior administration and faculty and staff on the development of services and subjects such as First Nations cultural practices, traditions and protocol. The Elder-in-Residence program is part of the university's Aboriginal Education Initiatives, which is meant to increase the recruitment and retention rate of First Nations students by implementing student services specifically tailored to meet the needs of First Nations students.</p> <p>Since 2013.</p> <p>Financial support by the Harrison McCain Foundation.</p>	Miigam'agan	Numerous visiting Elders.		

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
New Brunswick				
University of New Brunswick – Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Centre (MWC)	<p>MWC provides academically rigorous UNB programs enriched with First Nations cultural content, perspectives, and pedagogy. There is an Elder-in-Residence program. (No information about the program on the UNB website.)</p> <p>Since 2013.</p> <p>Current Elder – Imelda Perley</p>	Numerous visiting Elders.	Elders Indigenous Knowledge Committee – Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Centre	

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
Ontario				
<u>Algoma University</u>	Has a visiting Elder-in-Residence program.	Elders visit once per week.	The Annual Elders Gathering is a cross-cultural learning experience, which strengthens the cultural identity of Anishinaabe students. Elders are invited to Algoma University to share their knowledge and wisdom. <u>Anishinaabe People's Council</u>	
<u>Brock University</u>	The Elder-In-Residence is a keeper of knowledge and a sharer of knowledge. The Elder serves as a source of wisdom, understanding, and guidance to Aboriginal students. Her primary role is both simple and complex. The Elder listens to the students and offers them the opportunity to listen to her. Additionally, the Elder offers guidance to the wider Brock community in terms of cultural awareness. Current Elder: Carol Jacobs	Numerous visiting Elders.		

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
Ontario				
Carleton University	<p>This program has been offered on and off since 1993. The presence of Aboriginal Elders and distinguished members of the Aboriginal community on campus provides support and inspiration for Aboriginal students, staff and faculty. Such individuals also play an important part in introducing the entire University community to the rich traditions and talent in the Aboriginal community.</p> <p>Since 1993.</p> <p>Current Elder: Paul Skanks</p>	<p>Visiting Elder Program</p> <p>The Centre for Aboriginal Culture and Education (CACE) has a tradition of providing opportunities for Elders to connect with students and staff. CACE recognizes the significant need for linkages between Traditional and Western knowledge, as well as the importance of passing such knowledge on to those who will keep those teachings for future generations. The program provides a culturally safe and relevant space for First Nation, Métis and Inuit students, faculty, staff and community members to obtain assistance and cultural enrichment.</p>	<p>Aboriginal Education Council</p> <p>Equity Services makes Elders available to Aboriginal students, staff and faculty on an ongoing basis.</p>	<p>Guidelines for Working with Elders</p> <p>Carleton's Aboriginal Co-ordinated Strategy</p> <p>Carleton University Aboriginal Education Council Terms of Reference</p>
Lakehead University	<p>Individual and group discussions are offered.</p> <p>Current Elders: Gerry Martin and Beatrice Twance-Hynes</p>	Numerous visiting Elders.	Elders Council	Lakehead University
Laurentien University		Numerous visiting Elders.	Elders are involved in the Indigenous Studies program.	

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
Ontario				
McMaster University	<p>The Elders provides advice, lends a supportive ear and does crafts with students.</p> <p>Current Elders: Ima Johnson and Renee Thomas Hill</p>	Monthly workshops with visiting Elders to share cultural knowledge with the community. Bertha Skype is a regular visiting Elder.		
Nipissing University	Has an Elder-in-Residence program.	Numerous visiting Elders.		
Northern Ontario School of Medicine (Lakehead and Laurentian Universities)		Numerous visiting Elders.		Elders Handbook: How the Medical School Engages and Works with Aboriginal Elders
Queen's University	<p>Has an Elder-in-Residence program.</p> <p>Current Elder: Mary Ann Spencer</p>	Numerous visiting Elders.		

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
Ontario				
Trent University Chanie Wenjack School of Indigenous Studies		<p>The First People's House of Learning hosts weekly Traditional Teachings with Elders and other Traditional peoples.</p> <p>Annual Elders and Traditional People's Gathering</p>	<p>The Indigenous Studies Ph. D Council provides ongoing guidance to the program and is composed of Aboriginal/Indigenous Elders and community members, faculty from Indigenous Studies and other departments, Ph. D. student representatives, and senior university administrators. Aboriginal Educational Council (AEC) The Ph. D. program pursues an active partnership with the local Aboriginal community. The AEC has made a substantial contribution to supporting the cultural integrity of the Ph. D. program since its inception.</p> <p>Trent has appointed Indigenous Elders and Traditional people to faculty positions recognizing their Traditional Knowledge, wisdom and skills. See report on Aboriginal Initiatives.</p>	<p>Trent University – Aboriginal Initiatives</p> <p>Enweying: Continuing the Conversation about Indigenous Education at Trent University</p>

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
Ontario				
University of Ottawa	An Elder-in-residence functions as a great resource to ensure and promote emotional, physical, mental and spiritual wellness of Aboriginal learners. Current Elder: Morning Star	Numerous visiting Elders.		
University of Sudbury		Numerous visiting Elders.		
University of Toronto, First Nations House	Elders are vital to the Aboriginal community. First Nations House offers students the opportunity to meet with Elders and Traditional Teachers for support, guidance and teachings. Andrew Wesley, Elder Lee Maracle, Traditional Teacher	Numerous visiting Elders.		
University of Toronto, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education	Drop in or schedule an appointment with Elders. Contact Julie Blair at ien@utoronto.ca to make an appt. Cat Criger is the Traditional Elder for UTSC, UTM, UT Med Sciences, UT Faculty of Law and OISE. Elder Jacqui Lavalley	Numerous visiting Elders.	OISE Indigenous Education Network OISE Aboriginal Advisory Council	Association of Canadian Deans of Education: Accord on Indigenous Education

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
Ontario				
<u>University of Toronto Transitional Year Programme</u>	<p>Aboriginal Students at the University of Toronto, regardless of their program of study, can meet with the Elder-in-Residence at First Nations House. Counselling and Traditional teachings are offered.</p> <p>Current Elder: Grafton Antone</p>	Numerous visiting Elders.		
<u>University of Toronto - Faculty of Law's Aboriginal Law Program</u>	<p>The presence of the Elder-in-Residence will help to foster the cultural, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, staff and Faculty. Having an Elder on-site will give students unique access to personal support.</p> <p>Mark "Cat" Criger hosts monthly cultural teachings called "Cat Chats".</p>			
<u>University of Waterloo – St. Paul's University College</u>	The Elders-in-Residence program provides students with an opportunity to learn Traditional Indigenous teachings in both individual and group settings.	<u>Visiting Elders Programs</u>		

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

Ontario					
Wilfred Laurier University Master of Social Work Aboriginal Field of Study	Program Elders				
	<p>The first Master of Social Work program in Canada rooted in a wholistic Indigenous worldview and contemporary social work practice. The goal is to develop social work practitioners who demonstrate an understanding of and respect for the history, traditions and culture of the Indigenous peoples of Canada. This unique program includes the use of Indigenous Elders, a Traditional circle process, and Indigenous ceremonies.</p> <p><u>Program Elders:</u> Program Elders can integrate the needs of the program and Aboriginal values and principles. They uphold the integrity of the Aboriginal Field of Study while supporting students in the development of their wholistic healing practice and knowledge bundle. Their involvement enriches the program with their life experience, knowledge and ability to affirm Indigenous ethics and teachings. Program Elders also bring community engagement into the AFS and create a presence of relationships within community. They link culture, community and academy while also teaching students on how to work with community Elders. The primary reason for Program Elders within the AFS is to expose students to the respectful blending of culture and professional knowledge in their own learning journeys. The AFS regards their presence as integral to the delivery of a wholistically based graduate social work program.</p>				
University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Elders	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
York University			Visiting Elders Programs		

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
Quebec				
<u>Concordia University</u>	<p>The Elder-in-Residence welcomes people from all nations and cultures into a safe and friendly atmosphere. The Elder can assist with spiritual guidance, Traditional prayer and healing methods for body, mind and spirit. Sharing circles with friends are encouraged.</p> <p>Current Elder: Morning Star</p>	Numerous visiting Elders.		

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
Manitoba				
<u>University College of the North Thompson</u>	<p>An Elders Program provides services throughout the university college such as counselling, Traditional teachings, and information on Aboriginal issues to the university college community.</p> <p>Current Elders: John Martin and Emma Gossfeld</p>	Local Elders regularly visit the university college to meet with interested individuals and groups.	<p>The UCN Council of Elders works in partnership with the UCN Governing Council. The UCN Council of Elders will provides guidance within UCN by sharing Elder's Traditional Knowledge of wisdom, beliefs, and values in a respectful and caring way. The Council is actively involved in decisions respecting the direction and governance of the institution.</p> <p>The ininiwi kiskinwamakewin Centre is a central coordinating place for work with Elders including seeking Elder guidance on the development of culturally proficient curriculum.</p>	
<u>University of Manitoba</u>	<p>Elders-in-Residence provide cultural and spiritual guidance to students and staff.</p> <p>Current Elders: Norman Meade and Marlene Kayseas</p>	Numerous visiting Elders.		<u>Kaaweechimos eaywat Program: Walking with One Another – Mentor Guidebook</u>

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
Manitoba				
University of Winnipeg	<p>Elders provide Traditional teachings and cultural activities, guest lectures, counselling services and guidance for all students, faculty and support staff.</p> <p>Ruth Christie and Margaret Osborne, Hector Pierre</p>	Numerous visiting Elders.	Aboriginal Student Services Centre Lodge Ceremonies are held.	The University of Winnipeg Elder Protocols

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
Saskatchewan				
First Nations University of Canada	<p>The First Nations University of Canada's holistic approach to post-secondary education begins with the Elders, whose presence, wisdom and counsel are the mainstay not only for students but also for the University as a whole. Their knowledge of First Nations' tradition, culture, and spirituality creates a unique support service.</p> <p>Consultation with the Elders takes place in an atmosphere of trust and respect. This tradition helps restore an individual's self-confidence and peace of mind, which in turn helps the learning process.</p> <p>The Elders reinforce our respect for, and understanding of, the Creator's role in our lives. The knowledge of the Elders, in First Nations' traditions, culture and spirituality, creates a unique support service for students. Their presence, wisdom, and Traditional counsel provide a strong foundation for learning.</p>	Numerous visiting Elders.		

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
Saskatchewan				
University of Regina	Emerging Elder-in-Residence; Joseph Naytowhow	Numerous visiting Elders.	Aboriginal Advisory Circle to the President (AAC) . Current research is centered on the Indigenization project at the University of Regina. Indigenization “refers to the transformation of the existing academy by including Indigenous Knowledges, voices, critiques, students, and materials as well as the establishment of physical and epistemic spaces that facilitate the ethical stewardship of a plurality of Indigenous Knowledges and practices so thoroughly as to constitute an essential element of the university. It is not limited to Indigenous people, but encompasses all students and faculty, for the benefits of our academic integrity and our social viability.”	peyak aski kikawinaw: University of Regina Strategic Plan 2015 -2020

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
Alberta				
Brandon University		Numerous visiting Elders.	Annual Elders Gathering	
University of Alberta		Numerous visiting Elders.		Elders Protocols and Guidelines
MacEwan University	Elders share their knowledge of culture and Traditional practices. You can ask Kihew Watston staff to arrange a meeting with an Elder. Current Elders: Elsie Paul, Rick Lightning	Numerous visiting Elders.	Aboriginal Education Council - The Elders in Residence program invites Elders and special guests to the Aboriginal Education Council to share their knowledge of culture, Traditional practices and spirituality.	
University of Lethbridge - The Faculty of Management First Nations Governance Program	Elders provide cultural support and guidance to all students, faculty and staff. Current Elders: Francis First Charger, Carolla Calf Robe	Numerous visiting Elders.		Blackfoot and First Nations, Metis and Inuit Protocol Handbook

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
British Columbia				
Malaspina University	The Elder-in-Residence program will expand to establish six new part-time elder-in-residence positions. The role of these Elders will be to support Aboriginal ways of knowing and being in the various programs and practices at the university. They provide invaluable cultural teachings to all who are interested.	Numerous visiting Elders.	The Elders have been very active in advising faculty, staff, and administration on matters related to Aboriginal education and Aboriginal issues. By increasing the number of elders available to all students, faculty, staff, and administrators, cross-cultural learning opportunities will be significantly enhanced. Of all ASP initiatives, this is viewed as the single-most important effort that will support and give meaning to all others.	Aboriginal Service Plan, Malaspina University-College
Simon Fraser University	Program Elders		Reports	
	<p>Program Elders are recognized in terms of the value and importance of the role of Elders in the Aboriginal and university communities. The Elders provide counselling, support, and guidance to all students. Elders encourage cross-cultural sharing and teach Traditional protocols. The Elders work with student, staff, faculty, and concomitant community at SFU to provide grounding and support for students; mentoring; special events support; supervise culturally orientated courses and workshops; lunch/meet with students; be available for interviews and guest lectures, provide guidance in Traditional cleansing and ceremonial activities and assist on advisory groups.</p> <p>Elders include: Jim White, Margaret George, Evelyn Locker</p>		<p>Elders Protocol Document for Simon Fraser University</p> <p>Aboriginal Strategic Plan Simon Fraser University 2013-2018</p> <p>Reanimating Storywork: Indigenous Elders' Reflections on Leadership</p>	

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
British Columbia				
<u>Thompson Rivers University</u>	Elders provide personal consultation, conversation, guidance, and mentorship to Aboriginal students. To engage with students, Elders use Traditional Aboriginal life skills perspectives and methods such as the 'talking circle' and Elder Knowledge. Current Elders: Estella Patrick Moller, Jimmy Jack, Mike Arnouge, Doreen Kenoras	Numerous visiting Elders.		<u>Interviewing Elders Protocol</u>
<u>University of British Columbia – First Peoples House of Learning</u>	The Elder-In-Residence is available to meet and talk with students in the Longhouse about any concerns or issues they may have as Aboriginal students at UBC, or even if they would just like to chat with someone. Current Elder: Larry Grant	Numerous visiting Elders.		

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
British Columbia				
<u>University of the Fraser Valley</u>	<p>Purpose: Interacts with students through Traditional teaching and counseling contact, and provides awareness and guidance through demonstration and discussion. Elder are available to students, families and University staff creating opportunities to increase understanding of Indigenous perspectives and values. Delivery of Programs: Creates opportunities at the Indigenous Student Centre (ISC) to engage UFV students in the teaching of their knowledge, wisdom and stories; and attends a variety of gatherings including: Interaction with and guidance of students; Traditional teachings, and discussions about heritage and identity; Mentoring students, staff & faculty; Naming/honouring ceremonies; Sharing knowledge of traditional, cultural activities: Music, dance, Traditional dress & ceremonies; Story telling; Sweat lodge, smudging, harvesting cedar, collecting medicines & medicine walks (based on elder availability); Some related meetings, welcoming addresses and community 'outreach' activities.</p> <p>Current Elders: Eddie Gardner, Theresa Neel, Rene Inkster</p>	Numerous visiting Elders.		

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
British Columbia				
University of Northern British Columbia	<p>Elder engagement: Elder involvement is an important aspect of student success. The First Nations Centre works with Elders from a variety of nations and cultural backgrounds to build connections to support learning and growth.</p> <p>Since 2015.</p> <p>Current Elder: Edie Frederick</p>	The Visiting Elders Program as well as weekly Talking Circles offers a tangible link to First Nations tradition, identity and history.		
Vancouver Island University	<p>A multifaceted initiative supporting but not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support and use of Indigenous Knowledge and Aboriginal languages within VIU; - Support for all learners by offering Traditional Knowledge and spiritual guidance; - Assist in the area of access and retention of Aboriginal learners in post-secondary education by having a presence within the institution; - Assist faculty, staff and administration to build capacity in areas of cultural knowledge and understanding. <p>Since 1994.</p> <p>Current Elders: Nanaimo Campus: Ray Peter, Delores Louie, Geraldine Manson, Stella Johnson, Gary Manson Cowichan Campus: Philomena Williams, Harold Joe, Marlene Rice Powell River Campus: Eugene Louie</p>	Numerous visiting Elders.	Elders have been representing their respective communities and knowledge to the wider university community. There is an Elder's Council composed of 6 Elders. Further demand for their voice and expertise was identified in the Aboriginal Service Plan 2007-2010.	<p>Elders-in-Residence at Vancouver Island University: Transformational Learning</p> <p>Aboriginal Service Plan II – 2012/2015</p>

ELDER ENGAGEMENT IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

University	Elder-in-Residence Programs	Visiting Elders	Other Elder Engagement	Reports
British Columbia				
<u>University of Victoria</u>	Elders are the foundation of Indigenous communities and act as the glue that keeps our people together. They are the keepers of sacred stories, songs, language, culture and traditions. Elders' Voices is a partnership project between the University of Victoria and Camosun College. Based on recommendations by UVIC students, faculty, staff and administration, the Office of Indigenous Affairs (INAF) was given the privilege of assembling a group of Elders from local communities to guide students, staff, faculty and administration in Indigenous ways of knowing and being.	Numerous visiting Elders.		<u>Aboriginal Service Plan 2015-2016</u>

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