

Joining the Conversation

An Inventory and Report of Indigenous Peoples Research Engagement at Dalhousie University

FINAL REPORT

Prepared by the Ad hoc Steering Committee on Indigenous Research Engagement

Submitted to the Office of the Vice President (Research), Dalhousie University

January 2012

*“To achieve reconciliation, we all have to start by asking, ‘what is
the conversation we are in?’”*

- Justice Murray Sinclair, Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada,
Speaking at Dalhousie’s Schulich School of Law, January 2010.
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Acknowledgements

We wish to begin by acknowledging the Mi'kmaq people on whose territories Dalhousie University has been established. With respect to this report, we acknowledge all those members of the Dalhousie research community who responded to our survey. If any researcher on campus missed responding to the call, we hope that we were able to identify and include them in the findings. If we have for any reason missed anyone at all, we apologize and acknowledge their contribution all the same, asking them to join in the cross-institutional engagement this report ideally will generate. We also thank our various Schools, Faculties, and Departments for recognizing committee members' work on this inventory and report as a vital contribution to the research environment at Dalhousie. We are grateful as well for comments and instructive suggestions on drafts of this report from a number of Faculty colleagues: Prof. Gail Baikie (Social Work), Dr. John Cameron (International Development Studies), Prof. Patricia Doyle-Bedwell (Continuing Education / Transition Year Program), Dr. Graham Gagnon (Engineering), Prof. Constance MacIntosh (Law), and Dr. Audrey Steenbeek (Nursing). Finally, we are grateful to Vice President Dr. Martha Crago and to the staff at Research Services for supporting this initiative, most notably Gail Power. It is an honour to be able to contribute to a project that promises to advance the research and knowledge relations at Dalhousie with, for, and by Indigenous peoples in Nova Scotia, the Atlantic region, Canada, and beyond.

Executive Summary

The goal of this report is to identify and document the range and level of research engagement at Dalhousie University associated with Indigenous peoples. Information gathered is from the 2010/11 Academic year, but should have currency into 2011/12 and 2012/13, and offers a baseline for institutional strategies and initiatives over the coming decade.

After two calls for information to the university community, reviews of web resources, and direct follow-up communications, we learned that there are numerous research activities underway at Dalhousie. These research projects are being conducted by some 53 Faculty and research staff across the campus. Some of the research is funded by smaller development grants, a few major grants, and a great deal is unfunded or operating on nominal and time-limited budgets.

The picture obtained is that while there is a diverse array of research addressing or involving Indigenous peoples at Dalhousie, it is not visible to the larger university community, to the university's administration, or to prospective Indigenous faculty, staff, and students, nor is it well integrated or strategized.

Bringing more structure, coherence and collaboration to the significant and diverse research activities taking place at Dalhousie, and planning for the future, will require careful consideration and extensive discussion within and outside the university. As evidenced by universities elsewhere in Canada, strategic development and effective implementation requires significantly long time-lines.

To join and enhance the conversations needed to advance Dalhousie in this area, our ultimate recommendation is:

That the Vice-President Research establish a working committee chaired by an Associate Vice-President and including active members of the identified community of Dalhousie's researchers to consider and recommend appropriate mechanisms for bringing more structure, coherence and collaboration to the diverse research activities at Dalhousie concerning Indigenous peoples, including planning for the future.

1.0 Locating the Conversations: Engaging Indigenous Peoples through Research at Dalhousie University

“To achieve reconciliation, we all have to start by asking, ‘what is the conversation we are in?’”

• Justice Murray Sinclair, Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Speaking at Dalhousie’s Schulich School of Law, Jan, 2010.

This Inventory and Report seeks to extend and build upon this most basic question put forward by Justice Murray Sinclair, Chair of Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission, with respect to the reconciliation of historic relations between Indigenous peoples and the peoples of Canada: “What is the conversation we are in?”. By this, Justice Sinclair meant that each conversation toward reconciliation has to be fully sensitive to the local and historical situation in which it takes place.

Research, like reconciliation, requires conversations. In the case of research related to Indigenous peoples, research requires many different kinds of conversations that include Indigenous peoples or that are, indeed, initiated by Indigenous peoples. These conversations must include acknowledging the prior and ongoing presence of Indigenous peoples in their lands and territories and their relations with those lands.¹ Other conversations must also reach those Indigenous peoples who no longer live in their traditional territories, those of mixed heritage including Métis people, those who may find themselves in urban centres, and those who have migrated from across Canada or across international borders.

We wish to begin this report by acknowledging and honouring the historic and ongoing conversation between the Canadian citizenry of our region and the Mi’kmaq, the Indigenous people on whose traditional territories Dalhousie University has been established.

The work in this report is directed primarily at locating research action and related conversations pertaining to Indigenous peoples at Dalhousie. First and centrally, this report offers an initial survey of the range and location of self-reporting researchers within the University who are engaged in this area of research. Second, it offers indications of the distribution and concentration of activities across the institution, with attention to the level or degree of research engagement in these various activities. Third, and more provisionally, the report provides a discussion of how Dalhousie is situated in larger regional, national and international currents and actions in the advancement of research related to Indigenous peoples.

¹ We also acknowledge that in a contemporary ‘post-colonial context’ not all Indigenous peoples have remained on

From there, the report sets out a number of possibilities for joining, extending, and enhancing the larger research conversations with and about Indigenous peoples in ways that will fully harness Dalhousie's existing and future potential in this rapidly advancing and vital area of research.

1.1 Parameters of the Inventory and Environmental Scan

The Need to Know about Indigenous Peoples Research, Across Dalhousie and Beyond

The original impetus for this study grew, out of a meeting held at Dalhousie University in the Spring of 2010, organized by the Atlantic Aboriginal Economic Development Integrated Research Program (AAEDIRP), an arm of the Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs and hosted by Dalhousie's Research Services and the Faculty of Management. Attending this meeting were Dalhousie faculty members, staff, and students as well as representatives of AAEDIRP. A very high level of enthusiasm for developing a campus-wide network was expressed in the meeting, while at the same time recognizing that this very kind of conversation had never properly taken place at Dalhousie, and that many in the room were meeting each other for the first time, in spite of their common research interests.

It was clear that there was an intense need to know what was going on in research related to Indigenous peoples at Dalhousie, and how these activities fit into academic programmes, and research activities happening in multiple local, national, and international contexts. Up to that time, there was no centralized documentation on the extent of involvement in research, teaching, or other activities related to Indigenous peoples at Dalhousie.

With research development support from the office of the Vice President (Research), the original objectives of this study were to survey and produce "an inventory of research, teaching, administrative activities at Dalhousie in relation to Aboriginal peoples' issues, as well as a more general survey of regional university activities in this area, and some documenting of other university's models for organizing such activities". As the work toward this study unfolded, it became clear that the basic inventory work would take up the lion's share of the limited resources (i.e. support for one graduate research assistant) available to the ad hoc Steering Group that came to lead this initiative. The report also offers consideration of the regional university action in this area, and consideration of a number of university models, specifically Memorial University, the University of Victoria, the University of British Columbia, and Trent University. It also provides substantial contextualization in regard to the institutional, regional, legal and political settings in which Dalhousie activities take place. Additional steps, contingent on funding could include inventories of: 1) publications on Indigenous issues over the past decade; 2) funded research on Indigenous issues during the same timespan; 3) graduate student and other

student research / topical studies engagement — this latter acknowledging what the committee perceives as a very strong and growing graduate and undergraduate interest and demand for Faculty supervisors and courses in this area; 4) number of Indigenous scholars recruited to Faculty positions; 5) number of Indigenous staff employed at the university. It is also worth noting that at the same time that this work was going forward, the Office of the President and Vice President (Academic) and Provost, undertook a separate survey and cataloguing of services and initiatives at Dalhousie related to the Indigenous student education and experience.

The initial meeting with AAEDIRP has to be understood as part of a larger trend toward Indigenous engagement regionally and nationally. It can be seen as an expression of a much larger shift in the regional, national, and international environment for research addressed to or involving Indigenous peoples. For example, there are wider movements at the level of the United Nations, including the 2007 ratification of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples (which Canada finally formally endorsed in 2011), and here in Canada there are Aboriginal rights and title developments, from Canada's commitments to reconcile relations with Indigenous peoples via the Indian Residential Schools Settlement, from higher education policy initiatives of Indigenous organizations including the Assembly of First Nations, and from Treaty negotiating processes involving the federal and provincial governments and First Nations across the country.²

Although a preliminary step for Dalhousie, this inventory and report is offered as a starting point for more pragmatic discussions, both with Indigenous peoples' organizations and communities, and with other universities and research institutions in the region. Moreover, such an inventory will help with future institutional planning and implementation regarding Indigenous peoples' engagement at Dalhousie.

1.2 Steering Group

The original Ad hoc Steering Committee comprised of Dr. Brian Noble (Sociology and Social Anthropology), Dr. Heather Castleden (Resource and Environmental Studies) and Dr. Debbie Martin (Health and Human Performance) was supported by a research assistant, Rebecca Thomas. As the project began to take shape, the steering committee expanded to include Ms. Kara Paul (Coordinator, Aboriginal Health Science Initiative) who has provided a crucial Mi'kmaq voice on the committee, and Dr. Fred Wien (Emeritus Professor, School of Social

² The term "Indigenous peoples" has been used in this report to capture all those peoples who are considered the original or first peoples in their lands. "Aboriginal" is used in reference to Canadian law as it is defined in the Constitution Act (1982). "Indian" is used where it is part of an historic legal or administrative terminology. While the use of terms has been and remains complex and often debated, in general, "Indigenous peoples" is becoming by far the most widespread term in use in the academy nationally and internationally, and as well among representative organizations of Indigenous peoples, and we adopt that usage in keeping with this trend.

Work) who offers more than 30 years of experience both in Dalhousie's research engagement with Indigenous peoples, and in wider regional and national initiatives, including serving as a Senior Researcher for the Royal Commission on Aboriginal peoples in the 1990s. The committee was expanded in order to build a more comprehensive steering group that would be better able to make feasible cross-institutional recommendations to the university once the data were compiled and analyzed.

2.0 How We Conducted the Inventory and Environmental Scan

The central methodology informing this study was that of a cross-institutional survey grounded in self-reporting from the Dalhousie research community. The survey was augmented by qualitative observations via a review of Dalhousie webpages, and also based on the expertise and observations offered by Steering Group members. The Indigenous Peoples Research Engagement project began in July 2010, with data gathering and compiling continuing through February 2011.³

Preliminary work to frame the cross-institutional scan for information began at the end of July 2010. In the earliest stages of the project, information was collected by navigating through Dalhousie University's website, cataloguing relevant services and research, curriculum, policies, and Indigenous student funding. Dalhousie's main webpage does not have any visible links in relation to Indigenous studies or Indigenous peoples, research or students. In order to find information related to Indigenous issues, the search began in the research section of the website. The Dalhousie research website includes a list of the top ten most recent awards, one of which is a multi-million dollar CIHR grant on Aboriginal Economic Development directed by Dr. Fred Wien of the School of Social Work. Aside from this, it appears as though there is no showcase to highlight Indigenous peoples research at Dalhousie. In order to isolate current research and other Indigenous issues on the website, key terms were processed through Dalhousie's search engine which is located on the university's homepage.

In order to locate information on Indigenous issues, key terms, such as "Aboriginal", "First Nation" or "First Nation+Student Services", and "Indigenous" or "Indigenous+courses", were entered, which then produced a list of hyperlinks based on relevance according to Dalhousie's server. This method yielded information on the various programs targeted to Indigenous students; the Transition Year Program (TYP) and the Aboriginal Health Science Initiative (AHSI), for example. Since the web-based scan produced very limited results for research

³ The Committee's work was delayed from February through August 2011 for external reasons, but resumed in September of 2011.

underway at Dalhousie, a second method was devised in order to specifically target this field; that is, to appeal directly to university faculty for information.

We devised a call for information that took part in three steps. First, there was a trial period (August-September 2010) during which an initial call was distributed to the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences in order to test the effectiveness of this method. After a successful response, the call was circulated to the rest of the university via Research Services, sent out to all of the Deans' offices (all Faculty representatives of the Dean's Research Advisory Council). The information we received was heavily weighted with research that was being conducted or had been conducted by individual faculty members at Dalhousie, as opposed to specific research groups or centres. The initial call was sent out in August 2010 while many professors were preparing for the upcoming 2010/2011 academic year, which is likely to have put limits on our rate of response. It is for this reason that we sent out a second call for information in October, 2010 as a reminder to faculty who may not have responded to the initial call. To add further verification and qualitative dimensions, this method was followed up with personal emails (October-November) to faculty at Dalhousie known to be involved in research involving Indigenous Peoples.

The call method proved to be very effective at contacting full-time faculty at Dalhousie, however, it failed to access research staff and employees at the university who were not full-time or part-time Faculty members. As a result it was noted at one of our Steering Committee meetings that some key programs, such as the Aboriginal Health Sciences Initiative (which includes research activities) coordinated by Kara Paul, fell through the cracks because the project's coordinator was listed as "staff" and not "Faculty". As noted, Ms. Paul was then invited to join the Steering Committee to help us fill these now-apparent gaps, but also to ensure we had the invaluable experience from a colleague who is Mi'kmaq with many direct connections to Mi'kmaq programmes elsewhere in the region.

The August call yielded 27 responses from full-time and part-time faculty and staff at the university. The October call yielded a further 13 responses. The method resulted in an influx of information from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, the Faculty of Management, the School of Architecture, the School of Social Work, School of Nursing, Faculties of Law, Medicine and Dentistry, and the School of Health and Human Performance. However, there was no input from the Faculty of Science, and no individual respondents from that Faculty, nor from the Faculty of Engineering at that time. Further attempts to elicit any information from the Faculty of Science proved unfruitful. However, in due course through direct contact, two researchers in the Faculty of Engineering were identified as engaging in research related to Indigenous peoples. This then brought the combined total to 41 individual researchers (not including staff and graduate student researchers) at Dalhousie engaged in a direct and significant

form of research related to Indigenous peoples. A further 12 individuals with less direct involvement were identified, bringing the total to 53.

3.0 Respondents and General Levels of Involvement

Given the foregoing discussion of the scan methodology employed, a critical caveat in reading the data is that the findings provided here have to be understood as being based principally on self-reporting by those who actually responded to the calls. The figures, tables, and charts therefore should **only be regarded as estimates and approximations based on this self-reporting pool of respondents**. There may well be other researchers and activities occurring at Dalhousie who are not captured in this report. Further locating, tracking and recording of those activities are recommended for subsequent inventories. The approximations, nonetheless, provide helpful guidance for understanding the range and concentration of researchers and research activities in the University.

We learned that there was a large variety of research taking place at Dalhousie. The most apparent observation is that there appears to be a groundswell of research going on at Dalhousie University but with little communication and coordination between researchers, administrative units, or research services. The following two tables show who responded to the call and the level or degree of involvement in Indigenous peoples research for each researcher.

We distinguished these levels according to the following criteria:

1. People with direct involvement in Indigenous research (n = 41) are those who have run entire research projects dedicated to Indigenous issues, or who have an appointment designating such an engagement (Table 3.1).

2. People with indirect involvement in Indigenous research (n = 12) include those who, for instance, have components or sections of their research that involve Indigenous people or issues but do not have a central engagement with Indigenous peoples issues or research (Table 3.2). In some instances, these involvements dovetail with teaching and curriculum offerings, but entail some measure of research engagement as well.

Checked names are those who directly responded to the call. Those without checks are known to undertake research related to Indigenous peoples, but who did not respond to the call.

Table 3.1 Direct Involvement in Indigenous Peoples Research⁴

Person	Department
√ Attenborough, R.	Medicine
√ Baikie G.	School of Social Work
Beazley, K.	Management, SRES
√ Cameron, J.	IDS
√ Campbell, C.	History
√ Castleden, H.	Management, SRES
√ Clairmont, D.*	SOSA
√ Devlin, R.	Law
√ Doyle-Bedwell, P.	TYP/Continuing Ed
√ Durier-Copp, M.	Management
√ Filiaggi, M.	Bio-Medical Engineering
√ Furrow, M.	English
√ Gagnon, G.	Engineering
√ Greenfield, B.	English
√ Ikeda, J.	Resilience Center
√ Irvine, D.	English
Jameson, R.	Engineering
√ Kay-Raining Bird	Human Communication Disorders
√ Kroeker, R.	Architecture
Kraglund, F.	Dentistry
√ Latimer, M.	Nursing
Llewellyn, J.	Law
√ MacDonald, N.	School of Social Work
√ MacIntosh, C.	Law
MacLachlan, R.	Medicine

⁴ As at June 30, 2011.

√	Martin, D.	Faculty of Health Professions
	McNally, M.	Dentistry
	Moore, C. (Program coordinator)	AAHRP
√	Noble, B.	SOSA
√	Oguamanam, C.	Law
√	Palermo, F.	Architecture
	Paul, K. (Program coordinator)	AHSI
√	Ramos, H.	SOSA
√	Sketris, I.	Pharmacy
√	Steenbeek, A.	Nursing
√	Tomblin Murphy, G.	Nursing
√	Vanderzwaag, D.	Law
√	Vukic, A.	Nursing
√	Wien, F. *	School of Social Work
	Williams-Lorde, M. (Programme Director)	Law/ IB&M Programme
	Wunker, E.	English

Table 3.2 Indirect Involvement in Indigenous Peoples Research⁵

Person	Department
Crago, M.	VP Research
Dawson, C.	English
Fanning, L.	SRES
√ Fitting, E.	SOSA
√ Harman, K.	Physiotherapy
√ Hartingan-Rogers, J.	Nursing
√ Helland, C.	SOSA
Huish, B.	IDS
√ Matteucci, P.	French
Murphy, C.	SOSA
√ O'Brian, P.	Classics
Unger, M.	Social Work

4.0 Bird's-eye Views of Research Activity Across the Faculties

The type of research being conducted was incredibly diverse, ranging anywhere from First Nations poetry and land-use planning to community outreach and dental hygiene. Each call for information yielded an encouraging number of respondents who are involved in some form of research and / or curriculum addressing Indigenous peoples. Those involved represent a fraction of the Faculty and staff at Dalhousie. Table 4.1 is a proportionate representation of the total of respondents and their departments' total Faculty as well as the university's total full-time and part-time Faculty. We used the number of respondents in proportion to the total Faculty in the department and then the university. As noted elsewhere, these are not exact figures, but rather approximations. They are presented only to give a sense of proportion.

⁵ As at June 30, 2011

Table 4.1: Percentage and proportionate Faculty representation.

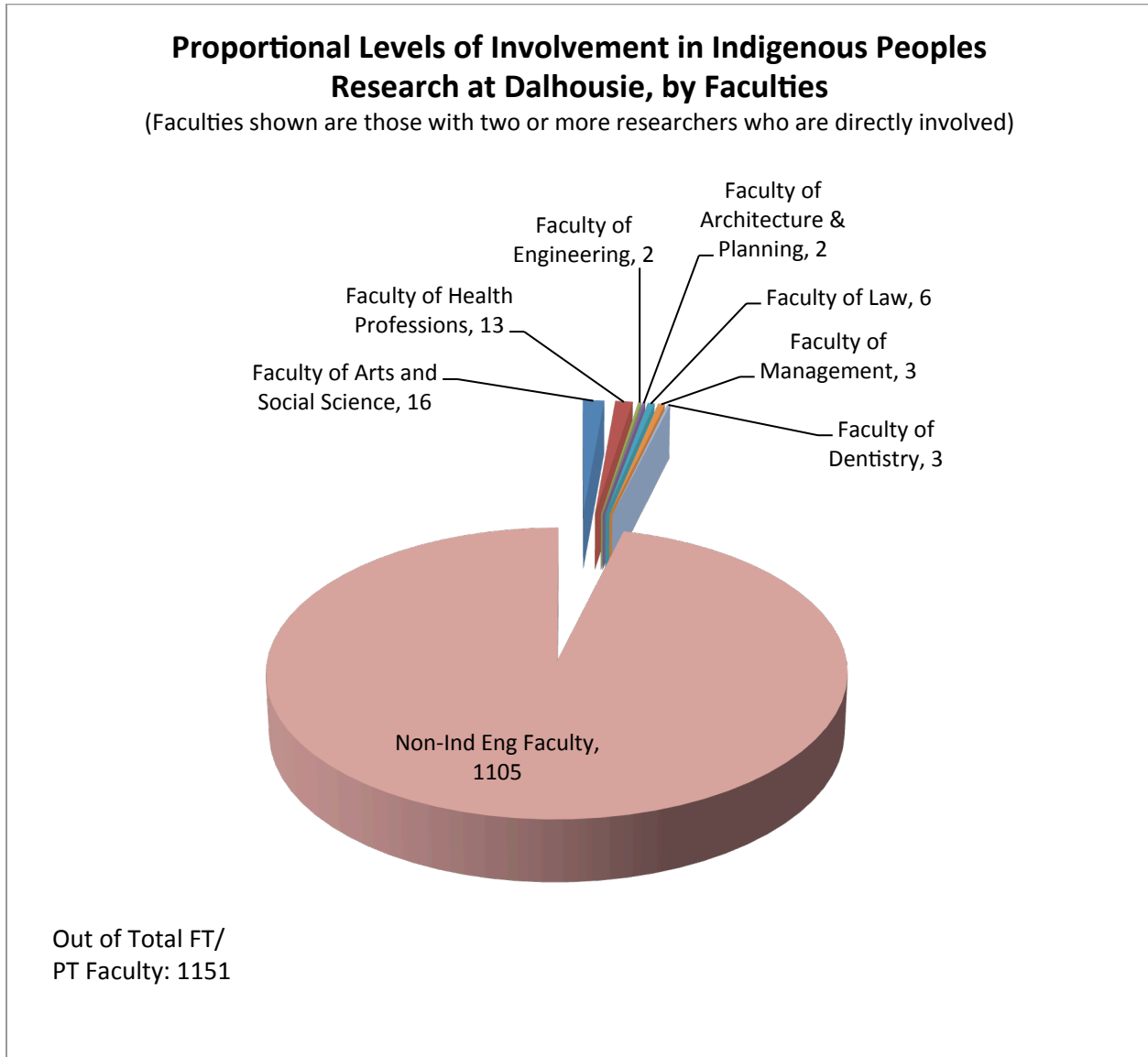
*Full-time and Part-time faculty total 1151 individuals at the university results in equivalent of 4.6% this number active in research involving Indigenous peoples, based on 53 researchers / 1151. Faculties are in bold. Selected units within faculties are in regular font.

Department/Faculty	Proportion	Faculty % of FT/PT Faculty*
Faculty of Architecture & Planning	2/23 (~8.7%)	~0.17% of Total FT/PT
Faculty of Arts and Social Science	16/181 (~8.8%)	~1.40% of Total FT/PT
SOSA	5/17	
English	5/22	
French / Italian	2/14	
History	1/21	
IDS	2/5	
Classics	1/9	
Faculty of Dentistry	3/39 (~7.6%)	~0.26% of Total FT/PT
Faculty of Engineering	2/87 (~2.3%)	~0.17% of Total FT/PT
Faculty of Health Professions	13/148 (~8.8%)	~1.13% Total FT/PT
Health and Human Performance	1/25	
Pharmacy	1/15	
School of Social Work	4/14	
Human Communication Disorders	1/11	
Nursing	5/43	
Faculty of Law	6/42 (~14.3%)	~0.52% of Total FT/PT
Faculty of Management	3/74 (~4.0%)	~0.26% Total FT/PT
Faculty of Medicine	2/312 (~0.64%)	~0.17% Total FT/PT

4.1 Graphic Views

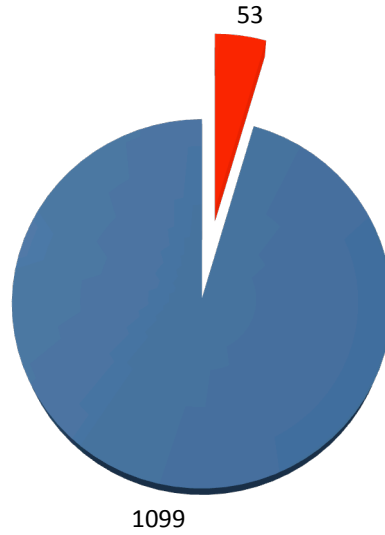
Following are a series of charts showing the percentages of Faculty members involved in a significant level of research with Indigenous peoples at Dalhousie University, first in relation to the entire Full-time / Part-time Faculty complement of Dalhousie University, and then in relation to the specific Research-oriented Faculties, from which we were able to gather responses.

**** Please NOTE:** *These charted outputs are limited to those who a) responded to the scan plus b) those who did not respond but who the committee was able to identify.*



Total Reported Involvement in Indigenous Peoples Research at Dalhousie

Total Faculty: 1151



Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Total Reported Involvement in Indigenous Peoples Research

Total Faculty: 181



Faculty of Health Professions

Total Reported Involvement in Indigenous Peoples Research

Total Faculty: 148



Faculty of Management

Total Reported Involvement in Indigenous Peoples Research

Total Faculty: 74





5.0 Discussion and Qualitative Dimensions of Findings

A substantial number of profiles of the research undertaken by Faculty members responding to the calls were gathered together in the course of this scan. In contrast to general involvement in the area, what follows is guidance on the *degree of engagement* by researchers with Indigenous peoples, or on matters relevant to Indigenous peoples.

At the time of this report's release, Research Services has begun to generate some data on grants and funding received by various researchers at Dalhousie, however, the search tool for this needs considerable refinement and management to ensure all relevant data are included, and it may well be missing key projects which do not contain relevant keywords in their titles, therefore making them inaccessible to the search tool. Data on size of grants can also be deceiving: some vitally important research and publishing can be achieved with minimal funding, while large grants may reflect costs that are only indirectly research-generative. We suggest that further information and a refined technique for scanning and collating funding received in a meaningful way be undertaken to gauge the relative scales and distribution of activities across the campus.

5.1 Two Levels of Engagement

There are two recognizable levels of research engagement taking place at Dalhousie. The first level is primary, intensive research engagement. There are 15 Faculty researchers and research associates at Dalhousie that maintain a significant specialization in Indigenous research. The next level is secondary research engagement, comprising 38 Faculty members and researchers who have interests that include Indigenous components but are not solely focused on them. At both these levels, engagement with Indigenous research issues is often also embedded in course content and committee work.

5.1.1 Primary / Intensive Research Engagement

There are a number of Faculty and professional researchers employed at Dalhousie University who specialize in Indigenous research or work with Indigenous communities. These 15 individuals — six of whom are Indigenous — have posts that are understood to include direct involvement with Indigenous peoples or related issues. This involvement is also reflected in their curriculum, program initiatives and publications. These individuals are considered “experts” in this arena and are often expected to contribute to matters within their respective Faculties, or across the institution, related to Indigenous peoples, including matters of policy or new initiatives targeted towards Indigenous students and communities.

Table 5.1a University Personnel with Intensive Engagements in Indigenous Peoples Research (*designates personnel in research coordinating roles)

Person	Academic Unit
Baikie, G., Assistant Professor	Social Work
Castleden, H., Assistant Professor	Management, SRES
Clairmont, D. Professor Emeritus	Sociology
Doyle-Bedwell, P., Associate Professor	Cont. Education, TYP
Llewellyn, J., Associate Professor	Law
MacDonald, N., Assistant Professor	Social Work
MacIntosh, C., Associate Professor	Law
MacLachlan, R., Associate Professor	Medicine
Martin, D., Assistant Professor	Health & Human Performance
Moore, C., * Director/Coordinator	AAHRP/PARP
Noble, B., Associate Professor	SOSA
Paul, K., * Programme Coordinator	AHSI
Steenbeek, A., Associate Professor	Nursing
Wien, F., Professor Emeritus	Social Work
Williams-Lorde, M., Associate Professor	Law

5.1.2 Secondary Research Engagement

A considerably larger number of Faculty (38/53) are involved in secondary Indigenous research engagement. Many researchers responded to the first and second call noting research projects on Indigenous issues in which they were involved but which extended beyond their principle specializations. Some researchers have components of broad ranging projects that also include Indigenous peoples. For example, a project focussing on the aging Canadian population is being conducted in Northern Canada where there is a large Inuit population, but addresses both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Therefore, a large section of this research includes Indigenous peoples without it being the sole group addressed in the study.

At the secondary level (as with the primary / intensive level) elements of research may also be embedded in curriculum and course work within undergraduate and graduate degree programs as well as training initiatives, professional development, etc. A course may not be fully dedicated to

an Indigenous theme; however, there may be aspects of the course that have an Indigenous component. For example, a recently offered course in Canadian Literature is not devoted to Indigenous peoples, but does feature Indigenous authors. Also, the Dalhousie Medical School has a seminar that attempts to educate medical students about cultural sensitivity when treating Indigenous patients. There is, in addition, the Arctic Nursing program offered in Iqaluit, engaging Inuit students. That being said, this type of embedded research is found in only a small fraction of the total courses and programs available at Dalhousie.⁶

5.2 Looking Behind the Recent Groundswell

The rising involvement in research related to Indigenous peoples at Dalhousie coincides with a larger contemporary transformation in recognition of the social, historical, economic, environmental conditions faced by Indigenous peoples both in Canada and internationally. It also coincides with significant transformations in policy, funding, and community-sourced efforts to reconcile disparities in relations with First Peoples that are arising in multiple sectors of Canadian social, economic, and governmental action.

5.2.1 Local to Global Transformations

Worldwide, Indigenous peoples' voices are growing stronger. Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians alike have witnessed the Government of Canada become a "late" signatory to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2010 – a declaration that acknowledges the un-extinguished rights of Indigenous peoples around the world to their lands, waters and resources, as well as the right to engage in activities that are aligned with their cultural beliefs and values. As well, Canada has taken great strides to address historical wrongs through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), established as a component of the Indian Residential Schooling Settlement Agreement, and following after the 2008 formal apology given by the Canadian Prime Minister to all Indigenous peoples and their children who have been affected by the residential school system in Canada.

Notwithstanding these key events, it is important to recognize that there still exist many health, social, economic and political disparities between Indigenous peoples and their non-Indigenous counterparts, which demand research initiatives that begin to address these

⁶ One reviewer of a draft of this report notes: "It is important to recognize that cross-cultural and critical pedagogy theory and practice actually argues that Indigenous (or Other content) needs to be embedded throughout a curriculum and not relegated to a specialty course or chapter. In other words a specialty course may be no different than a specialty module or a specialty chapter within a textbook. Indigenous (or Other content) should form the basis of a normalized curriculum (as opposed to the norm being EuroAmerican, with everything else being specialized."

unacceptable disparities. As indicated by this report, there is a great deal of research happening at Dalhousie that is attempting to do just that – and attempting to do so by invoking the very same principles —that have led to such significant strides as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (which Canada endorsed in 2010) and the TRC (including individual and collective rights, the right to self-determination, the right to life, to sustaining distinct cultures and polities and spiritual lives, the right to control their own community’s education, the right to self-governance and the securing of sound economic livelihoods, and much more).

Across Canada, indeed around the world, research conducted by, with and for Indigenous peoples is growing. Behind this recent groundswell is a concerted movement by Indigenous peoples and their non-Indigenous allies to re-shape *how* Indigenous research is conducted – right from the questions that get asked, to the methodologies that develop, and perhaps most importantly, to what happens with the research once it is completed.⁷ No longer is it acceptable for researchers to devise research projects that describe and detail the lives of Indigenous peoples without their knowledge or consent. No longer are Indigenous peoples satisfied to watch research justify the unfettered development of their ancestral lands and waters without their engagement in *how* those lands and waters will be used, and how they (and their children’s children) will be impacted by those developments. Indeed, rising numbers of Indigenous academics in Canada — though still small in number at Dalhousie – are challenging the scholarly world with fundamental questions of and alternatives to what counts as legitimate knowledge, who can and who does carry such knowledge.

As indicated by the research contributions illuminated by this report, there are many members of the Dalhousie community engaging Indigenous communities. But as noted by the findings of this report, these efforts are largely occurring in isolation from one another. Given the research expertise shown by the Dalhousie faculty and staff to date, it is imperative that these isolated voices be infused with financial, infrastructure and administrative resource supports that can augment the current successes. The importance of more effectively connecting faculty and staff who are already engaged in Indigenous research promises to generate synergies and, in all likelihood, new research projects and funding opportunities that otherwise would not exist, especially at a moment when funding agencies are placing a high premium on partnerships, collaborative, cross-disciplinary, and community-based approaches in their funding assessments. It is equally critical that Dalhousie researchers who undertake research with Indigenous peoples

⁷ One reviewer noted: “This has been evidenced by ethical research processes involving Indigenous peoples that have played out in the Tri Council’s new Policy Statement on the Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (especially Chapter 9: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada). Also worth noting is the wellspring of relatively recent scholarship of Indigenous academics who are challenging the pillars of academia with questions such as: ‘What is knowledge? Who is a knower? What is known/not known? Who can and should know?’ ”

present a united front that deems research ‘on’ Indigenous peoples, done simply for the purpose of advancing academic knowledge, is not acceptable within our institution. In keeping with initiatives and trends at highly-engaged universities across Canada, Dalhousie must continue to advance, conduct and disseminate Indigenous research in close collaboration with Indigenous peoples themselves. It must also be understood that faculty and staff engaged in Indigenous research at Dalhousie will be called upon to work with Indigenous peoples in ways that extend beyond traditional research activities, and that merit recognition in the tenure and promotion system beyond conventional indicators. It is an opportune time for Dalhousie to keep up with this recent groundswell of support for Indigenous research, and to begin to alter the institutional culture in manners that value the work of reconciliation and partnered research with Indigenous peoples, and that value Indigenous knowledge practices in and of themselves, conducted with, by and for Indigenous peoples.⁸

5.2.2 Reconciliation: Indigenous Peoples Research at Dalhousie in Political, Legal, Moral Context

While many Indigenous people are physically disconnected from their traditional lands and have ended up in Halifax (or the Atlantic region) precisely because of colonial conditions, it also must be stressed that Dalhousie has to acknowledge and support its special relationship with Mi’kmaq peoples, given the University has been established on traditional Mi’kmaq territory.

Since the passage in 1982 of the Canadian Constitution Act and within that s.35(1) acknowledging existing Aboriginal and Treaty rights and title, jurisdictions across Canada have been moving with Indigenous peoples in their corresponding territories through a range of negotiations — at times in response or leading to litigation — to fulfill and reconcile obligations in relations to Indigenous peoples in Canada. Among these negotiating and mutual discussion processes are the “Made in Nova Scotia” process, and the Tripartite Forum, involving Mi’kmaq peoples, the Federal Crown, and the Province of Nova Scotia. Both of these processes respond largely to existing historic Treaty responsibilities between the Crown and the Mi’kmaq, and are also built on responsibilities flowing from the Royal Proclamation (1763). A number of

⁸ While this inventory is meant to be addressed to research activities, support for research alone is insufficient, as noted by one reviewer on adraft of this report: “for any real change to take place scholars involved in this work have to be working internally as well to create an institutional culture that values Indigenous ways of knowing and practice contributions. The university has to be culturally re-shaped in a manner that values and respects Indigenous peoples and nations as philosophers – knowers, we can’t just continue to teach students ‘about’ Indigenous peoples from the research we do – we have to contribute to shaping institutional , societal , professional values , beliefs and perspectives. A good way to think about this is the context of the typical mainstream university knowledge and teaching about the natural environment. We are now beginning to recognize Indigenous peoples’ knowledge of the environment and how humans should relate to the earth. This knowledge needs to be central to the mindset of the institution and the curriculum not in peripheral courses or modules ‘about’ Indigenous peoples.”

Supreme Court decisions have affirmed many of the duties and rights arising from these fundamental legal instruments. Dalhousie University, as an institution established by Provincial Statute and situated on Mi'kmaq lands, arguably is morally, and potentially legally bound, to respond to and participate in these processes — this responsiveness extends to all aspects of its mandate from research, to curriculum and educational delivery, to services offered to Mi'kmaq and other Indigenous peoples.

Perhaps as important as these formal matters, Canada and Canadians of all sorts are presently engaged in an historic set of conversations around reconciliation of relations between Indigenous peoples and the larger non-Indigenous citizenry as well as the Crown itself. The groundswell in research engagement visible at Dalhousie (and elsewhere in Canada) is in part a manifestation of the urgency to reconcile relations, and is also in large measure informing the many policies and initiatives that are causing a shift in and new attention to the research pertaining to, and relevant to Indigenous peoples. Added to this, there are rising student demands — at both undergraduate and graduate levels – to study and engage these histories and relations both locally and internationally, and to offer positive interventions in support of the move to reconciliation.

Dalhousie, the leading academic and research institution in Nova Scotia, the Maritimes, and arguably in all of Atlantic Canada, has an opportunity (and an obligation?) to set an example in redressing these historic moral responsibilities, and take the lead regionally by supporting and enhancing research engagement with Indigenous peoples. Whether it is in engaging with issues relevant to Mi'kmaq people, to urban Indigenous people, or to other Indigenous peoples in the Atlantic region, including the Innu, Inuit, Métis, Maliseet, Passamaquoddy and those Indigenous peoples who have moved from other parts of Canada to reside in this region.

5.3 Diversity, Scale and Distribution of Indigenous Research Across the Institution

Findings in this inventory point to how research issues related to Indigenous peoples spans the intellectual and disciplinary gamut of scholarship at Dalhousie. Three longstanding mainstays of research related to Indigenous peoples notable at institutions elsewhere in Canada are also at play at Dalhousie: 1) Social, legal, economic and humanist research pertaining to the rights, histories, practices of Indigenous peoples and their relations with other societies, cultures and polities; 2) Environmental, resource, and land-related research; 3) Health and medical research pertaining to Indigenous peoples. While there are researchers who engage with Indigenous peoples' research methodologies, no formalized programming in Indigenous studies is present at Dalhousie. Consequently a core and comprehensive research approach with, by, concerning, and relevant to

Indigenous peoples — including Indigenous methodologies and pedagogies— is absent, apart from the approaches that might be applied by individual researchers.

Research involving Indigenous peoples in Canada and internationally is undergoing a rapid transformation, from research ‘on’ to research ‘with, by and often for’ Indigenous peoples. Researchers are now attempting to carry out respectful and relevant projects in partnership with Indigenous peoples, communities, and organizations using community-based participatory methodologies. This trend is reflected as well in the kinds of research undertaken by individual researchers and research teams at Dalhousie.

Debate about what constitutes ‘ethically sound’ Indigenous research in theory and how to operationalize such an approach is emerging in the peer-reviewed and grey literature, and also around many water coolers in the academy and in the boardrooms of Indigenous communities. These issues are now presenting new and necessary challenges to the formal ethics review system at Dalhousie — actively raised by many scholars across the university — although there has yet to be a systematic consideration on implementing such requirements.

With the number of university personnel directly or indirectly involved in Indigenous research across the university, it is worth asking the question: Is the level of commitment by the University administration adequate? Put more precisely:

- a) Is there adequate commitment and involvement relative to the various key areas noted to support both high budget and low budget initiatives?;
- b) Is there adequate commitment and involvement in terms of setting a research agenda that involves Indigenous issues of regional, national, or international / global character? (and how much is enough?);
- c) Is there adequate commitment and involvement in relation to the social, historical, legal-political situation in which Dalhousie is located, and to which the institution ought to be considering its moral (if not legal) duty to contribute — in this regard, one must ask what degree of engagement is sufficient in relation to Mi’kmaq, and also to Metis people, who have notable rights in Nova Scotia and the region. All of this flows from the combined fact of Dalhousie’s location, most notably, on Mi’kmaq lands, from the context of historic Peace and Friendship Treaties, implied duties from the Royal Proclamation (1763), the Tripartite Comprehensive treaty negotiation underway, and all of this is underwritten by Canada’s Constitution Act, s.35, and attendant moral-legal obligations.⁹

⁹ See Mi’kmaq Rights Initiative pages at: <http://www.mikmaqrights.com/page.asp?ID=17>

The question, then, of adequacy is difficult to answer. But it is worth noting that in the case of full-time university Faculty members engaged in this area, four of the 12 individuals¹⁰ are recent appointments (i.e. in the past two years) with only one of them being a newly created position. Only four faculty members at Dalhousie are Indigenous scholars: Prof. G. Baikie (Inuit); Prof. P Doyle-Bedwell (Mi'kmaq); Prof. N. MacDonald (Mi'kmaq); and Dr. D. Martin (Inuit-Métis). It is the committee's observation, on the basis of these personnel matters, that relative to other research-intensive, PhD/MD-granting institutions in Canada, Dalhousie's level of Indigenous engagement is lagging.

At a time when the demographics of university-based research personnel is in transition, we need to better understand the debates as well as the risks and benefits for researchers contemplating careers in research involving Indigenous peoples. We need a clear understanding of the institutional barriers so that we may take action towards reducing or removing them. In short, we need to ask, how/does this university create a welcoming environment for Indigenous scholars, Indigenous students, and Indigenous communities wanting to draw on the wealth of research expertise here. If we come up wanting in our response, we need to make the necessary changes with long-term commitment and investment from the Board of Directors, the University Senate, senior administration, and the Deans across campus.

6.0 Dalhousie's Engagement in Context

6.1 Regional Contexts

Dalhousie is the largest university in the Maritimes, and one of the two largest in Atlantic Canada alongside Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN). Because of its size and status, it is often a destination for undergraduate students and students who wish to continue their education and pursue a degree beyond a Bachelor's Degree. It is for this reason that in addition to conducting a Dalhousie-wide scan, we also conducted a preliminary regional scan in order to see how other institutions compare. While we did not review carefully the programmes at MUN, a recent Presidential Task Force on Aboriginal Initiatives lists 22 recommendations for improvement of strategic initiatives at MUN, providing a strong indication that MUN is moving toward a university environment that recognizes the importance of engaging with Indigenous communities, particularly those within the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Most recently, they have appointed MUN's first special advisor for Aboriginal Affairs. In this regard, Dalhousie University might well look towards MUN's recent efforts to determine how best to move forward.

¹⁰ The number 12 is derived from table 5.1a, noting that it lists 14 researchers, two of whom are emeritus professors (Clairmont, Wien).

Many universities in the Maritimes — the higher education district in which Dalhousie operates – offer Master’s programs, but none offer a level of graduate programming comparable to Dalhousie, suggesting Dalhousie is poised to make advances in this thematic area. Acadia University, Saint Mary’s University, Mount Saint Vincent University and The Nova Scotia Agricultural College all offer some form or minor scholarship for Indigenous students and all, with the exception of the Nova Scotia Agricultural College, have some curricula dedicated to Indigenous studies. Only a few have specific faculty hired who specialized in Indigenous themed research. There are four Universities, however, that have extensive programs that deal with Indigenous studies: Cape Breton University; Saint Francis Xavier; Saint Thomas University; and the University of New Brunswick.

Cape Breton University has an administrative unit called the Unama’ki College of Cape Breton University. This program:

*strives to meet the needs of the Mi'kmaw communities of Mi'kma'ki, which includes Atlantic Canada, Quebec, and parts of New England. The Unama'ki College of Cape Breton University has made it possible for Mi'kmaw students, educators, scholars, and researchers of Mi'kmaw cosmology to establish a curriculum and research agenda which contributes to the achievement of educational goals set by Mi'kmaw communities.*¹¹

Housed at CBU is the Mi’kmaq Grand Council-appointed Mi’kmaq Ethics Watch, which ensures that any data collection or research the involves Mi’kmaq peoples is conducted in a way that adheres to the principles and protocols that protect the integrity and cultural knowledge of the various Mi’kmaq communities.¹²

Saint Francis Xavier University also has specialized programs with an Indigenous focus. The school has a program entitled “the First Nations Focus”. The Bachelor of Education Program has entered into partnership with the Mi’kmaq Kina’matnewey (Mi’kmaq Education Advising Body), now offers a part-time BEd cohort with math science focus for Mi’kmaq students, First Nation Student Success Partnership and the Mi’kmaq Language Pedagogy. The Mi’kmaq Kina’matnewey holds a position on the Xavier Teachers Education Advisory Committee. The School of Nursing is currently working to incorporate the cultural safe curriculum outlined by the Aboriginal Nursing Association of Canada.

Saint Francis Xavier University has designated a Canada Research Chair in Indigenous peoples and Sustainable Communities. In addition to courses, the focus on First Nations, this

¹¹ See <http://mrc.uccb.ns.ca/mciprofile.html>, 2011.

¹² Mi’kmaq Ethics Watch site at: <http://www.cbu.ca/academics/mikmaq-studies/mikmaw-ethics-watch>.

university plans to develop out-reach courses that includes ethnographic fieldwork in partnership with surrounding Mi'kmaq communities.

In line with the development of out-reach courses to the Mi'kmaq communities is the new Indigenous Women In Community Leadership Program offered by the Coady International Institute, which is affiliated and housed within St. FX. The focus of the program is to engage the next generation of Aboriginal women leaders and provide them with practical leadership skills and experience so that they can promote community development from within.¹³

Saint Thomas University offers a number of programs with Mi'kmaq and/or Maliseet focus. This school has an Endowed Chair in Native Studies as well as a Native Studies academic program and the Mi'kmaq Maliseet Bachelor of Social Work program. The Mi'kmaq/Maliseet Bachelor of Social Work (MMBSW) Programme is designed for First Nation individuals in the Maritime Provinces and Quebec, who are currently working or interested in working in social work or related positions in areas such as child and family services, addictions, health, social development or education¹⁴. Dalhousie University's School of Social Work has collaborated with St. Thomas in the design and implementation of the program for the past 16 years; it has now admitted its third cohort of students.

Similar to the CBU's Unamak'i College is the University of New Brunswick's Mi'kmaq-Maliseet Institute (MMI). The Institute, open for 30 years, promotes growth and self-determination of First Nations through its programs, services and research.¹⁵ The programs offered at MMI are the one-year Bridging Year designed to help students gain entry to undergraduate programs, Bachelor of Education for First Nations, and a Certification in First Nations Business Administration.

It should also be noted that the Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU) has established a Working Committee on Aboriginal Education, with representation from most of the region's universities. The Committee is advisory to the AAU on matters affecting the education of Indigenous students, including issues ranging from recruitment, admissions, support and retention. Although this committee is addressed to Aboriginal Education, it is clear that Faculty members engaged in research are often also involved in curriculum and teaching, and that initiatives in this area should dovetail with those in the area of research.

Going forward, it was clear to the Steering Group that, if brought into coordination, the community of advanced research and teaching institutions across the Maritimes — and

¹³ See <http://www.stfx.ca/news/view/2535/>

¹⁴ See <http://www.mmbsw.ca>

¹⁵ See <http://www.unb.ca/fredericton/education/mmi/index.html>

potentially including Atlantic Canada — could generate vital synergies across the region. This will be further enhanced by taking careful steps to avoid unnecessary duplication or redundancy. Given its leading role generally in the research community, Dalhousie ought to take this lead in areas of Indigenous peoples research engagement.

6.2 National Contexts

The last decade in Canada has seen a rapid rise in the establishment of integrative University-level programmes committed to research and education related to Indigenous peoples. Among the leading players in Canada in this arena are: University of British Columbia, Trent University, University of Saskatchewan, and the University of Victoria. All of these institutions are responsive to regional Indigenous and First Nations communities, offering degree programmes at either or both undergraduate and graduate levels, with concomitant high levels of research and scholarship underway. All of them support academic units in Native Studies, Indigenous Studies, or First Nations Studies.¹⁶ Worth noting, there are no PhD granting institutions east of Quebec offering general programmes in First Nations / Indigenous peoples studies.

Suffice to say that Dalhousie is late in joining this movement, which is surprising given the university's prominence in Atlantic Canada where it is the logical candidate as an institutional leader for the region and therefore a potential national-scene player, and where there is presently a vacuum in such leadership. While Dalhousie offers the one noteworthy specialized programme in Mi'kmaq-Maliseet Social Work, it otherwise has no degrees or minors related to Indigenous peoples or First Nations — this, despite widespread student demand for studies in this area, despite the call from Aboriginal communities and organizations for programming and services in this area, and despite the existence of a community of experts across the institution available to support such programmes.

In addition to the national and international legal-political rights and treaty-obligation environment referred to already, there are at least four major impetuses at play in Canada compelling universities to engage in Indigenous peoples scholarship across the three pillars of research, teaching, and service:

- 1) National reconciliation movement after Canada's Apology to Indigenous peoples for policies and abusive treatment associated with Indian Residential Schooling;

¹⁶ See listing of Native Studies, Indigenous Studies, FN studies at: http://www.canadian-universities.net/Universities/Programs/Aboriginal_and_Native_Studies.html

- 2) AUCC initiative in higher education for Indigenous students, with the published report “Answering the Call”¹⁷;
- 3) Assembly of First Nations’ national priority in regard to education, including higher education. This is manifest in the regional Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs’ Secretariat push for university / Aboriginal joint programming; and
- 4) General public awareness, impatience, and shame with Canada’s ongoing inability to redress the conditions of poverty and marginalization faced by Indigenous peoples in Canada, in urban areas and in traditional territories, reserve, and non-urban local community settings.

There are indications that federal and provincial resources will be committed in these areas. In Nova Scotia, the Premier of the province has taken on the Aboriginal Affairs portfolio, signalling the centrality of this matter for government. The federal government has announced its intention to meet with the national Aboriginal leaders, most notably in response to initiatives of the Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn Atleo, to work toward a new agenda of relations and support, with education as a central area of concern.

The Tri Council has also made Indigenous research funding a priority. SSHRC has expanded the array of specialized funding programmes committed to Indigenous research, most notably collaborative research initiatives.¹⁸ The CIHR maintains the Institute of Aboriginal Peoples’ Health which offers major funding programmes, complementing other funding priorities within the CIHR mandate.¹⁹ NSERC has an Aboriginal Ambassadors program to fund Indigenous students from undergraduate scholarships to postdoctoral fellowships.

6.2.1. Three Models of Action

Outside Atlantic Canada, universities that have taken up the call in these areas – and which are, therefore, best poised to take advantage of the related opportunities for research development in this area – include the University of British Columbia (UBC), the University of Victoria, and Trent University.

Striking in each of these three universities is the establishment of impressive physical presences on each campus in the form of architecturally distinctive First Peoples’ Houses.²⁰

¹⁷ See AUCC programme statement: <http://www.aucc.ca/policy-issues/aboriginal-education/>. Also see 2010 “Answering the Call” report: www.aucc.ca/pdf/english/reports/2010/aboriginal_report_e.pdf

¹⁸ See SSHRC statement: http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/programs-programmes/priority_areas-domaines_prioritaires/aboriginal_research-recherche_autochtone-eng.aspx

¹⁹ See CIHR page: <http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/8668.html>

²⁰ Trent U. site at <http://www.trentu.ca/academic/nativestudies/enweying.htm>; UBC site at <http://www.longhouse.ubc.ca/>; UVic site at <http://web.uvic.ca/inaf/index.php/first-peoples-house>

However, it is the institutional planning and strategic approaches of each of these institutions that we consider in the profiles below, as potential comparables for development of strategic models for Dalhousie going forward.

It is also important to note that each of these universities launched institution-wide planning over several years, and as such they have advanced the implementation of their various strategies and initiatives.

University of British Columbia

UBC released its integrated Aboriginal Strategic Plan in December of 2008. It offers a strong model from a PhD/Professional University that is in many ways comparable (in the context of British Columbia) to Dalhousie (in the context of Atlantic Canada). The UBC plan identified the following areas of engagement as core to its development, and all of which are now actively being implemented to considerable success:

1. Pre-university, Recruitment and Access Initiatives
2. Student Support and Retention
3. Curriculum and Public Programming
4. Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Support
5. Research
6. Study and Work Climate
7. Community Relations
8. Internal and External Communications
9. Development Initiatives
10. Administration, Evaluation and Resources²¹

What is striking at UBC is that the initiative originated at the level of the University President's Office, but sought full and effective engagement with the entire university professoriate, as well as the pedagogical and research and regional community with engagements in this area. While UBC, like Dalhousie, has many major strategic priorities, the approach offered by UBC was targeted at bringing significant cross-institutional integration to this one thematic area, noting how the strategy:

seeks to articulate the UBC mission statement into meaningful practice... [to guide UBC's] engagement with Aboriginal peoples and communities, its inclusions and

²¹ UBC Aboriginal Strategic Plan, 17 December 2008, at pp.1-2. The original plan and implementation plan are accessible at: <http://aboriginal.ubc.ca/strategic-plan/>

*representations of Aboriginal histories, cultures, and understandings, and the education on Aboriginal issues it provides to all.*²²

Such an integrative model has merits for considering future planning at Dalhousie, in that it offers an example of how to bring greater cohesion both horizontally and vertically across the institution.

Research is specifically addressed in Section 5 of the UBC plan, emphasizing non-exploitative approaches, and indeed benefit-oriented approaches to engagement with Aboriginal people:

*University based research can be of substantial benefit to Aboriginal people and communities, but many Aboriginal communities remain circumspect about research initiatives based upon their experience of exploitive research practices common in the past and still pursued at points in the present. Models of more mutually beneficial collaborative research with communities, however, have been in operation at UBC and elsewhere for many years. UBC should continue to find ways to support research that respects and benefits Aboriginal communities. It should ensure that UBC researchers are not involved in the continuation of exploitative research practices.*²³

The subsidiary elements of the research strategy are noteworthy for Dalhousie consideration, though of course adjusted to meet with the local situation and relationships with Indigenous peoples and communities in the Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canadian setting:

5.1 An Aboriginal/community-based research group or institute welcoming the contributions of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal researchers should be established for the sharing of experiences, practices, and strategies, etc., to provide the basis for collaboration on funding and initiatives, and to contribute to a broader professional and public discussion of the Aboriginal community-based research as it is developed at UBC and elsewhere. This group should maintain liaison with other relevant research units and administrative bodies (e.g., research ethics boards).

5.2 A task group should be established that includes UBC legal staff, researchers, and community groups and organizations to investigate the critical questions of intellectual property rights in community-based research.

5.3 Where appropriate, university and community research protocols, such as those being developed under existing memoranda of affiliation with the Musqueam Indian Band and the Okanagan Nation Alliance, should be developed. They should be readily available to UBC researchers.

5.4 The stabilization, documentation, and recovery of Aboriginal languages are often cited as among the most important priorities for communities. UBC should continue to

²² *ibid.*

²³ *ibid.*, at pp 6-7.

*develop its contributions in this area in both research and instruction, wherever possible.*²⁴

To reiterate, much as the UBC model is responsive to the situation within BC and with BC First Nations in particular, the models developed for Dalhousie would need to be tailored to the kind of historical, social, legal-political and regional conversation in which Dalhousie is situated.

University of Victoria

The University of Victoria (UVic) is another B.C. university that has recognized its special responsibilities with respect to Indigenous engagement. In its 2007 strategic plan, UVic notes the changing Canadian landscape and the university's responsibility at the outset:

Many of the changes in our society have also placed natural and social systems under stress. The protection of the environment, health, social well-being, the special challenge of reconciliation with Canada's Indigenous peoples, and other such issues, demand our attention. Addressing these issues is fundamental to the sustainability of our society and requires solutions across the disciplines. (p. 9) 25

Of the 33 objectives laid out in the strategic plan, it is particularly revealing that the third objective relates to the university's commitment to support emerging Indigenous scholars:

Objective 3: To increase the number of Indigenous students graduating from all faculties at UVic, building on our commitment to and our unique relationship with Canada's First peoples.

Key strategies:

a) with the advice of the President's Advisory Council on Indigenous education, identify and implement ways of enhancing the recruitment, retention and graduation of Indigenous students in all faculties. (Vice President Academic and Provost, Deans, Student and Ancillary Services, and Office of Registrar and enrolment Services)

b) coordinate programs of education and services for Indigenous students. (Vice President Academic and Provost)

c) create a focal point for Indigenous students and programs through the completion of the First Peoples House by 2009. (Vice-President Finance and operations, Vice-President external Relations, and Student and Ancillary Services)

UVic established an Office of Indigenous Affairs, with 8 Indigenous staff, to promote and support UVic's many Indigenous initiatives including academic programs, student support services, protocol activities and the First Peoples House. The office also provides advice to

²⁴ *ibid*, at p 8.

²⁵ University of Victoria strategic plan: <http://web.uvic.ca/strategicplan/pdf/strategicplan.pdf>

university departments, faculty members, staff and administrators, and it works to expand UVic partnerships with First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities and organizations. Two valuable resources are available on the Office webpage: one is a handbook for Indigenous students and the other is a handbook for Indigenous staff; both provide overviews of programs (research and teaching) and services that would be of interest to their respective audiences. Further highlights of the UVic experience include: Elders-in-Residence; Cultural Protocol Guides; Talking Circles; Feasts and Ceremonies; Craft and Cultural Nights; and a Community Kitchen.

UVic and Dalhousie are relatively comparable in size: Both have student populations just under 20,000 with relatively similar sized faculty numbers. In contrast to Dalhousie's four Indigenous faculty members, of the 873 faculty members at UVic²⁶, 16 are Indigenous scholars.²⁷ Several sessional instructors and university staff members are also employed on campus. Moreover, UVic has several Indigenous academic programs, courses, and links to Indigenous communities and organizations. Thus, UVic also stands out as a possible source for inspiration as to what Dalhousie could become with respect to reputation for Indigenous engagement in Atlantic Canada.

Trent University

Trent University is unique in Canada, with more than four decades of engagement in teaching and research related to Indigenous Peoples. While arguably the least comparable to Dalhousie – given its distinctively deep history of engagement in the area and it being primarily an undergraduate institution – Trent nonetheless offers inspiration in regard to long-range potentials. The Trent Indigenous Studies website notes:

Trent University was the first university in North America to establish a department dedicated to the study of Aboriginal Peoples. Established in 1969 as the Indian-Eskimo Studies Program and later in 1972 as the Department of Native Studies, the program led the way for other programs in Canada. In 2006, the Department changed its name to Indigenous Studies.

The program, from its earliest times, set as its mission the education of students about the realities of Aboriginal life in Canada and abroad. The goal was to create a cadre of leaders and allies who would work over the course of their lifetimes to create new realities for Aboriginal peoples in this country and elsewhere. Our goals remain unchanged.

²⁶ <http://www.uvic.ca/resources/factsfigures.php>

²⁷ University of Victoria's Student Hand book at:

http://www.uvic.ca/shared/shared_rootsite/documents/pdfs/IndigenousStudentHandbook.pdf

In his 2010 visit to Dalhousie,²⁸ Trent Indigenous Scholar Prof. David Newhouse provided an overview of outstanding initiatives instituted at Trent over the last several decades including:

- ongoing appointment of an Indigenous Elder for the University (1981, 1986, 1993)
- 1999, initiation of PhD in Indigenous Studies, and Indigenous Knowledge Foundation
- 2007, appointment of Chair in Indigenous Knowledge

Trent University administration has responded with numerous policy and organizational actions including: establishing academic programmes at Undergraduate and Graduate levels; expansion of Indigenous personnel in both academic and non-academic posts; changing appointment, tenure, promotion, and faculty performance criteria to enhance valuing of Indigenous knowledge practices of Indigenous faculty.

These efforts are supported directly by the President's office, and affirmed in the University's Senate and Board approved Vision:

*We foster an environment where Indigenous knowledges are respected and recognized as a valid means by which to understand the world.*²⁹

Commitments are reiterated in the Trent University Mission Statement, as noted on the President's web page, which states as one of its six mission points that Trent will:

*Remain at the forefront of Indigenous education and scholarship*³⁰

Further manifestations of the commitment to Indigenous knowledges and scholarship are evident in the establishment of three categories of scholars engaging Indigenous peoples concerns and topics: a) Conventional scholars (who employ canonical scholarly knowledge practices); b) Traditional Aboriginal scholars (who employ Indigenous knowledge practices); and c) Dual tradition scholars (who move between, blend, or employ both conventional and Aboriginal scholarly practices).

²⁸ Summary points recorded by Brian Noble from Prof. Newhouse's address, October 25, 2010.

²⁹ Trent U. Vision Statement at: <http://www.trentu.ca/calendar/>

³⁰ Trent U. Mission Statement at: http://www.trentu.ca/administration/presidentsoffice_mission.php

7.0 Where next for Dalhousie? A Recommendation for Joining and Enhancing the Conversations

This inventory and report indicates that there is a significant amount and variety of research related to Indigenous peoples already taking place at Dalhousie.

With stronger coordination across the university these diverse activities can be made to cohere into a strategic focus for Dalhousie. This would allow Dalhousie to enhance the impact of research underway, and demonstrate it is engaging with regional, national, and international efforts regarding reconciliation with Indigenous peoples — an apt leadership role for this leading academic institution in Atlantic Canada. In this regard, the Committee observes that there is enormous untapped potential at Dalhousie for the development of local, national, and international competitively funded research related to — but also in partnership with — Indigenous peoples.

Bringing more structure, coherence and collaboration to the significant and diverse research activities taking place at Dalhousie, and planning for the future, will require careful consideration and extensive discussion within and outside the university. As evidenced by universities elsewhere in Canada, strategic development and effective implementation requires significantly long time-lines.

It would be premature, therefore, to make specific recommendations at this time. We have discussed ideas such as having an information-sharing mechanism within the university, establishing an office, institute, or centre pertaining to Indigenous peoples research, developing a university strategy and protocol for Indigenous engagement as part of the university's strategic plan, linking with other Atlantic region universities in the formation of an Indigenous peoples research network. Still, these are only initial ideas among many that might emerge. To move forward effectively, we will need genuine, well-considered institutional, regional conversations, and conversations indeed with those who may most be effected by such initiatives — Indigenous peoples themselves.

To consider and possibly advance these and other potential initiatives, we recommend:

That the Vice-President Research establish a working committee chaired by an Associate Vice-President and including active members of the identified community of Dalhousie's researchers to consider and recommend appropriate mechanisms for bringing more structure, coherence and collaboration to the diverse research activities at Dalhousie concerning Indigenous peoples, including planning for the future.