

SECTION 2: INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE, PEOPLES, AND INCLUSION

Question:


12. How do we approach Indigenization² at UWinnipeg?
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Background

In the Fall of 2004, President Axworth convened an Aboriginal Education Working Group led by First Nations and Metis faculty, staff, and students. The Working Group resulted in a holistic and comprehensive Indigenous Education Strategy and a number of distinct initiatives. Over the past decade, UWinnipeg has become known as a post-secondary leader of Indigenous teaching, learning and inclusion. As a result, many other universities have studied the UWinnipeg approach. While this has resulted in other institutions implementing advisor circles and Aboriginal student lounges, it also means UWinnipeg is now just one of many players in the Indigenous space for post-secondary institutions.

UWinnipeg continues to see the percentage of first-year self-identified Indigenous students grow from

² The University of Regina defines Indigenization as the transformation of the existing academy including Indigenous knowledges, voices, critiques, scholars, 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 thorough as to constitute an essential element of the university. It is not limited to Indigenous people, but encompasses all students and faculty, for the benefit of our academic integrity and our social viability. Camosun College defines Indigenization as the process of infusing Aboriginal knowledge and perspective into the structural layers of an institution.



ear to ear. Currently, approximately 10% of UWinnipeg undergraduate students self-identify as Indigenous. The retention rate after 7 years is approximately 10 points lower for Indigenous students. Metis students make up 55% of the Indigenous student body, but 75% of Indigenous graduates. This means there is a challenge around the retention of First Nations students. UWinnipeg is also home to a small but vibrant number of Inuit students. The Aboriginal Student Services Centre maintains a safe, educational and culturally competent environment for all Indigenous students (First Nation, Metis and Inuit) as they pursue their academic studies at UWinnipeg.

Several UWinnipeg degree programs incorporate Indigenous perspectives and content in their coursework, such as Anthropology, Education, History, and Religion and Culture. UWinnipeg offers language courses in Cree and Ojibwe and has developed a variety of degree programs with a specific focus on Indigenous studies such as:

- Master's in Development Practice (MDP) with a focus on Indigenous Development
- MA in Indigenous Governance
- BA in Indigenous Studies
- Community-Based Aboriginal Teacher Education Program

