Goals Of the Campaign

Student and Enrolment Services Division developed the “I Declare” campaign for several reasons:

• To proudly say the U of S has one of the highest populations of Aboriginal students among Canadian post-secondary institutions and that our diversity gives us strength
• To enable the University to demonstrate continued Aboriginal student enrolment growth
• To expand the uses for which the university can apply Aboriginal self-declaration data beyond statistical collection to broader communication of general benefit to students (i.e. invitation to events and opportunities specifically for Aboriginal students such as Graduation Powwow, Aboriginal Achievement Week, mentorship and scholarship opportunities)
• To permit self-declaration at the “local level” (i.e. application for an equity seat in certain programs, acceptance to programs such as Teacher Education Programs or learning communities, application for specific scholarships) to be used as “University level” self-declaration and to develop a simple online method for local level self-declaration to flow to the University’s Student Information System
• To initiate collaboration among SESD Admissions, schools, colleges and administrative units to create a comprehensive inventory of points of contact in order to integrate new affirmational language into any local level forms and applications and standardize acceptable forms of identification for Aboriginal self-declaration to eliminate students having to repeatedly present this same identification information for other purposes
• To help the USSU determine the appropriate number of Aboriginal students who sit on the USSU University Students’ Council

Developing the Campaign

The process of developing this campaign was initiated by the University Registrar in consultation with Associate & Assistant Deans, the Vice Provost Teaching and Learning, the University Secretary, and the AVP Student Affairs. The work was supported by legal advice from Corporate Administration and project management and communications from SESD. Consultations were conducted with staff from the Aboriginal Student Centre and a group of Aboriginal students. Through this process, SESD developed a more user friendly legal definition of self-identification and translated this into more affirmational and aspirational language about the benefits of self-declaration to both students and institution. This is now integrated into the PAWS Self Declaration and the U of S general Application for Admission forms.