

Building Reconciliation at the U of S

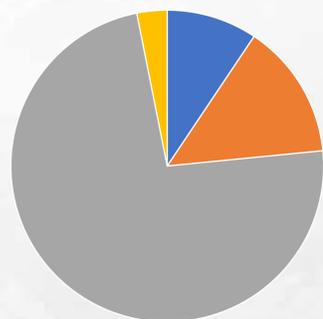
College of Nursing

Student and Faculty Reconciliation Survey

DESCRIPTION

In early December 2016, the College of Nursing sent out a survey to all faculty members and BSN students to gauge their perceptions of the College's efforts to respond to the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It was concerned particularly with integrating Indigenous concepts and experiences into the curriculum; improving our students' cultural competency; and achieving a representative nursing workforce in the province of Saskatchewan. The survey was reviewed by the College's Reconciliation Working Group as well as a faculty committee before distribution.

Student Survey: How Important is Reconciliation to you Personally?



■ Not at all ■ Somewhat ■ Very ■ Don't know/ no opinion

CONTACT

Heather Exner-Pirot
 Strategist for Outreach and Indigenous Engagement
 College of Nursing
 (306) 966-5770
 heather.exner@usask.ca

STUDENT FINDINGS

"I had the opportunity to do my clinical placement on a reserve and a lot of my current knowledge around Aboriginal people comes from that experience."

77% of respondents said Indigenous health was addressed in the curriculum. Some thought quality, not quantity was a challenge, citing superficiality or repetition. Nursing students were

taught a lot about colonialism, residential schools and Indigenous-specific health statistics and chronic illness burden. They learned much less about traditional medicines, FNMI health care systems, and community-driven

wellness initiatives. Half of students had heard from guest speakers on Indigenous health, and had had an Indigenous instructor. Almost a third had had an Indigenous "experience" (clinical, community visit,

powwow, smudge). Students expressed a desire for more experiences and speakers, more so than added content in the curriculum. Only 11% of students wanted less Indigenous content.

FACULTY FINDINGS

81% of faculty respondents indicated they had addressed Indigenous issues, peoples and/or concepts in their teaching. 93% said they were interested in

incorporating more Indigenous content. They indicated the most useful supports towards doing so would be access to modules, lessons and/or in-class activities to

incorporate into their teaching; a list of guest speakers to draw from; and professional development opportunities to learn more about Indigenous issues

and perspectives. Several faculty members indicated they did not always feel comfortable or knowledgeable enough to teach Indigenous content.

"It is one thing for me (a non-Aboriginal person) to talk about the history of Aboriginal peoples in Canada, however it would be much more powerful for students to hear/see/experience these things directly guided by an Aboriginal person. I believe it is important for the [College] to address these topics, however I always feel a bit uncomfortable speaking about others' experience."

BUILDING RECONCILIATION

There were some interesting differences between student and faculty perceptions of reconciliation and how to achieve it. Students were much more interested in experiences and speakers, whereas faculty, perhaps cognizant of time and financial constraints, sought opportunities to improve

classroom content. Students were also much more interested in anti-racism efforts and education than faculty, who prioritized Indigenous-specific efforts. Both students and faculty identified value in recruiting more Indigenous faculty, instructors and guest speakers. Students commonly perceived

superficiality or repetition in the addressing of Indigenous concepts and issues, and wanted a more health-specific focus, with a practical, nursing application. Similarly, faculty wanted to see better coordination, implementation and progression of Indigenous content across the BSN program rather than the

current, sometimes disjointed, individual efforts. Most importantly: there was a desire and willingness from a strong majority of students and faculty to see more and better Indigenous reconciliation – indicating little apparent fatigue with the College's focus and efforts on reconciliation.