

Statement on the TRC's Calls to Action in Education¹

In 2015, the [National Truth and Reconciliation Commission released its 94 Calls to Action](#) (NTRC), calling upon all Canadians to co-create positive and respectful relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. The faculty and staff in the [Criminal Justice Degree Program](#) at Mount Royal University are guided by specific sections of the Calls to Action to enrich our relations between the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) and the people of Treaty 7 (the Siksika, the Piikani, the Kainai, the Tsuut'ina, and the Îyârhe Nakoda), and the people of Métis Nation of Region 3.

Point 28: Calls upon law schools to revise their programs to include truthful courses of history. Although we are not a law school, many of our students aspire towards it and others will graduate to work within the criminal legal system and with lawyers. Therefore, we see the importance of including these objectives and learning aims into our program and curriculum.

Point 57: Calls upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants. Most of our graduates will work in criminal justice professions which are primarily public service employment. Therefore, we see the importance of including these objectives and learning aims in our program and curriculum.

Point 62(ii): Calls upon post-secondary institutions to provide the necessary funding to educate teachers about how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into their classrooms. Regardless of funding, we strive to engage in such professional development.

Point 63: Calls upon the Council of Ministers of Education to (in part) share information and best practices on teaching curriculum. Although we fall under the Ministry of Advanced Education, we see the importance of including these objectives and learning aims in our program and curriculum.

The faculty and staff in the program accept the many ways in which education was used as a tool of assimilation, violence, and oppression of Indigenous peoples for over 160 years. As a place of learning, today we have an inherent responsibility to acknowledge this, address our complicity, and work to advance reconciliation. Systemic racism is deeply entrenched in both academia and Canadian society, and therefore we must consider ways to fairly and reasonably mitigate this within our program and curriculum. We also recognize that policing and other criminal justice professions carry damaging interactions with Indigenous peoples.

We affirm [Senator Murray Sinclair's position that education is the key to reconciliation](#) between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. We commit to create reconciliation opportunities

¹ Thanks to the following academic institutions that initiated similar statements and that serve as a model for this statement. [Queen's University](#); [Association of Canadian Deans of Education](#); [Simon Fraser University](#); [University of Regina](#).

through education, by working to remove barriers to the success and wellbeing of Indigenous students and colleagues, to support Indigenous knowledge systems and ways of knowing in our classrooms, curriculum, in our research endeavours, at staff meetings, and in our decision making. We aim to build respectful relationships with communities within and outside of MRU, and we commit to include truth and reconciliation in all spheres in which our students and colleagues engage.

In our work we will also listen and learn. In the 2017 [SFU-ARC Walk This Path With Us](#) report, “nothing about us without us” was the dominant theme that applies to all aspects of academia. We respect that research about Indigenous issues or making decisions that impact Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, faculty, and staff, will *include* Indigenous peoples in that process from start to finish.

And lastly, this statement accepts that every student, faculty, or staff member could build the tools necessary for listening, learning, reconciliation, and for moving towards decolonization. We recommend the following and, although the list is not exhaustive and is not a checklist of requirements, it is a list of recommendations:

- Promote [Reconciliation Education](#) through MRU.
- Promote Coursera and the University of Alberta’s [Indigenous Canada](#) course.
- Have knowledge of Canada’s history with and the continuance of colonialism, including of [Indian Residential Schools](#), the [Inuit experience](#) of residential schools and [Inuit perspectives for education](#), the [Indian Act](#), the [Sixties Scoop](#) and [assessment of our current child welfare system](#).
- Have knowledge of the [reports by the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#) and its [Calls to Action](#), the [Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples](#), and the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#).
- Have knowledge of Turtle Island, the treaties and unceded territories, specifically of Treaties 7 and Métis Nation 3 as they exist in what we call Calgary ([Mohkinstsis](#)).
- Promote reconciliation in our classrooms and campus by supporting Indigenous students, faculty, and staff.
- Encourage students, faculty, and staff to actively be anti-racist in life, in the classroom, and in practice, in practicum placements, honours supervision, and in our research endeavours and beyond.
- Ensure our courses include required reading/listening from Indigenous authors and other authors of colour.
- Support, retain, and graduate Indigenous students through the program, their practicum placements, and Honours stream.
- Address institutional racism and settler privilege within our program and department.
- Understand the role we can play in reconciliation based upon the knowledge and skills we will have acquired.

Signed by members of the Criminal Justice Degree Program at Mount Royal University