Indigenous Graduate Studies at McMaster: Moving Forward with Innovation

9 Recommendations for Structural Change (Identified by participants at our June Discussion Circle)

**Recommendation #1**
Create a working group that will use a strategic, collaborative, cross-departmental and self-determining approach towards addressing existing structural barriers to a culturally secure educational experience at McMaster for Indigenous graduate students.

**Recommendation #2**
Promote and facilitate an increased awareness and understanding among non-Indigenous faculty and decision-makers on campus of our shared history with respect to Indigenous peoples’ experiences in Canada.

**Recommendation #3**
Collaborate in the development of a culturally secure and innovative undergraduate and graduate education experience for Indigenous students.

**Recommendation #4**
Collaborate in the development of a comprehensive, holistic strategy that will address barriers on multiple levels and move us toward an innovative, inclusive, and culturally secure, Indigenous student experience.

**Recommendation #5**
Explore and identify Indigenous graduate student admission issues.

**Recommendation #6**
Promote mentorship

**Recommendation #7**
Increase Indigenous pre & post-doctoral opportunities across departments.

**Recommendation #8**
Increase the number of Indigenous faculty at McMaster

**Recommendation #9**
Collaborate in the development of a Bachelor’s degree in Indigenous studies.

Indigenous Graduate Studies Working Group Objectives
After the November 2012 Action Circle meeting, the IGSWG was formed as a smaller focus group to assist in the prioritizing, development and review of a strategic work-plan to advance implementation of MIGS’s nine recommendations. In July 2012, the WG prioritized the need for data collection on Indigenous graduate studies and with support from the FWI Initiative and SPICES is currently conducting research to identify structural barriers impeding Indigenous education at McMaster.

Forward with Integrity: Current & Future Work
A successful recipient of Forward with Integrity funding, MIGS is currently conducting a study here at McMaster that will explore awareness and understanding of the Indigenous graduate student learning experience on campus. The objective of this research is to identify existing structural barriers, such as departmental challenges in recruiting and retaining Indigenous students, and to identify potential collaborative and innovative solutions. We are hopeful that these solutions will help affect a level of structural change that will both contribute to the recruitment of FNMI graduate students to McMaster and also enhance their learning experience at McMaster.

“McMaster’s educational system will not progress until there are more Aboriginal faculty and students.”
-Patrick Deane
(June 2012 Discussion Circle)