



Tuesday, March, 18 2025

Distributed via Email to all EdCo members

**To: Education Council, c/o Bijan Ahmadi
Chair, Education Council
3100 Foul Bay Road
Victoria BC V8P 5J2**

CC: Indigenous Education and Community Connections, Camosun College Indigenous Advisory Council

Dear Bijan and all Education Council members,

RE: Proposed Process for Nomination of an Indigenous Voting Member at Education Council (EdCo) at Camosun College (2025)

The Camosun College Faculty Association (CCFA) applauds the spirit of this proposal and believes it is vital to include more Indigenous worldviews in all our areas of governance. Indigenous worldviews emphasize relationality, inclusivity, and the interconnectedness of all beings. Incorporating these practices into academic governance certainly aligns with the broader organizational goals of reconciliation, equity, and sustainability. This approach proposed by the Centre for Indigenous Education & Community Connections (IECC) undeniably seeks to amplify marginalized voices, however, the CCFA is not in agreement that the addition of a single voting member that could be selected from students, faculty, staff, or administration as suggested is the best way to do this.

Adding an Indigenous representative to each constituent group within EdCo is a more effective approach for incorporating Indigenous worldviews into academic governance while maintaining alignment with the BC College and Institute Act. This approach respects the existing ratio of voting members, ensures meaningful Indigenous participation is possible from all stakeholder perspectives, and enhances the integration of Indigenous perspectives across all decision-making processes without creating additional barriers.

We are all too aware how unintended biases already shape our perspectives and decisions. It would be unfair to ask a single Indigenous person to be responsible for representing the interests of all stakeholders on EdCo. Each group has a different and unique role to play on EdCo. For example, Indigenous faculty members provide insight into curriculum development, Indigenous pedagogies, and decolonizing education. Indigenous students bring first-hand experiences regarding barriers in post-secondary education, providing perspectives on how EdCo can foster culturally safe learning environments and strengthen Indigenous student retention and success strategies. Indigenous support staff help align academic policies with reconciliation initiatives and institutional commitments to



Indigenous learners helping to decolonize student services, reduce barriers and expand cultural supports for students.

None of these groups can or should speak for the others. The most appropriate alteration of the Bylaw would be to include one dedicated voting seat in each constituency for a self-identified Indigenous person, who shall be acclaimed should there be no other self-identified Indigenous persons nominated for that position.

The proposed IECC process could be easily revised to select the Indigenous administrator to be appointed to EdCo. Their inclusion can strengthen EdCo's ability to support Indigenous faculty hiring, curriculum review, and land-based learning initiatives. However, as exempt Indigenous administrators are not elected and do not experience the same precarity and vulnerability as all the other constituent groups, it seems appropriate and desirable that they should be selected by a consensus of the proposed committee.

The CCFA hopes all members of EdCo can see why we object to the addition of a single (shared) Indigenous seat on EdCo. From an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion perspective, adding a seat for an equity deserving group to an existing governance structure is often seen as a largely symbolic gesture. Instead, we advocate for incorporating Indigenous representation within each constituent group of Education Council to ensure that Indigenous perspectives and worldviews are meaningfully integrated into academic governance while maintaining alignment with the BC College and Institute Act.

We believe this approach strengthens faculty-led decision-making, enhances Indigenous participation across all levels, and prevents tokenism by embedding Indigenous voices into every area of curriculum development, student support, and institutional policy. We encourage everyone on the Education Council to uphold their commitment to reconciliation and decolonization in a way that is both structurally sound and deeply impactful.

We now hope you understand that the CCFA's inability to condone or support the proposal, and potentially to be required to actively oppose it, is not borne of anything other than **our commitment to ensuring Indigenous ways of knowing are not just acknowledged, but actively embedded** in the governance of our institution.

In gratitude and solidarity,

Lynelle Yutani
President, CCFA