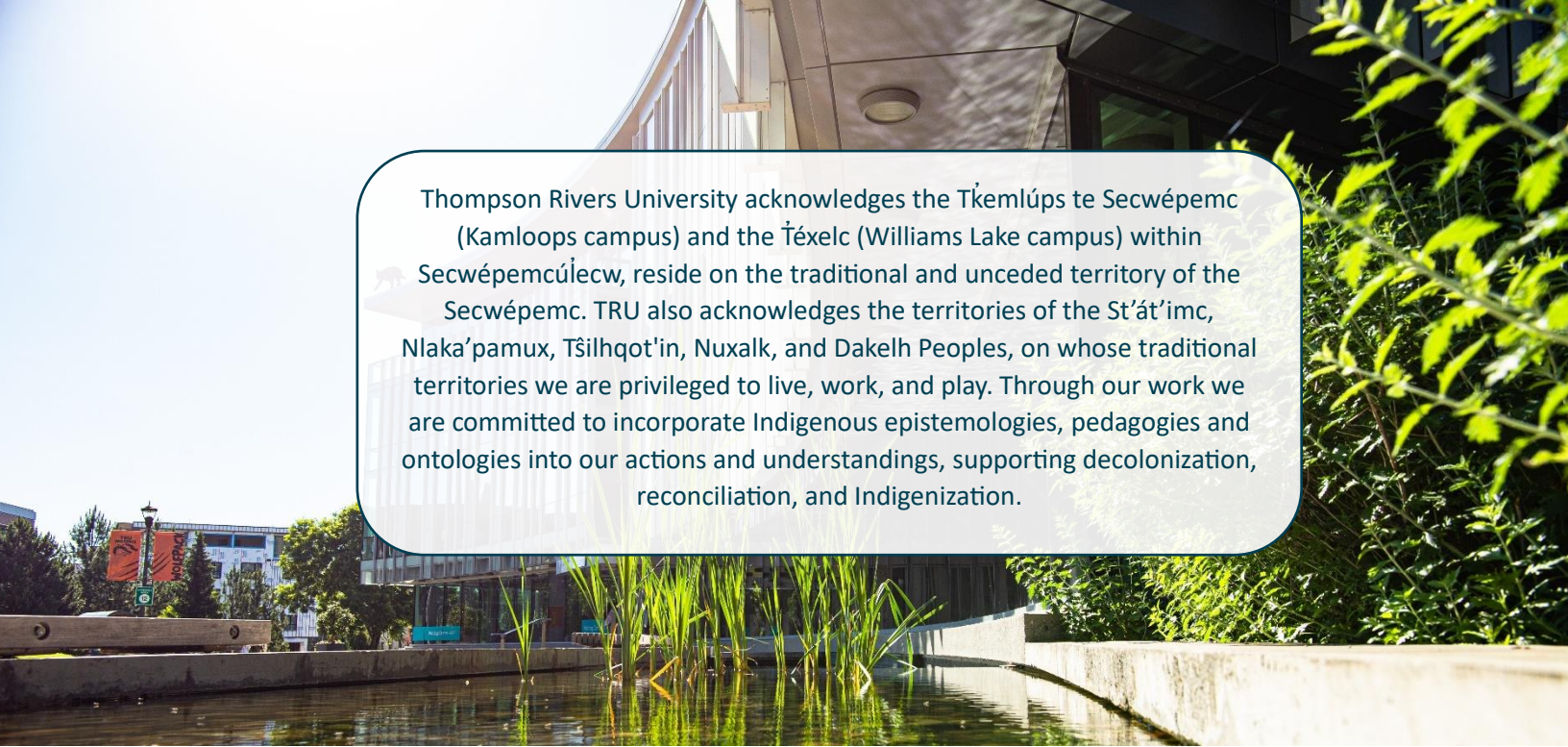




**THOMPSON
RIVERS
UNIVERSITY**

Centre for
Excellence in
Learning & Teaching

Strategic Plan
2024-2029



Thompson Rivers University acknowledges the T̓kemplúps te Secwépemc (Kamloops campus) and the ̓Téxelc (Williams Lake campus) within Secwépemcúlcw, reside on the traditional and unceded territory of the Secwépemc. TRU also acknowledges the territories of the St'át'imc, Nlaka'pamux, T̓silhqot'in, Nuxalk, and Dakelh Peoples, on whose traditional territories we are privileged to live, work, and play. Through our work we are committed to incorporate Indigenous epistemologies, pedagogies and ontologies into our actions and understandings, supporting decolonization, reconciliation, and Indigenization.

Preamble:

The Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, CELT, supports a culture of teaching excellence at Thompson Rivers University. As a non-instructional unit, CELT's efforts are focused on furthering the educational professionalization of faculty. This is achieved through innovative programming, personalized consulting, supportive educational leadership, and recognition of teaching excellence.

During the 2023-2024 academic year, CELT engaged in collaborative discussions, deliberations, and decisions as a team to refine how we envision and action our efforts. Furthermore, CELT examined and updated our range of services reflecting the current needs of our multi-campus community.

Insights drawn from consultation with faculty and university leadership include increasing recognition of the emphasis on scholarly approaches to teaching; increasing opportunity and recognition of value of scholarship of teaching and learning; the urgency to honour truth and address reconciliation and rights; shifting demographics and the need to support intercultural competencies for inclusivity and campus cohesion; efforts to revitalize the Williams Lake campus and regional centres; changing practices associated with academic integrity and effective assessment design.

Consultations highlighted the high value that many faculty and educational leaders place on CELT's services and the strength of relationships that CELT has forged with academic units across the university. Partners in the Faculty of Student Development emphasized the value of CELT for supporting their student service efforts with aligned and complimentary faculty development experiences.

The importance of existing partnerships was key to the consultation process. This included discussions with many units across campus including Indigenous Education, the Library, and Research Services. Areas for increased collaboration were identified, such as with the Open Learning Division and Information Technology Services. Involvement in institution-wide initiatives, such as Honours College have been pursued as a result of our consultations. Additional emergent issues, such as Generative Artificial Intelligence, micro credentials, and design of community-responsive degrees were also discussed during the consultations.

TRU's Change Goals

Throughout the consultation for this strategic plan, CELT focused on the University's *10-Year Strategic Change Goals* and the *Integrated Strategic Plan (ISP)*. The ISP provides direction for units within the University, including CELT, through strategic priorities and objectives. This strategic plan overlays faculty development and curriculum renewal on the University's change goals:

1. Knúcwentem xwexwéyt es xpqenwéllens, Eliminate Achievement Gaps –

We will support faculty in taking calculated risks that innovate upon the existing landscape of post-secondary learning experiences. We will acknowledge the importance of knowledge-sharing for lifting up all TRU learners and the communities they call home, including those at the Kamloops and William's Lake campuses, the regional centres, and around the world. We will strive to ensure that CELT services are accessible to faculty and graduate student educators working in each of TRU's contexts and do so with intentionality toward the goal of eliminating student achievement gaps.

2. Nucwentéls te m-kelélnemctls le tsucwlém te swestélt, Honour truth, reconciliation and rights –

We will celebrate Secwépemc culture as we support faculty in developing relevant cultural competencies that they can bring to their teaching. Through respectful actions, we will practice and support the inclusion of indigenous curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment practices through faculty development experiences including Learning from the Land and the Indigenous Teaching and Learning Program.

3. Kukwpi7stém k stselxmém ell melúkwctem te sqlew , Lead in community research and scholarship –

We will establish opportunities for faculty and students to innovate and investigate teaching and learning practices in response to the needs of today's students. TRU Scholars of teaching and learning will apply and share their knowledge nationally and internationally. We will work collaboratively with the Office of the Vice-President Research and other units to maximize the reach and impact of our scholarship on teaching and learning.

4. Me7 tsqey' k tsúntem es ctswentém, me7 sten wel me7 yews, Design lifelong learning –

We will guide faculty as they integrate experiential learning into academic programs and nurture growth mindsets for lifelong learners. Collaboratively, we will adapt and combine modes of learning, teaching, and practical experience to create a seamless and integrated set of educational encounters that meet the changing needs of learners throughout their lives and careers.





TRU has now shifted from planning activities into realizing envision (2023-2026), setting three strategic priorities along with strategic objectives.

Strategic priority	Strategic objective
Student success and research innovation through inclusive excellence in research faculty and staff recruitment	By 2033 TRU will successfully recruit and retain 200 new tripartite faculty and 100 staff. We will aim to recruit from equity deserving groups.
Eliminate achievement gaps across different groups of learners, and honour truth, reconciliation and rights.	TRU will measurably eliminate achievement gaps and honour truth, reconciliation and rights by developing, implementing and evaluating a holistic belonging model that addresses academic, material and cultural needs of our learners.
To be recognized provincially, nationally, and internationally for our unique academic and trades programs that provide students with flexible learning pathways, experiential opportunities and community research.	We will develop, implement and evaluate an Academic and Open Learning plan that reflects our commitment to accessible, research-informed curriculum, experiential learning, and Trades and Technology

With hundreds of new faculty hires planned for TRU, the Centre understands the important role it will play in introducing and mentoring these new educators in demonstrating the exceptional teaching standards of our community and in supporting the work of researchers who investigate teaching and learning within higher education.

Living Our Values

Our efforts are rooted in our commitment to respectful relations. We join with all members of our university community in showing respect toward each other, *Xyemstwécw*. We respect the land, knowledge, the peoples of our region and beyond. The implementation of the CELT Strategic Plan is aligned with our university values as follows:

Ta7 me7 t'ícwells k swetí7, Inclusion and Diversity:

CELT embraces diversity of thought and people, including diverse ways of thinking embedded within academic disciplines and programs at TRU. We recognize and celebrate Indigenous and intercultural perspectives and experiences. We are responsive to the need for inclusive access to our services for all TRU educators across all disciplines, levels of instruction, campuses, and teaching modalities. We recognize the importance of ontological and epistemological pluralism within an academic community.



Knucwentwécw-kt e sle7s e stsyem-kt, Community-Mindedness:

CELT works to build a TRU community of scholarly teachers and establish a nexus of scholars of teaching and learning that network and collaborate with external partners. We aim to develop, support, empower, and celebrate faculty as educational leaders in local, regional, national, and international contexts.

Qwenmíntem es tselxemstém xwexwéyt re stem, Curiosity:

CELT recognizes that curiosity is central to intellectual ethos. We respect the expertise of TRU faculty across all divisions and units as professional instructors. We seek to connect educators with new ideas and encourage innovation in curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment. We support faculty in enhancing learning experiences for all students and navigating the risks associated with change.



Tknémentem te yucwmíntem re stem ntmicw, tsukw e stens wel me7 yews, Sustainability:

CELT supports the efforts of TRU faculty to teach sustainability across multiple domains including cultural, social, economic, environmental, and educational. We encourage approaches to curriculum renewal that respect the past, learn from it, and pursue continual and sustainable improvement.

Envisioning Our Efforts

CELT's efforts are rooted in the role and responsibilities of the Centre's team within the University.

CELT's Vision

Partners for scholarly teaching and research on teaching and learning

CELT's Mission

Advance the scholarship of, and scholarly approaches to, teaching & learning within the diverse and flexible learning environments of TRU to support the transformation and empowerment of faculty as they and their students engage the world



Core Activities

The following activities are core to CELT's operations:

- **Enhance curricular, pedagogical, and assessment practices** across TRU's spectrum of learning environments through faculty development and accreditation of educators using an appreciative inquiry framework.
- Foster a **community and culture of faculty belonging and teaching excellence across TRU campuses, regional centres, and place-based learning spaces.**
- **Develop and celebrate educational leaders** across our continuum of educators.
- Support efforts to **weave Indigenous and Western ways of knowing** across TRU's teaching contexts in response to the Calls for Action from Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015; Louie, 2024).
- Consult on the **development, implementation, and continuous improvement of course curricula and program design.**
- Support educators in the practice of **Scholarly Teaching and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning**, and engage them in knowledge creation and dissemination within, with, and through CELT.
- In partnership with faculty and departments, thoughtfully **integrate the pedagogy of educational technology into teaching practices** to enhance learning and promote digital skill development among educators.
- Contribute to **university governance**, particularly in relation to issues of teaching and learning.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (2015). *Canada's Residential Schools: Reconciliation The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, (Vol. 6). McGill-Queen's University Press.

Louie, D. W. (2024). Barriers to Engaging with Reconciliation in Canadian Education: Confusing Colonial and Western Knowledge. *Canadian Journal of Education/Revue canadienne de l'éducation*, 47(2), 466-491.

CELT's Strategic Goals

CELT's Strategic Plan takes a mission-driven approach, with the following themes identifying opportunities for enriching TRU's culture of inclusive teaching and learning excellence. These themes reflect the expertise of our team, acknowledged needs of faculty, and emerge from TRU's Mission, Vision, Values and Change Goals. Within the next five years, CELT will advance our efforts around these opportunities in collaboration with internal and external partners to advance the faculty professionalization portfolio of TRU.

1. Strengthening communication streams to address access, improve awareness, and build relationships across TRU campuses
2. Innovating with curriculum and programming in response to TRU's changing educational landscape
3. Enriching our culture of scholarly teaching through the scholarship of teaching and learning
4. Advancing the university's commitments to honour truth, reconciliation and rights
5. Increasing teaching and learning connections between Kamloops, Williams Lake, and the regional centres



1

Strengthening communication streams to address access, improve awareness, and build relationships across TRU campuses

CELT will examine our suite of programming to identify emerging needs that require our leadership, and sunset offerings that have fulfilled their purpose. Core services will be aligned with the needs of faculty, and will be informed through consultation with all of our academic partners including faculty, students, institutional and community leadership to cultivate a spectrum of exceptional learning experiences. We will create and support opportunities for faculty to share their expertise with colleagues, broadening the impact of their teaching practice. Excellence in teaching will be recognized and celebrated through internal processes and nomination support for external awards.

CELT will provide leadership on issues related to post-secondary teaching and learning through institutional committees, organization of events, and external academic communities. We will examine our own scholarly teaching practices as individuals and as a team. By creating and curating resources, CELT will connect faculty with nascent research on pedagogy and andragogy. Our efforts will support the transformation and empowerment of faculty as they and their students engage the world.

CELT will adapt to changing communication practices by faculty, and within the university, to ensure effective and timely communication with faculty about professional development opportunities. Through deliberate and consistent communication strategies, CELT will improve faculty awareness of PD workshops.



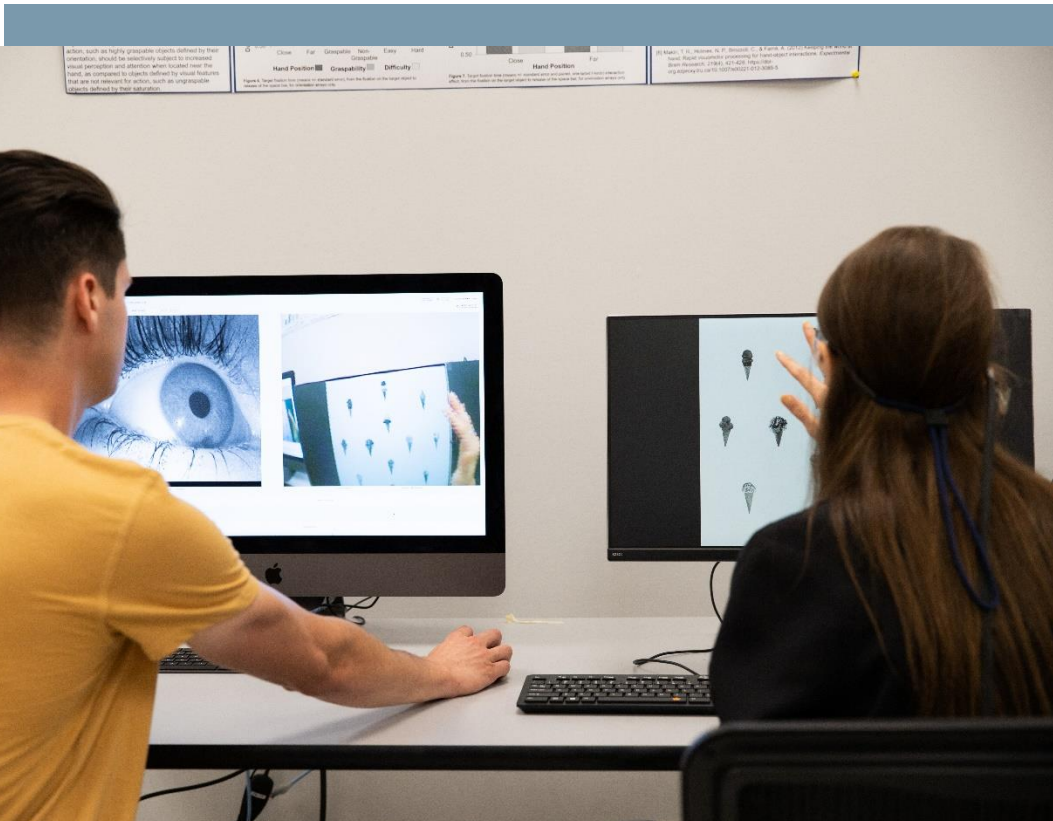
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Innovating with curriculum and programming in response to TRU's changing educational landscape

TRU is set to embark upon a new future as it launches initiatives such as TRUly Flexible and TRUBold. CELT will support Faculties, Schools, and Departments as they seek to reimagine educational experiences to address changes in technology, economic opportunities, societal needs, and culture. We will leverage our expertise and engage that of our colleagues, such as those in Learning Technology & Innovation, Instructional Design, and Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition to enhance TRU's responsiveness across our teaching and learning modalities.

We celebrate efforts of our colleagues to innovate with how we conceptualize curriculum and programming. We will contribute our individual and combined skills to create and enrich learning experiences that address cross-cultural learning and explore complex ideas through multiple perspectives, drawing upon diverse knowledge systems. In this work, we will respect the expertise of others, recognizing the validity of different ways of creating, discovering, validating, sharing, and acquiring knowledge.

As TRU aims to expand graduate programming, CELT will complement the training within academic programs by providing professional development for graduate students that increases their skills as educators. This will benefit graduate students in terms of their future employment prospects and enrich TRU's culture of teaching excellence for undergraduates through their interactions with teaching assistants. Additional opportunities, including a Graduate Assistant Educational Developers program will be explored, for collaborative approaches to championing scholarly teaching.





3

Enriching our culture of scholarly teaching through the scholarship of teaching and learning

TRU defines scholarly teaching as “the use of scholarly methods, such as reviewing literature and applying evidence-based practices, to inform and improve teaching and enhance student learning outcomes. Faculty members who engage in scholarly teaching examine the effectiveness of their teaching practices and the resulting learning that occurs when they apply interventions in their classroom”. (Thompson Rivers University, 2023, p. 1).

The core activities of CELT include professional development workshops and individual consultations that support faculty in exploring, adopting and demonstrating scholarly teaching practices. Changing cultural needs, such as the ubiquity of smart phones on university campuses in the early 2010s and the sudden system-wide shift to remote learning during 2020 have required shifts in teaching practices that were informed by research. Emergent issues, such as the use of generative artificial intelligence in post-secondary learning, will similarly require strategic and intentional efforts by faculty to teaching digital literacy and foster responsible AI skill development among graduates.

In developing resources that foster scholarly teaching, CELT partners with and leads regional and national initiatives including BC Teaching and Learning Council, BCcampus, and the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (both nationally and internationally). We aim to build on past successes with external recognition of TRU teaching excellence, such as the West Coast Teaching Excellence Award and the 3M National Teaching Fellowship.

Thompson Rivers University. (2023). *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Discussion Paper*, 1.

The scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) is defined by TRU as “a research-based approach to investigating and improving teaching and learning practices in postsecondary education. Faculty members who conduct SoTL contribute to the field of teaching and learning by using rigorous research methods and disseminating their findings, making them available for critique and replication” (Thompson Rivers University, 2023, p. 1). The evidence on effective pedagogical practices used by scholarly teachers is generated through the rigorous systematic and systemic investigations of scholars of teaching and learning.

We will create opportunities for faculty and graduate student SoTL scholars to have national and international impacts on post-secondary teaching and learning, including the SoTL Scholar Development Program and the Thompson-Okanagan Teaching and Learning Conference. These efforts will build upon and expanding existing development opportunities for faculty interested in conducting research on teaching and learning in higher education contexts.

CELT will draw upon its expertise in SoTL to provide national and international leadership on post-secondary education. We will continue partnerships with scholarly societies and journals to generate the research that informs TRU’s scholarly teaching practices.



4

Advancing the university's commitments to honour truth, reconciliation and rights

We commit ourselves to honour truth, engage in reconciliation, and observe rights. In partnership with Tkemlúps te Secwépemc community members, Indigenous Elders, the Office of Indigenous Education, and Indigenous Educators, we will elevate faculty awareness of Secwépemc knowledge and pedagogy. As we support faculty in their efforts to integrate Secwépemc knowledge, language, and traditions into the curriculum we will foster a respectful and inclusive academic environment for all learners.

Through workshops and consults we will empower faculty with the cultural competencies required to confidently action the university's commitments. We will develop academic program supports, such as the *Indigenous Teaching and Learning Program* (ITLP), to foster collaborative solutions for the Indigenization of teaching and learning. We will invite indigenous graduate students to contribute to this work as we explore the role of graduate educational developers. In this work, we will prioritize approaches that emphasize shared responsibilities for learning, planning, actioning, and reflecting.

CELT respects the importance of relationships with the land and her peoples. By embedding this respect into our university's practices, we commit to protecting and honoring the sacred connection between the Secwepemc people and their traditional territories. Land-based education initiatives are vital steps in this process, such as the *Learning from the Land* (LFTL) retreat for TRU employees. We recognize the challenges of curriculum and pedagogical renewal and seek to address sustainability gaps.





5

Strengthening teaching and learning connections between Kamloops, Williams Lake, and the regional centres

To support TRU in its efforts of eliminating achievement gaps across different groups of learners, CELT will enhance access to professional development for faculty teaching at campuses in Williams Lake and the regions. This will include increased in-person services in TRU's second house, as well as hybrid, remote, and asynchronous approaches designed for faculty teaching in Kamloops, Williams Lake, and the regional centres.

CELT acknowledges the distinct aspects of teaching and learning in remote contexts. We will listen to local voices and engage with faculty and administration across all of TRU's teaching environments to respond to collective circumstances as well as the varied needs of each setting. Throughout our faculty development services and curricular supports, CELT will maintain a focus on learner success across all learning contexts. Through an emphasis on our shared purpose, CELT will strengthen connections between Kamloops, Williams Lake, and the regional centres.

Tracking our efforts

Strategic Goal 1

Strengthening communication streams to address access, improve awareness, and build relationships across TRU campuses

Objective:

Review CELT activities in relation to currently known needs.

Consult with partners annually to identify unmet needs in faculty development and course/program supports.

Create a TRU internal-facing resource and update external-facing resources.

Strategically improve faculty awareness of CELT PD opportunities by effective dissemination of CELT services and programs through consistent and appropriate communication channels.

Strategic Goal 2

Innovating with curriculum and programming in response to TRU's changing educational landscape

Objective:

Leverage CELT expertise to support curriculum development, revision, and renewal in collaboration with Faculties, Schools, and Departments.

Develop and pilot a support model that connects users to CELT expertise and resources to assist them in meeting teaching and learning goals.

Support university-wide efforts to create and enrich cross-cultural and epistemological pluralistic learning experiences.

Create a graduate teaching assistant (GTA) development program and establish a model for GTA excellence and recognition.

Strategic Goal 3

Enriching our culture of scholarly teaching through the scholarship of teaching and learning

Objective:

Generate resources for faculty on advancing from good teaching to scholarly teaching.

Develop a cohort-based faculty development program for research into teaching and learning.

Cultivate faculty expertise in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning and establish an emerging network of SoTL Scholars at TRU.

Elevate scholarly teaching and SoTL through formal recognition and faculty dissemination.

Examine and share the scholarly teaching and SoTL practices of CELT faculty and leadership.

Strategic Goal 4

Advancing the university's commitments to honour truth, reconciliation and rights

Objective:

Promote an educational culture that honours truth and reconciliation, and models inclusivity.

Engage with partners from local Indigenous communities to enrich faculty development opportunities.

Foster awareness of local Indigenous ways of knowing and Indigenous pedagogy by faculty through workshops, consults, and land-based experiences.

Enhance integration of Secwépemc knowledge and Indigenous pedagogy into undergraduate academic programs through the Indigenous Teaching and Learning Program.

Strategic Goal 5

Strengthening teaching and learning connections between Kamloops, Williams Lake, and the regional centres

Objective:

Enhance in-person faculty development supports at Williams Lake

Bridge CELT Indigenization of Teaching and Learning supports across TRU's campuses.

Extend professional development for faculty teaching in all of TRU's contexts, including the regional centres, through a combination of in-person, hybrid, remote, and asynchronous professional development.

Next Steps

We will identify relevant metrics for assessing our attainment of the objectives listed in this plan. The nature of the metrics used will reflect the characteristics of each objective.

CELT will document progress on our Strategic Goals and associated objectives over the years represented by this plan. We commit to posting information on our progress in an appropriate space, to be shared with the TRU community.

We do this work in collaboration with faculty with the intent to enhance the exceptional learning experiences available at TRU. As CELT actions this plan over the next five years, we maintain our focus on our mission: to advance the scholarship of, and scholarly approaches to, teaching & learning within the diverse and flexible learning environments of TRU to support the transformation and empowerment of faculty as they and their students engage the world.

