

# Chapter 7

## Supporting Indigenization in Canadian Higher Education Through Strong International Partnerships and Strategic Leadership: A Case Study of the University of Regina



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**Abstract** This chapter discusses the implementation of several international initiatives that the University of Regina, a Canadian tertiary institution located in the province of Saskatchewan, put in place to support campus Indigenization. The agenda to support Indigenization is not unique to this particular university; in fact, as this book highlights, it is becoming more “mainstream.” However, what is novel about this approach is how Indigenization and internationalization agendas and practices were intertwined. As such, this chapter offers one understanding of the relationship between agendas of Indigenization and internationalization and how common ground can be found as academics, students, and administrative staff develop a deeper recognition of Indigenous frameworks while critiquing settler-colonial infrastructure. By combining these intentions, this approach provides context-specific theoretical and practical perspectives that seek to decenter and make visible settler agendas.

The introductory chapter of this book discusses Indigenization, settler colonization, and the relationship to Western hegemonic education systems. This chapter continues this discussion by focusing on how the University of Regina, a Canadian tertiary institution located in the province of Saskatchewan aimed to Indigenize and disrupt infrastructural settler colonialism within its internationalization agenda. Like many other countries, the land now known as Canada reflects settler colonialism as outsiders came to a land inhabited by Indigenous people and claimed it as their own. Generation after generation of outsiders proceeded to come for the space and resources (Hinkson, 2012). Rather than being contained in the past and discussed as an inevitable part of nation-building, the arrival of non-Indigenous people into Canada is indeed ongoing, with minimal social understanding of the implications of this continued settlement on stolen lands (Veracini, 2011).

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In documenting the programs led by the University of Regina, the authors stand in solidarity with colleagues who analyze the ways settler colonialism underpins the conceptualization of educational theory and practice, as well as with those who explore the extent to which Indigenization agendas actually challenge asymmetrical relationships within tertiary institutions. And while we are concerned with the settler appropriation of what it means to Indigenize or to decolonize (Tuck & Yang, 2012), it is beyond the scope of this chapter to explore these concepts in detail. What this chapter does offer is insight into how the University of Regina initiated their Indigenization agenda by seeking to decenter settler-colonial agendas in their internationalization programs.

The international initiatives discussed in this chapter outline how meaningful alliances with the local and international communities sought to raise critical consciousness about settler colonialism while consciously centering on Indigenous educational agendas, infrastructures, processes, curriculum, and practices. For the purpose of this chapter, the term settler colonialism describes how:

settlers come with the intention of making a new home on the land, a homemaking that insists on settler sovereignty over all things in their new domain ... settlers make Indigenous land their new home and source of capital ... the disruption of Indigenous relationships to land represents a profound epistemic, ontological, cosmological violence. This violence is not temporally contained in the arrival of the settler but is reasserted each day of occupation. In the process of settler colonialism, land is remade into property and human relationships to land are restricted to the relationship of the owner to his property. Epistemological, ontological, and cosmological relationships to land are interred, indeed made pre-modern and backward. (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 5)

However, as Tuck, McKenzie, and McCoy, (2014) remind us, “when we theorize settler colonialism, we must attend to it as both an ongoing and incomplete project, with internal contradictions, cracks and fissures through which Indigenous life and knowledge have persisted and thrived despite settlement” (p. 8). To better understand how settler colonialism links to educational agendas, it is important to call attention to how formal Western systems of education have both promoted and resisted the settler-colonial agenda, including the marginalization of Indigenous relationships between self, spirit, community, and land.

## **University of Regina’s Commitment to Indigenization: Theory and Actions**

The University of Regina is a medium-sized university located in the province of Saskatchewan—a province located in the prairies of Canada, where the main economic activity is agriculture and mining. As of the 2018 Fall semester (September to December), the university had a total of 15,568 registered students—of which 13% is of self-declared Indigenous descent. However, because some students choose to not self-declare, this number does not represent the total number of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students enrolled at the University of Regina.

The cultural invisibility of settler colonialism has become normalized in hegemonic infrastructures such as Western educational systems and hence the lack of Indigenous perspectives in formal education systems—from educational administrators and faculty members to educational materials and resources (United Nations, n.d., para. 1). Since becoming President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Regina in 2008, Dr. Vianne Timmons took a leading role in establishing the strategic direction of the university to support campus Indigenization, by prioritizing Indigenization in the institution's policies, programs, and curricula.

Through a consultative process, Dr. Timmons established the 2009–2014 strategic plan, “mâmahokamâtowin: Our Work, Our People, Our Communities”—weaving Indigenization through the University of Regina's priorities on teaching, research, and service to communities. This agenda responded to “the needs and aspirations of our students, our people and our communities and reaching out to the world around us” (University of Regina, 2009, p. 1). Specifically, the university aims to “prepare all our students to live in a Saskatchewan where First Nations and Métis peoples achieve their rightful place in society and the economy, and where their cultures are celebrated” (University of Regina, 2009, p. 10). Reflective of the many Indigenous Nations upon which the university is positioned, the main goal around Indigenization was to build long-term relationships with the communities of the First Nations and Métis peoples by addressing their needs, reflecting their cultures in programs and campus life, celebrating their culture, and educating all students about Indigenous issues. Building on this momentum, the 2015–2020 strategic plan, “peyak aski kikawinaw: Together We Are Stronger,” identifies three key priorities: student success, research impact, and commitment to their communities and advises that:

the University of Regina is situated on Treaty 4 and Treaty 6 lands. Aboriginal students, employees and community members are welcomed and supported at the University of Regina. Since the inception of the 2009-2014 Strategic Plan, we have been focused on implementing important initiatives to support the success of Aboriginal students, faculty and staff on our campuses, and Indigenize the University. (University of Regina, 2015, p. 9)

The Strategic Plan 2015–2020 states,

the University of Regina's motto, As One Who Serves, speaks to the deep connection and commitment to serving all of the communities the University touches in Saskatchewan, across Canada, and around the world. The University is committed to collaborative community service and engagement opportunities. (p. 15)

Supporting actions include the increase of joint programs, collaborations, and exchanges between students and faculty provincially, nationally, and internationally (University of Regina, 2015, p. 17). This latest agenda adds to the previous one by expanding the experiential and service-learning opportunities. As described by Lewis and Williams, (1994), experiential learning “means learning from experience or learning by doing. Experiential education first immerses learners in an experience and then encourages reflection about the experience to develop new skills, new attitudes, or new ways of thinking” (p. 5). Service learning is

an educational methodology that combines community-based experiences with explicit academic learning objectives and deliberate reflection. These learning experiences require a partnership between the community (nonprofit, schools, government, business, human services organizations, or other entities) and the institution or academic unit/program and are characterized by a focus on mutual benefit. (Gelmon, Holland, & Spring, 1995, Preface)

The university is committed to offering experiential and service learning around Indigenization within its internationalization exchanges.

For over 10 years, the strategic plans of the University of Regina have stated that Indigenization is a priority. The university states it is committed to building an institution that welcomes and is inclusive of Indigenous people. To achieve this goal, the University of Regina implemented several initiatives to support campus Indigenization. This included the expansion of the Aboriginal Student Centre, the creation of an Indigenous Advisory Circle that advises the President and Vice-Chancellor on measures to support Indigenization, and the creation of an executive-level position (entitled Executive Lead: Indigenization) to oversee the development and integration of Aboriginal protocols, methodologies, and programs (University of Regina, n.d., para. 4). Building this infrastructural support enables the realization of these agendas and models, an institutional recognition of what Indigenization means at the University of Regina:

the transformation of the existing academy by including Indigenous knowledges, voices, critiques, scholars, students and materials as well as the establishment of physical and epistemic spaces that facilitate the ethical stewardship of a plurality of Indigenous knowledges and practices so thoroughly as to constitute an essential element of the university. It is not limited to Indigenous people, but encompasses all students and faculty, for the benefit of our academic integrity and our social viability. (Pete, n.d., para. 1)

Moreover, in order to Indigenize its campus, the University of Regina's implementation plan includes changes to the university's governance and administration, increasing the number of Indigenous academics, increasing Indigenous research, improving support for Indigenous students, and building community engagement (University of Regina, n.d.). Focusing on this last point, the University of Regina directed their curricular initiatives to reflect the local Indigenous Nations' cultures and ontologies, traditions, and practices. This was important as the university is located on the ancestral lands of several Indigenous nations, and each nation's participation was essential for the success of these initiatives. Working with the local Indigenous communities, the university was able to offer courses that embed Indigenous knowledge and pedagogies across all academic programs, to support faculty members on how to Indigenize their curricula and to offer academics the ability to be mentored by Elders to incorporate traditional ways of knowing in their specific curricula. The Strategic Plan 2015–2020 continued to offer these resources to the university community, but further aimed to strengthen the university's relationships with local and international communities by increasing the number of mobility exchanges for students and faculty. It is because of this agenda that the University of Regina has strongly focused on internationalization. As explained by Knight (n.d.) internationalization "at the national, sector, and institutional levels is defined as the

process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education” (p. 2).

The University of Regina’s Indigenization and internationalization agendas outline the importance of collaborating with Indigenous faculty members, Indigenous communities, and Indigenous Elders when developing international Indigenous-focused programs. The university believed it was crucial for academic institutions to ensure that Indigenous peoples have control and protection over their own their narratives and representations of cultural heritage. They also mandated that program curricula incorporated local Indigenous perspectives, was approved by the local Indigenous communities, and was delivered by Indigenous peoples (University of Regina, 2015). Curricula changes focused on Indigenous philosophies, perspectives, practices, and traditions rather than from a settler’s narrative. The programs developed under these strategic plans needed to offer a different perspective from the usual settler-colonial perspectives found in Western education. They needed to promote Indigenous ontologies and perspectives, to focus on sharing knowledge through oral tradition, and to encourage Elders of local Indigenous communities to be leaders of these intercultural programs.

Academic institutions have usually approached Indigenization with a focus on working with local Indigenous communities to better support local Indigenous students. The strategic plans of the University of Regina further this agenda to promote a global focus on Indigenous knowledge exchange. The rest of this chapter will explore how Indigenization and internationalization can be addressed together by supporting campus Indigenization through the positive correlation of strategic planning and leadership, program development, and international engagement. Specifically, we will highlight examples and lessons learned from programs developed by the University of Regina and its Mexican partners.

## **University of Regina’s International Strategic Partner Towards Indigenization: Mexico**

The University of Regina was one of the pioneer Canadian academic institutions to participate in the first Canada-Mexico Round Table on Indigenous Higher Education, held in Mexico City in 2012. Under the lead of the executive teams from the University of Regina and Lakehead University, a group of executive leaders of Canadian academic institutions met with the rectors of intercultural Universities in Mexico. Along with officials from the Ministry of Public Education of Mexico, they discussed academic issues and potential international collaborations regarding Indigenous knowledge. These discussions culminated in the establishment of partnerships with academic institutions in Mexico and resulted in the signing of collaboration agreements with the purpose to promote mobility programs with a student, faculty, and staff focus. It was imagined that these programs would include

student, faculty, and administrative staff traveling to other countries to experience Indigenous-focused programs developed and taught by local Indigenous peoples.

The University of Regina aimed to develop an international agenda that sought to mobilize students, faculty, and administrative staff (Internationalization Plan, 2016–2020, 2016), by promoting mobility exchanges. By hosting international visitors and by participating in organized overseas visits, the university built infrastructure that allowed for new Indigenous philosophies, understandings, and practices to be shared and learned, which inherently supported the mandate to internationalize and Indigenize the curricula. The leadership of the university saw a beneficial focus to link both their internationalization and Indigenization endeavors and developed a series of outbound and inbound Indigenous-focused local and international programs with the University of Regina's Mexican partners.

Since the establishment of their first agreement with a Mexican academic institution in 1997, the University of Regina has collaborated on multiple programs with Mexican universities (Maragos, 2015). More than 12 million Indigenous peoples live in Mexico (Breves del Panorama Educativo de la Población Indígena, 2018), and throughout Mexico, 12 intercultural universities (universidades interculturales, in Spanish) specialize in preserving and promoting the culture of Indigenous peoples, promoting local and regional development of Indigenous communities, and providing academic programs that encompass the methodologies of Indigenous peoples. The Government of Mexico has created programs and policies to support its Indigenous peoples. For example, in 2003 the Congress approved the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples Act (Ley de la Comisión Nacional para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas, in Spanish), which outlines actions for the development of Indigenous peoples such as access to education, equal opportunities to participate in international programs, and provision of training to administrative staff to respond to the needs of Indigenous peoples. These agendas aligned with the University of Regina's strategic plans and made Mexico the perfect ally for these international mobility programs.

These academic mobility programs are in line with recommendations from the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2008), that universities around the world should prioritize study-abroad opportunities for Indigenous students. However, finances are a major concern for students: the Canadian Bureau for International Education's 2009 study, entitled *World of Learning*, reported that almost 74% of students nationwide said that financial constraints prevented them from participating in study-abroad programs (Bond et al., 2009). To address this concern, the University of Regina, with support from the Government of Saskatchewan, created the International Experience Travel Fund, which offers up to \$1,000 Canadian dollars to eligible University of Regina students who would like to study overseas on an exchange program or study tour. As well, the University of Regina collaborated with its Mexican partners to coordinate logistics and leverage resources. For example, for some of the programs the hosting university covered the expenses of accommodation and meals while the home university covered the travel expenses of the participants. Further, Mexican partners leveraged funding available through government funding

agencies such as the Councils of Science and Technology, and scholarships available through the Mexican and Canadian governments.

## **Student-Focus Mobility Programs: Indigenous Students**

One of the main outcomes of the 2012 Canada-Mexico Round Table on Indigenous Higher Education was the establishment of a cooperation agreement between the University of Regina and the Intercultural University of the State of Mexico (Universidad Intercultural del Estado de México, in Spanish). This agreement has promoted the mobility of students at the University of Regina and Indigenous students from Mexico to exchange their culture and traditions in a short-term, noncredit program during the Spring/Summer semester (May to August).

In this alternating program, started in 2012 and, at the time of writing, still continuing today, students from Canada travel to Mexico during the summer in one year and the following summer Mexican students come to Canada. Through this program, University of Regina Indigenous students go to the State of Mexico for 3 weeks to learn about Mexican Indigenous peoples and to visit places identified as important or relevant to the Mexican Indigenous community. The Canadian students participated in, and were embedded in, various Indigenous communities of the Mazahua people. The program is delivered in English, with Spanish-English interpretation when necessary. Historically, interested students have needed to submit an application, and a committee of Indigenous faculty members and staff of the University of Regina select the students. Participating students receive \$1,000 Canadian dollars toward their flight, while accommodation, meals, and in-country transportation are provided by the Intercultural University of the State of Mexico.

In return, Indigenous students from the Intercultural University of the State of Mexico come to the University of Regina to take a 4-week customized program. Students receive academic instruction in English as an additional language and attend seminars on the history, culture, and traditions of Indigenous peoples in Canada with a special focus on the Indigenous peoples of the province of Saskatchewan. The seminars are led by the Executive Lead: Indigenization, delivered in English with Spanish-English interpretation. Topics include understanding the post-Confederation era and treaty signing, the Indian Act, the Canadian Indian residential school system, First Nations protocols and methodologies, and current Indigenous issues in Canada. The program also focuses on local experiences where students undertake field trips to a First Nations community—formerly known as an Indian reserve, a former Indian residential school, and a Powwow (a celebration where people gather together from across the country to share, dance, and visit). Typically, Mexican students receive a travel fund from the Intercultural University of the State of Mexico and the University of Regina covers the costs of accommodation and meals.

Stephanie, an Indigenous Mexican student who participated in the 2014 program, offered her perspective of her experience:

Undoubtedly, a month is too little time to fully understand the nuances and deeper aspects of something as diverse and complex as what a country can be in terms of its culture, its language, and its history.... And even more when it comes to such a different reality from the one that we have always known – a reality in which we have lived throughout our entire life. However, it is precisely this radical difference which makes the best element to be able to appreciate certain elements in particular.

Beyond issues such as the weather or even something like vegetation and landscape, one of the things that caught my attention the most was the enormous difference of customs and ways of living between our respective populations. While in Mexico social coexistence is characterized by a large component of verbal exchange, which among other things entails a particularly friendly way of forming affective bonds, my impression is that in Canada such ties are established based on less obvious interactions – what I would consider a much less effusive, colder character. Regardless, I accepted and assimilated such difference as much as possible, since it was going to be part of my life for a month. This led me to appreciate to a greater extent my own idiosyncrasy as a Mexican, ranging from day to day interactions – food, customs, traditions, family relationships, etc. – to ways of thinking.

One of the activities that allowed me to appreciate this difference more clearly was the visit we made to the Indigenous reserve and to the pow wow. Firstly, because it is a reserve, a confined space where First Nations people live – very different from the dynamic in Mexico where the Indigenous peoples and the mixed population coexist throughout the national territory. Their way of living caught my attention, and although it was a short visit, we were able to learn about the challenges they face. My stay in Canada helped me understand and appreciate the value of belonging to a culture as rich as the Mexican culture, understand that other cultures are as complex, and that much contact between local communities is needed so that both can be enriched. – Stephanie (Intercultural University of the State of Mexico)

Stephanie's account demonstrates the importance of belonging to a community and working collaboratively to understand its historical complexity. The aim of this experiential learning endeavor encouraged students to spend time with the local Indigenous peoples which created a space where students can learn with and from people in these communities. This reflects the agenda of the University of Regina's strategic plans. This strategic direction also included implemented international mobility programs toward Indigenization for non-Indigenous students, as the next section will highlight.

## **Student-Focused Mobility Programs: Non-Indigenous Students**

Indigenous students have not been the only ones to have access to the Indigenous-focused programs that the University of Regina has developed with its Mexican partners. In May 2013, the University of Regina's women's soccer team, called Cougars, took part in a mobility program in the State of Hidalgo. This program was developed in collaboration with one of the University of Regina's Mexican partners, the Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education—Hidalgo Campus (Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey—Campus Hidalgo,



in Spanish) to engage with the children of marginalized Indigenous communities of the Nahua and Otomí peoples through sports and artistic and cultural activities.

The 21 soccer players, led by their head coach, spent 15 days interacting with the Indigenous elementary students through friendly soccer matches and by carrying out projects to improve the conditions of rural elementary schools through painting inspirational murals and redesigning and renovating school gardens. The University of Regina provided \$1,000 Canadian dollars to each participant, and students organized fundraiser events to cover additional expenses.

Through an online blog, the soccer players shared their daily experiences—highlighting some of the needs and disadvantages that children from Indigenous communities face day to day (U of R Cougar Women’s Soccer in Pachuca, Mexico, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c). As shared in their 2013 online blog, the following text is excerpts from Carley’s recollection:

When I decided to go on this humanitarian trip to Pachuca, Mexico, I knew that I would learn many things. However, I was astonished by how much I learned in such a short amount of time. Through the students and staff at the University Campus Hidalgo, the Mexican community, and the children we worked with, I have learned more than I could have ever imagined; and I know that I am not just speaking for myself.

At the same school, one of the teachers, Carlos, shared an old legend with us. The symbol of death is portrayed as a woman in his story, and death wanted to take Francisca away. So death hops on a train to Francisca’s hometown and has a certain amount of time to take Francisca before she has to catch the next train. Death knocks on Francisca’s door, but she is not there, as she is off helping a boy with a hurt leg. Throughout the story, death goes to numerous places to find Francisca, but Francisca is always somewhere else helping someone. In the end, death has to catch the train and leaves without taking Francisca’s life because she could never find her. The moral of the story is that if you help others, you avoid death. This story shows that by giving, bad things in life will not burden you. I also learned that giving makes us happier, it is contagious, and that it is love.

The community’s drive for change in Mexico is amazing and I am so proud that we flew all the way to Mexico to be involved in these projects. Helping another nation has been such a great experience, do not get me wrong, but I recognize that what I did there, I can just as easily do here. In Regina, there are problems and poverty as well, and there is always a need for people who want to generate change. I want to improve my involvement within Regina’s community and help others to make the city in which I live a better place. This is a test for all of us who went on this trip. We agree that it has been a life changing experience and that we learned so much, but the test for us is whether we bring that home with us. I believe it is something we can all do. Carly (Cougars women’s soccer team)

As outlined in the Strategic Plan 2015–2020, Carley’s international experience highlights how, through experiential learning and service learning, students can return home with a greater understanding of how colonial agendas and infrastructures influence all communities. Upon their return to Regina, the soccer players made numerous presentations to share their experiences with student peers, their families, and members of the community—influencing the local community knowledge and cultures.

## **Faculty-Focused Mobility Programs: Sharing Canadian Indigenous Knowledge with Mexican Professors**

In the 2014 Spring/Summer semester (May to August), 2 years after mobilizing students through Indigenous-focused programs, the University of Regina decided to expand its offering and created professional development programs for Mexican faculty members. As such, the University of Regina hosted two groups of Mexican professors who participated in a 3- and a 4-week professional development program. The professors from Panamerican University (Universidad Panamericana, in Spanish) and from Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education—Mexico City Campus (Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey—Campus Ciudad de México, in Spanish) engaged in interactive seminars on a variety of subjects, including international cooperation, active learning, anti-oppressive teaching strategies, course redesign, inclusive education, and Indigenization of teaching. Program curricula included theories and research regarding second-language acquisition, understanding teacher–student interaction in classroom settings, presentation skills, and using instructional methodologies in second-language learning.

To reinforce their learning on Indigenization in education, the visiting faculty members and instructors learned about First Nations history and the Canadian Indian residential school system were taken on a guided tour of a First Nations community by the Executive Lead: Indigenization and visited the site of an Indian residential school in Saskatchewan. Discussions involved the sharing of teaching methodologies, storytelling, and life experiences. Program workshops and sessions were developed to cater to the needs of each Mexican institution, as the home institution of the participants covered all the expenses of the mobility program in support of their capacity-building efforts.

Coming to a country previously unknown to me: Canada, and then arriving to the City of Regina, it was a symbiosis between learning and adventure. Knowing the culture, traditions, people, living in a university context, dialoguing and apprehending a foreign language, has been one of my best experiences. Without a doubt, I learned more from Canada through this experience of cultural immersion than I could have learned before from travel guides.

A new word that I learned through this cultural immersion was: “First Nations”. When I heard it, I did not understand much until one of the activities of the program included learning about Indigenous peoples and culture in Canada. I really enjoyed hearing firsthand from a First Nations person – an Elder from a local Indigenous community in Saskatchewan. The Elder gave us an explanation of who they are, their traditions and beliefs, and how they are well respected by everyone at the University of Regina.

A thing that I remember a lot is that they gave us a guided visit to a building (within the University) that had a ceremonial center where First Nations perform ceremonies and invoke their spirits. A place where the material and immaterial world made a binomial of culture and beliefs creating an environment of deep respect and pride. The First Nations peoples expressed how proud they felt of their roots. Being able to partake in this activity made it a very enriching experience to me.

In the end, as a learning experience, I now know that the Indigenous peoples at the University of Regina are respected and not discriminated against because they are a minority, and

that the Indigenous peoples, without losing their traditions, live harmoniously with other non-Indigenous peoples as any other Canadian citizen. Brenda (Professor, Panamerican University)

Brenda's comments are a testament to the success of how the University of Regina's strategic goals have progressed the building of long-term relationships with Indigenous peoples. However, her comments are isolated from her experience. The university's strong relationship with local Indigenous communities does not reflect the experiences and relationships of all Indigenous communities in Saskatchewan or Canada. The reality of settler colonialism in Saskatchewan necessitates that the 2009–2014 and 2015–2020 strategic plans must prioritize the decentering of colonial epistemologies and the centering of Indigenous ontologies, practices, ideas, and principles within the university academic endeavors.

### **Administrative Staff-Focused Mobility Programs: University of Regina Staff Embracing Inclusiveness**

In collaboration with Panamerican University, the University of Regina developed the first international professional development program for 31 members of its administrative staff with a focus on inclusiveness and intercultural competencies. This 1-week intensive training program was held in Mexico City in February 2015. It was hosted by Panamerican University's School of Administration of Institutions (Escuela de Administración de Instituciones, in Spanish).

The 2015 Professional Global Leadership Program aimed to expose university staff members to topics related to global competencies, cross-cultural communication strategies, customer service, Mexican culture and traditions, and the history and knowledge of Indigenous peoples in Mexico. Interested staff submitted an application, and participants were selected based on their roles in working directly with international students. The total cost of the program was covered through the contributions of each participants' department, scholarships, professional development allowances, revenue generated through previous mobility programs, and through personal contributions.

As evidenced by the following testimonies from program participants, through the 1-week intensive professional development program, the University of Regina was able to further its strategic goal of building a friendly, respectful, diverse, safe, and welcoming university for all:

Being in Mexico City was fascinating because history is alive and is well-celebrated. You have a clash of cultures and time periods. You have the modern and ancient buildings around you – and what it tells you is that you are not only celebrating Indigenous peoples, but also their lasting cultural impact on modern society. Rebecca (President's Office, University of Regina)

Working with recruitment, I encounter various students with multiple beliefs and values systems and this program has provided me with the necessary skills to be able to understand the best way to interact with them. Shayla (Enrolment Services, University of Regina)

We learnt the Spanish conquerors had come in and turn the Indigenous sanctuaries into Christian churches and monasteries. They turned them into schools for the local native population to learn the Spanish language, theology and culture. Similar to what happened in Canada with the residential school systems. Jamie (Financial Services, University of Regina)

Thanks to this program I now have a better understanding of where our international students are coming from and what is like to be in another culture and country. Raelynn (Faculty of Business Administration, University of Regina)

The administrative staff of the University of Regina had the opportunity to enhance their intercultural competencies, experience firsthand what students go through when they go abroad, and learn about the breadth of Mexican Indigenous peoples—which will allow them to further the university’s agenda to connect and engage with all the communities they work with, including Indigenous peoples.

## **Common Themes and Lessons Learned: Weaving Indigenous and International Agendas**

Through the University of Regina’s international programs, students, faculty members, and university administrative staff—Indigenous and non-Indigenous—have been able to discover the culture of Indigenous peoples and share their own Indigenous heritage and history. Through the stories of the participants, we can see why Embleton, Gold, Lapierre, and Stevenson, (2008) believe academic exchange is transformational for individuals, as they return to their home country having a stronger appreciation of their heritage and an avidness to give back to society. On their return, the University of Regina study-abroad participants are required to share their experiences and knowledge with their community. This sharing of lessons learned to students, professors, and administrators benefits the university and the community by furthering the goals outlined in the University of Regina’s strategic plans, such as valuing Indigenous cultural heritage, building respectful attitudes toward Indigenous people’s traditions and beliefs, and strengthening the university’s relationships with local Indigenous communities.

The development and implementation of these projects offered contextual understandings for participants to critique the domination and exploitation associated with settler colonialism, while also successfully increasing critical consciousness of intellectual and practical Indigenous philosophies, perspectives, agendas, and pedagogies. Moreover, the participants gained an understanding of the relationship between the local and international Indigenous peoples and their lands, an understanding that differs from settler colonialism. In this way, these programs were successful in their outcomes of providing spaces where different Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities could come together in collaboration and dialogue. These programs could be classified as reconciliation Indigenousization (Gaudry & Lorenz, 2018), where universities work to reconcile Indigenous ideologies and perspectives with Western ideologies and perspectives in relationship with local Indigenous communities. Even

though this chapter focuses on the apparent success of these specific internationalization programs, it is important to put these programs into a larger university-wide context. Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) caution that universities tend to create these reconciliation spaces in only a handful of programs that are insignificant to the larger workings of the academy. This is certainly the case for these internationalization programs. While these programs may offer an example of implementation, it might be argued that fundamental changes throughout the university have yet to occur. If Indigenization is to be a process where universities transform their existing academy to equitably including Indigenous ideologies, perspectives, voices, scholars, and students, then these programs might represent false hope in achieving this outcome. What these programs do highlight is that the University of Regina has made one positive step toward the practice of reconciliation Indigenization. Institutions which progress down this road must be vigilant that international programs such as these do not become “the solution” or become “the answer” to the institution’s responsibility to Indigenization—but rather one step along a pathway toward a more comprehensive agenda.

These international programs at the University of Regina show us the positive results that institutions can achieve when working in strong local and global collaborations—connecting Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples toward a common goal. By developing Indigenous-focused international inbound and outbound programs, academic institutions can promote intercultural dialogue and active international citizenship. Becoming an international citizen means understanding international issues and how they affect local communities as well as fostering and protecting cultural heritage in favor of an ecologically sustainable future. This international awareness promotes understanding and respect, mutual comprehension, and solidarity among students, faculty, and staff members from multiple backgrounds. It also means valuing Indigenous cultural heritage; building respectful attitudes toward nature, cultural diversity, and traditions according to the Indigenous peoples’ beliefs; and using that awareness when making executive decisions, developing policies, and implementing programs.

Through international partnerships, higher education institutions can not only actively participate in both the cherishing and the sharing of Indigenous perspectives, but can also encourage their students, faculty, and staff to become international citizens. By embedding Indigenization within the university’s strategic plans, Dr. Vianne Timmons prioritized the implementation of the Indigenization in practical ways within the internationalization agenda. The inclusion of Indigenization and internationalization in the University of Regina’s strategic plans highlights the important role a leader plays within an institution. In order to deepen and further Indigenization in academia, it is imperative that this agenda is championed by the senior leadership team and is embedded in strategic planning, allocation of resources, and program and curricular development and implementation. The University of Regina may still have a long way to go before its community members can be seen as international citizens; however, by prioritizing Indigenization through its internationalization agenda, it is making progress toward this ideal.

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