

**Leaders**  
INTERNATIONAL  

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Executive Search



**Associate Vice-President: Indigenous Initiatives**

**LAURIER**   
*Inspiring Lives.*



## The University

Wilfrid Laurier University (Laurier) is a multi-campus university renowned for its extraordinary learning environment and highly personalized educational experience. As a comprehensive university with more than 19,000 students, Laurier has grown rapidly in research intensity while at the same time preserving our well-earned reputation for excellent undergraduate teaching and learning. With a multi-campus and multi-community culture, Laurier offers students an exceptional range of more than 100 academic programs. As a leader in higher education for more than a century, Laurier has offered students a transformative experience, an ethos that is offered in Laurier’s intention to inspire lives of leadership and purpose.

Laurier’s campuses and locations are on the Haldimand Tract, within the traditional territories of the Neutral, Anishnaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples, a short 2.5-hour drive of **18 First Nations communities**, including the Six Nations of the Grand River— the most populous First Nation in Canada — and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Kitchener-Waterloo and Brantford both have large urban Indigenous populations. There are **12 Métis councils** within a 3-hour radius. We recognize the unique heritages of Indigenous peoples and support their right to preserve and express their distinctive Indigenous cultures, histories, and knowledge through academic programming, research, and co-curricular activities. Laurier honours Indigenous knowledge through diverse ongoing initiatives, programs, funding events, and positions, including the university’s Indigenous Student Centres, its [Centre for Indigegogy](#), the Indigenous Knowledge Fund, Indigenous Education Week and the annual Indigenous Research Symposium. Laurier welcomes a regular stream of Visiting Elders and has an Indigenous Curriculum Specialist, not to mention a growing number of Indigenous faculty, students, and staff.

At Laurier, we support the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s 94 Calls to Action, and we have committed



## The University

the university to Indigenization. Laurier developed its [Action Plan for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and Indigeneity](#) based on recent research and consultations within the Laurier community and include institution-wide initiatives as well as faculty- and student-focused initiatives. We are committed to continually improving and demonstrating leadership in this space. The Associate Vice-President: Indigenous Initiatives (AVP) will play a key role in the Indigenization strategic planning process and working closely with the Associate Vice-President Equity, Diversity and Inclusion to the continued development and implementation of the institutional strategy for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. The relationship between Indigeneity and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at Laurier is in the spirit of the Two Row Wampum. They advance side by side, along the same path, in pursuit of partnership and mutuality in pursuit of an inclusive, welcome and just community.

Laurier recognizes that the entire Canadian post-secondary education sector has a great deal of work to do in supporting the process of decolonization in higher education. With this in mind, we will support the AVP Indigenous Initiative's work through the proactive support of the President's Cabinet, Vice President Academic Council, Elders-in-Residence, Indigenous Education Council, Office of Indigenous Initiatives staff, The AVP Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and Human Resources. It is through a commitment within Laurier's institution-wide Strategic Plan including Indigenization efforts, creating a culture of support for Indigeneity, hiring additional Indigenous faculty and staff, and supporting the development of new initiatives that the AVP will have the support needed to successfully implement the renewed strategy.



## Position Summary

As the most senior Indigenous leader at Laurier, the AVP Indigenous Initiatives will provide strategic advice, support and expertise to academic and administrative units across the institution in achieving goals related to Indigeneity including creating an environment of cultural competency and safety for Indigenous faculty, staff, students and visitors and further engaging Indigenous communities and strengthening partnerships.

Reporting to the Provost and Vice-President Academic, and as a member of the President and Vice-Chancellor's Cabinet of senior executives, the AVP Indigenous Initiatives will play a key leadership role in strengthening and expanding Laurier's reputation for excellence in Indigeneity and advancing its priorities and goals.

In this role, the AVP Indigenous Initiatives is responsible for providing leadership to six (6) staff, including one (1) direct report, the Director, Office of Indigenous Initiatives and one (1) Curriculum Specialist (this position is shared with Vice Provost, Teaching and Learning). As a key senior leader throughout the institution, the AVP will work closely with the following:

- President's Cabinet
- AVP Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Senior Executive Officer, Brantford Campus
- Indigenous Education Council
- WLU Faculty Association
- Vice President Academic Council
- Centre of Indigegogy
- Office of Research Services
- Indigenous Faculty Council

The AVP Indigenous Initiatives will hold an administrative appointment for a term of five (5) years, subject to renewal for a further term, as well as a tenured faculty appointment in a department or equivalent aligned with their teaching and research/scholarship/creative activity.

# Key Accountabilities

## **Strategic Leadership**

- Guides the development of a university wide Indigenization strategy and provides leadership to clearly identify the priorities, goals, commitments, action plans and assesses and measures and reports on progress to key communities;
- Provides advice, support and guidance to the President's Cabinet and SEO, Brantford Campus and other University leaders on strategies that support, engage and advance Indigenous student experiences and student groups, Indigenous research and scholarship, Indigenous teaching and learning, and Indigenous peoples' perspectives and ways of knowing;
- Provides leadership and support to Laurier's Indigenous Education Council, an advisory committee of Indigenous community and Laurier representatives; and
- Works with leaders across the institution to advance Indigenous faculty members' representation, retention and engagement, recognition of Indigenous teaching and learning in promotion and tenure, and annual performance assessments and collaborates with Human Resources to support Indigenous workplace planning strategies and staff recruitment, onboarding and retention.

## **Administrative Planning and Operations**

- Guides and supervises the work of the Director of Indigenous Initiatives in their ongoing efforts to support Indigenization and decolonization, the strategic and operational plans and enhance the Indigenous student experience;
- Supports academic and administrative units to embed Indigenization strategies, goals and priorities into their unit/department/faculty strategic plans;
- Supports the work of Indigenous faculty and receives support and input from Indigenous faculty members at Laurier; and
- Supports initiatives to help advance Indigenous curriculum and grow support to Laurier faculty for Indigenous content teaching resources in partnership with the Vice-Provost Teaching and Learning, through the co-supervision of the Indigenous Curriculum Specialist.

## **Internal and External Relationship Building**

- Builds, expands and strengthens mutually beneficial relationships across the institution founded on ethical reciprocity and partnerships with Indigenous communities and organizations to achieve institutional goals;
- Build relationships with the Centre of Indigegogy around ongoing professional development of faculty to develop resources and incorporate Indigenous related co-curricular learning into the classroom;



## Key Accountabilities (cont.)

### **Internal and External Relationship Building (cont.)**

- Works with Laurier's Advancement Office to maintain and enhance links with Laurier's Indigenous alumni and prospective donors; identifies and seeks out appropriate funding resources to ensure sustainability and enhancement of Indigenous-focused academic programs, Indigenous student recruitment and retention;
- Engages with Elders and traditional knowledge keepers on behalf of Laurier to ensure Indigenous traditions and cultures are incorporated in institutional proceedings and ceremonies, as needed; and
- Works with the Office of Research Services and different offices including SEO Brantford to nurture and grow resources to support Indigenous content research occurring at the university, as well as support Indigenous faculty researchers.

### **Communication Management**

- Oversees the development of information and communications with the Registrar's Office for Laurier's annual reports regarding Laurier's Indigenous student enrollment, graduation statistics;
- Nurtures an inclusive campus culture that values Indigenous peoples, perspectives and knowledges; and
- Supports the advancement of Indigenous research and scholarship.

# Qualifications

## Required

- Eligibility to be appointed with tenure within a relevant academic unit at Laurier (PhD or equivalent terminal degree an asset, but not essential);
- Evidence of significant contributions (whether academic or community-based) with post-secondary education initiatives, programs and transformative practices in support of Indigenous education, student success and community engagement;
- Ability to articulate an Indigenous worldview within a post-secondary education context, facilitating an environment of team work to identify and overcome institutional and system barriers to the successful attainment of post-secondary education for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students across the University;
- Must be of Indigenous ancestry (i.e., Turtle Island - First Nations Status and non-Status, Métis, or Inuit);
- Demonstrated commitment to Indigenous community-engaged research, teaching and learning across diverse cultures (meld with lived experience and Indigenous knowledge and worldview);
- Expertise and lived experience of Indigenous worldviews, cultures and values and strong understanding of diverse Indigenous knowledge systems, research methodologies and epistemologies in partnership and alongside Indigenous communities;
- Experience championing large scale-initiatives addressing complex issues related to Indigeneity
- Expertise and knowledge of the political, legislative and governing bodies pertaining to Indigenous initiatives at a local, provincial and national level;
- Knowledge of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and relevant Federal and Provincial reports, programs and grant opportunities that are relevant to the post-secondary sector;
- Demonstrated experience in engaging external Indigenous communities and stakeholders to support strategic priorities and to inform operational policies and practices;
- Proven ability to manage in a complex and diverse environment while understanding and enabling diverse viewpoints and approaches; and
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills; an ability to guide and facilitate an inclusive and collaborative approach that fosters consensus-building and creative problem solving.

## Assets

- Experience writing successful funding applications; and
- Competency in an Indigenous language or knowledge of Indigenous languages.



## To Apply

This is an exciting leadership role that offers the unique opportunity to directly impact Indigenous education. For more details, please contact:

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To apply, please submit a Cover Letter and Resume directly to Leaders International outlining your interest, qualifications and experience.

**Leaders International** specializes in the recruitment of Board of Directors, leadership succession and executive level positions. Our global network, **Penrhyn International**, is a world leader in the executive recruitment industry, with more than 47 offices in over 25 countries on 5 continents.

To learn more about **Wilfrid Laurier University** please visit [www.wlu.ca](http://www.wlu.ca).