

Title: Mistatimōk Committee**Committee type:** Organizing Committee**Responsibility:** Office of the Vice Provost Indigenous Engagement (OVPIE)**Approval:** OVPIE / PEC**Date:** January 10, 2022

We acknowledge we are on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.

We also acknowledge the lands and Treaty territories that constitute kisiskâciwan (Saskatchewan), and the Indigenous Peoples that call kisiskâciwan home. The University of Saskatchewan is ultimately intertribal in spirit.

CONTEXT

The committee recognizes the systemic racism of the Residential School System set up by the Canadian government and administered by churches that operated from 1880 into the 1990s with the proposed objective to educate and explicit directives of indoctrination into Eurocentric and Christian ways of living. In the wake of the [confirmation of unmarked graves](#) at the site of the former Kamloops Residential School in May 2021, an ad-hoc committee was brought together at USask to guide the university in responding to and coping with these tragic events. In June 2021, more news was received regarding [751 unmarked graves at Cowessess](#) First Nation in Saskatchewan, and again the group was convened. Knowing that these would not be the last such discoveries, the committee identified that we must “**prepare for more,**” and this unfortunate reality became its name and intent.

In June 2021 the Government of Canada finally delivered on call #80 from the TRC Calls to Action delivered in 2015, “... to establish, as a statutory holiday, a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (NDTR) to honour Survivors, their families, and communities, and ensure that public commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools remains a vital component of the reconciliation process.”

On September 1, 2021, The Provost requested a committee be created to lead and guide the university’s efforts in commemorating events such as the [National Day for Truth and Reconciliation](#) on September 30, 2021. The 9/30 group, with many of the same members from the P4M committee planned the events for the first USask cross campus collaboration for NDTR. This collaboration and cross campus effort revealed that the particular knowledge, expertise, and collective vision of the two groups (P4M and 9/30) would be invaluable for USask as a body that could oversee, lead, and guide such efforts, whether through planned events or in response to unfolding occurrences in the community. The success of this committee for the September 30th event and the P4M committees work over the summer prompted the consolidation of the two groups to form the current group, Mistatimōk (Horses “working together”).

<https://indigenous.usask.ca/our-stories/news--events.php>

<https://news.usask.ca/articles/general/2021/presidents-statement-on-the-cowessess-first-nation-residential-school-unmarked-graves.php>

This Terms of Reference outlines the role of the **Mistatimōk Committee**, to formalize and define its purpose, mandate, and composition.

PURPOSE

The *Mistatimōk Committee* is the structure to facilitate collaborative work across campus to support and plan activities that foster awareness of significant national and local Indigenous events for the educational advancement of the USASK community and external partners.

PRINCIPLES & GUIDING FOUNDATION

This work is guided by the University of Saskatchewan's [principles and values](#), and by the first aspiration described in the [university plan 2025: Transformative Decolonization Leading to Reconciliation](#). In particular, the foundation of these terms of reference and the work of the Mistatimōk Committee is built upon [ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan](#) (let's fly up together) the Indigenous Strategy for the University of Saskatchewan.

ROLE AND MANDATE

The Mistatimōk Committee will lead and guide the USask community through navigating, acknowledging, and/or commemorating existing and future discoveries at former Residential Schools, and other related occurrences for which our community seeks support and guidance. The Committee will also lead the direction of meaningful and authentic commemorations and/or events pertaining to decolonization and reconciliation, such as those described below. The Mistatimōk will be led by the Office of the Vice Provost Indigenous Engagement and chaired by the Vice Provost Indigenous Engagement.

The Mistatimōk Committee *will* be asked to:

1. Convene in response to any future announcements pertaining to Residential Schools, or other events that may substantially impact Indigenous students, staff, and faculty.
2. Provide guidance on responses provided by USask, including communications and support for USask community.
3. Lead, direct, plan and/or implement commemoration events for:
 - a. [National Day for Truth and Reconciliation](#), September 30 (annually)
 - b. [National Indigenous Peoples Day](#), June 21 (annually)
 - c. [māmowī āsohtētān Internal Truth and Reconciliation Forum](#) (annually)
 - d. [Red Dress Day: National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA People](#), May 5 (annually)
4. Support the following events:
 - a. [Indigenous Graduation Celebration](#)
 - b. [Indigenous Achievement Week](#)
5. Work in collaboration with other units on campus, such as PEC, University Relations, Communications, Senior Leadership Forum, colleges and schools as relevant to its activities.

The Mistatimōk Committee will *not* be asked to:

1. Supersede the assigned duties and roles of other university working groups and committees (e.g. the Crisis Management Team), and will seek to work collaboratively and in support of existing groups and committees

AUTHORITY

This Committee has a planning and decision-making role, as pertains to the fulfilment of its purpose and scope. Its authority is vested from within the Office of the Vice Provost Indigenous Engagement.

Input, feedback, and support for the outcomes will be sought from stakeholders and other senior leaders as appropriate. Approval/support, whether formal or in principle, may also be sought by the Mistatimōk Committee for its plans, events, or actions from the President’s Executive Committee and regular communication between these bodies should be maintained.

RESOURCES AND BUDGET

Core funding allocations through the Office of the Vice Provost Indigenous Engagement with additional supports from colleges, departments, and offices.

COMPOSITION AND MEMBERSHIP

All members may participate in decision making, which is sought by consensus. Should a formal motion be tabled, all members hold equal voting rights. The Mistatimōk Committee will be comprised of the following:

Position/Role
Vice Provost Indigenous Engagement (Chair)
Provost and Vice President Academic
Gordon Oakes Red Bear Centre Director, or designate
USSU President
GSA President
Manager, Indigenous Education Initiatives
Indigenous Advisory Circle
OVPIE
OVPIE
OVPIE
Director, USask Art Galleries
College/unit/school representative from each across campus
Executive Officer, University Relations

TERM LENGTH

The Mistatimōk Committee will be constituted on *January 10, 2022*, following consideration of a motion to approve the committee’s membership and these Terms of Reference. It will remain active until the Vice Provost Indigenous Engagement, the Provost and Vice President Academic, and the President agree that its work has been completed, assigned to another body, or is otherwise no longer required. The first iteration terms will be staggered between 2 and 3 years to facilitate consistency and institutional memory of the committee. Term length for appointed members will be two years unless otherwise specified under ‘membership.’

MEETINGS

Meetings of the Mistatimōk Committee will take place approximately monthly, with more frequent meetings and/or email communications as scheduled events are approaching, or in response to announcements that necessitate the group’s guidance for the campus community. Microsoft Teams will be used for online discussions and file storage.

Support for the work (including research, record keeping, consultation, writing, event planning, etc.) will be provided by the Office of the Vice Provost, Indigenous Engagement.

Others, such as Elders and Knowledge Keepers, may be called upon by the Mistatimōk Committee for their expertise and specialized contributions as required.

SUBCOMMITTEES

Subcommittees will be formed and will meet separately to facilitate the work of the larger committee. These subcommittees will be modified as necessary to better meet the event being planned.

SCOPE OF WORK

The table below provides a general overview of deliverables and targeted timelines:

Date	Deliverable
Xx	First meeting of the formal committee to discuss Terms of Reference and goals
Xx	Develop “planning guides” to guide future event work, such as National Day for Truth & Reconciliation, including internal and external stakeholders who may need to be involved or consulted, or who may assist and provide support
Xx	