



ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan: The Gift

Phase 4 Report: The College of Nursing Journey

June 2026

Purpose, Scope, and Guiding Principles

“To know where we are going, we must reflect on where we have been.”

This report reflects the College of Nursing’s ongoing journey with ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan - “let’s fly up together.” It does not present the work of Indigenization, reconciliation, or anti-racism as complete. Instead, it tells the story of what the College has begun to learn, where progress is visible, where gaps remain, and how the College must continue to walk with Indigenous students, faculty, staff, Knowledge Keepers, Elders, alumni, communities, and partners with humility, accountability, and care.

The College of Nursing works across sites in Treaties 4, 6, and 10 and the Homeland of the Métis, and its main campus is situated on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. This creates responsibilities that are both educational and relational.

Nursing and health care have colonial histories, and the College recognizes the need to acknowledge Indigenous history, culture, and lived experience in undergraduate and graduate education. The College’s responsibility is to prepare nurses who understand the ongoing effects of colonialism and Indigenous-specific racism, and who can contribute to safer, more respectful relationships with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples and communities. (1)(2)

Across this report, the seven fundamental commitments from the University’s official ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan framework are used as a relational lens rather than a separate checklist. Safety, Wellness, Stewardship, Representation, Right Relations, Creation, and Renewal are carried through the discussion of access, curriculum, student support, faculty learning, research, governance, and future accountability. (1)(3)

The Heartbeat of wahkohtowin / wâhkôhtowin

The College's work has also been shaped by wahkohtowin / wâhkôhtowin, a relational teaching gifted to the College through Dr. Holly Graham's leadership as Indigenous Research Chair in Nursing and through College-specific efforts to think about relationship, responsibility, and transformation in nursing education and research. This report uses this language with care. It does not claim that one Indigenous teaching or concept represents all Indigenous Nations, languages, or communities served by the College; rather, it recognizes wahkohtowin / wâhkôhtowin as one important gift and teaching that has influenced the College's learning. (2)(4)

The values named in the University's Indigenous Strategy and reflected in the Phase 4 reporting guidance and College planning materials, including respect, wisdom, love, bravery, humility, honesty, and truth, call the College to move beyond symbolic language. These values ask faculty, staff, leaders, and students to consider the ways relationships are built, harm is prevented and addressed, Indigenous scholarship is respected, and nursing education prepares students to practice with cultural humility and safety. These commitments require ongoing learning, not one-time statements of support. (1)(3)(4)

The Fabric of Our Programs

Indigenization, reconciliation, and anti-racism responsibilities are integrated into nursing education across the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), Post-Degree BSN, Master of Nursing, Nurse Practitioner, and PhD programs. The College supports Indigenous

students' access through initiatives such as Indigenous Student Achievement Pathways (ISAP), equity-seat admissions, graduate awards and bursaries, distributed learning opportunities, and outreach initiatives. These supports are important, and

they also carry a continuing responsibility: access must be matched with belonging, academic support, mentorship, cultural safety, and a clear path to completion after students enter nursing programs. The College educates nurses, including Indigenous nurses, while recognizing that Indigenous identity, healing, and cultural roles are defined by Indigenous Peoples and communities themselves. (2)(4)(5)

These access and student-support efforts are complemented by community-based outreach to younger generations. Such outreach can help make nursing and health-care careers more visible to students in northern and remote communities. The College's responsibility is to ensure that outreach is relationship-based and connected to sustained support, not only recruitment. (2)

Together, these access, outreach, and student-support efforts connect Representation and Renewal with Safety and Wellness: access matters only if students are also supported to belong, continue, and succeed. Stewardship and Right Relations require the College to keep asking whether recruitment, outreach, and program supports are matched by

sustained support and respectful relationships. (1)(2)(4)

The pre-professional year includes an Indigenous Studies prerequisite, identified on the College website as introduced in 2012 for admission into the College of Nursing. This prerequisite is one component of a broader curriculum responsibility. It does not, on its own, fully ground students in Indigenous worldviews, Indigenous health, or institutional responsibility. The College's ongoing work is to connect this early learning with curriculum, clinical preparation, intercultural communication, anti-racism, and cultural safety throughout nursing education. (2)

Equity-seat admissions are one strategy supporting access and representation for Indigenous students. The College understands equity seats as an admissions strategy set at 16.6% of total intake quota in undergraduate and Nurse Practitioner programs, informed by provincial Indigenous population demographics. This planning figure is distinct from the College's strategic target for Indigenous student representation and from actual year-to-year Indigenous enrolment, which fluctuates and

includes students admitted through equity seats, competitive admission, and distributed-site access through approaches such as Learn Where You Live. The College recognizes that access must be paired with completion supports, mentorship, wellness supports, financial support, culturally safe advising, and continued engagement with First Nations and Métis communities to strengthen enrolment, retention, graduation, licensure, and longer-term participation in the nursing workforce. (2)(4)(8)

The College is assessing the nursing curriculum to improve the levelling, consistency, and quality of Indigenous content. This curriculum work requires careful, sustained attention. Curriculum change cannot rely only on symbolic inclusion, isolated readings, or the labour of a small number of Indigenous leaders. It requires intentional curriculum mapping, responsible use of Indigenous scholarship, attention to Indigenous-specific racism in health care, and support for faculty who are learning how to teach with humility and within the limits of their own knowledge. (4)(8)

Interprofessional Indigenous health learning opportunities, anti-racism modules, and emerging course development can support curriculum renewal when they are connected to broader program outcomes and ongoing reflection. The College is continuing to clarify how undergraduate, graduate, and interprofessional learning opportunities contribute to cultural safety, anti-racism, trauma-informed care, and respectful care for Indigenous individuals, families, and communities. (2)(4)

The College also recognizes intercultural communication as a continuing area for learning across curriculum, faculty learning, and clinical preparation. This includes preparing students, faculty, and clinical instructors to enter Indigenous community and clinical contexts with humility, active listening, respectful communication, conflict resolution skills, and an understanding that good intentions can still cause harm when relationships and context are not attended to. This direction aligns with TRC Call to Action 24 and CASN accreditation expectations that nursing education integrate UNDRIP, human rights, the history of Indigenous Peoples in Canada, Indigenous

teachings and practice, intercultural competency, and anti-racism. (2)(9)

In curriculum work, the seven fundamental commitments are woven together through both content and practice. Creation and Stewardship require careful use of Indigenous

scholarship and knowledge; Safety and Wellness require learning environments that address Indigenous-specific racism; and Right Relations require faculty to know the limits of their own knowledge while continuing to learn with accountability. (1)(4)(8)

The Past: Truth and the Roots of Our Journey

To move toward reconciliation, the College must first speak truthfully about the colonial history of nursing, health care, and education. Nursing education has not been separate from colonial systems; it has operated within health and education structures that have caused harm to Indigenous peoples. The College's responsibility is to acknowledge this history, learn from it, and continue building relationships with Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers, students, faculty, staff, alumni, communities, and partners so that nursing education better serves Indigenous students and communities.

The Shadows of the Past

Geography, racism, lack of cultural safety, financial pressure, family responsibilities, transportation, housing, and academic barriers have shaped Indigenous students' experiences in nursing education.

Community connections have remained important throughout the College's history, and distributed learning has helped some students remain closer to home. At the same

time, the College must avoid assuming that access alone is success. The work now is to understand where students thrive, where students struggle, and what supports are needed across different sites. (2)(4)(10)

The Dawn of Resilience

The College's earlier work included initiatives such as the Native Access Program to Nursing, now connected to the University of Saskatchewan

Community of Indigenous Nurses (UCIN), along with later efforts to support Indigenous students and strengthen Indigenous presence in nursing. Dr. Holly Graham's leadership and the wahkohtowin / wâhkôhtowin symbol also form part of the College's Indigenization story. These initiatives are important, and they are described here with humility as part of a longer journey rather than as proof that the work is complete. (2)(4)(10)

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, including the health-related Calls to Action and Call to Action 24, continue to shape the College's responsibilities. The College website identifies Indigenous Studies as a pre-professional prerequisite

introduced in 2012 and describes the College's "Learn Where You Live" model as one strategy to improve access. Current College administrative data and program sources are used where available to describe Indigenous student representation, graduate pathways, and distributed-site outcomes. (2)(4)

This past-focused reflection also carries the seven fundamental commitments. Truth-telling supports Safety and Right Relations because it names harm rather than hiding it; Stewardship asks the College to remember institutional history accurately; and Renewal requires using that learning to change future decisions rather than repeating earlier gaps. (1)(8)(10)

The Present: Weaving the Seven Fundamental Commitments into College Responsibility (2021-2026)

The College is learning to approach ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan not as a set of separate categories, but as an integrated responsibility. The seven fundamental commitments - Safety, Wellness, Stewardship, Representation, Right Relations, Creation, and Renewal - are described in the official framework as interdependent, mutually reinforcing, and interconnected in time and space. For the College, this means the work cannot be reported only as a list of activities under individual headings. It must also ask how those activities are changing relationships, learning environments, student experiences, faculty responsibilities, research, governance, and College systems. (1)

Access, Belonging, Safety and Wellness: Student Support as Shared Responsibility

Safety and Wellness are reflected in student-facing supports such as UCIN, Indigenous student advising, the Knowledge Keeper and Indigenous Student Advisor role, scholarships, bursaries, emergency funding, and efforts to create places of connection and care. Dr. Kathleen McMullin is identified by the College as Knowledge Keeper and Indigenous Student Advisor, supporting Indigenous student belonging, relationship-building, and connection across the College's distributed learning context. (2)(10)

UCIN supports Indigenous nursing students through their studies and remains an important part of the College's student-support story. Student recognition through Indigenous Achievement Week and other leadership opportunities can also affirm Indigenous student presence and success. These examples form part of a broader support system, while the College continues to ask whether students across all sites experience safety, belonging, mentorship, and sustained support. (2)(11)

At the same time, the College recognizes that a small number of Indigenous leaders, Knowledge Keepers, and faculty members have carried significant relational, cultural, and educational work. Consultations emphasized that this responsibility must be shared more sustainably across the College, with appropriate supports, clearer pathways, and respect for the time and expertise of Indigenous colleagues. To honour Safety and Wellness more fully, the College must continue building sustainable support pathways, shared responsibility, and clearer referral structures so Indigenous students are supported and Indigenous leaders are not expected to carry this work alone. (8)(10)

Representation, Renewal and Completion: Access Must Lead to Support

Representation and Renewal are connected through equity-seat pathways, scholarships, bursaries, graduate awards, and the College's commitment to Indigenous student access. However, the College has learned that recruitment is only one part of the work. Representation must be paired with completion supports,

academic preparation, mentorship, culturally safe advising, and attention to barriers that affect students at northern and distributed sites.

(2)(4)(10)

Consultation materials identify NCLEX preparation and completion supports as ongoing areas of concern, particularly for students at northern and distributed sites. This remains a visible gap rather than a solved issue. Future action focuses on strengthening supports for students after admission, including licensure preparation, peer mentorship, and site-specific academic and wellness supports. (4)(10)

Stewardship and Right Relations: Learn Where You Live

The “Learn Where You Live” model brings nursing education closer to students in Saskatchewan communities. The College website states that studying close to home is one of the strongest predictors of Indigenous student success and long-term retention in the local workforce after graduation, and lists campuses/sites in Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Île-à-la-Crosse, La Ronge, Lloydminster, Muenster, North Battleford, Swift Current, Weyburn, and Yorkton. This model supports access and can strengthen

relationships with communities when paired with respectful preparation, consultation, and support. (2)(12)

Stewardship also requires the College to listen carefully to site-specific barriers. Consultation materials identified challenges such as winter travel, road access, attendance expectations, childcare, housing, transportation, and varied access to supports. These realities show that access must be accompanied by responsive policies and student supports. (10)

Creation, Right Relations and Shared Accountability: Transforming the Work

Creation and Right Relations are visible in the work of Dr. Holly Graham, the Indigenous Research Chair in Nursing, and in ongoing efforts to include ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan in faculty onboarding, learning opportunities, and professional development. At the same time, consultations identify a structural gap: there is no clearly designated College-level coordinator or facilitator to support day-to-day implementation, connect faculty with resources, and help document progress. (8)(10)

The next stage is to move from individual faculty initiative to collective institutional action. A centralized working group, renewed committee structure, or shared resource repository could help faculty access Indigenous scholarship, guest speakers, learning materials, and appropriate review processes. This would also help distribute responsibility more appropriately and strengthen accountability across the College. (8)(10)

Professional development, including Four Seasons of Reconciliation, Indigenous Canada, anti-racism learning, GMCTL resources, and College learning events, can support faculty and staff. However, anti-racism and anti-oppression require more than participation in a workshop. The College must continue asking what behaviour, policy, curriculum, and accountability changes follow from these learning opportunities. (4)(8)

Outreach, Right Relations and Renewal: The Science Ambassador Program and Youth Leadership

The College's involvement in the Science Ambassador Program

supports outreach with northern and remote Indigenous community schools. This work can contribute to Renewal and Right Relations when it is grounded in long-term relationship-building, community listening, and sustained pathways into nursing rather than one-time recruitment. (2)(4)(6)(7)

Sponsorship of leadership events and outreach initiatives, including Saskatchewan's Next Generation of Leaders Post-Secondary Leadership Symposium, can help younger learners see nursing and health-care education as possible. These initiatives are part of a broader relationship-building approach that connects outreach, student recruitment, community engagement, and future pathways into nursing. (8)(13)

For the College, outreach is most meaningful when it helps demystify nursing education while respecting community knowledge, local role models, and student identity. Future outreach should continue to prioritize student and community voice so that recruitment and engagement are shaped by the people and communities they are intended to serve.

Reflection: What We Have Learned, What Has Changed, and What Remains Difficult

Reflection over the past five years shows meaningful progress alongside areas that require continued attention. The College has examples of access, curriculum work, student support, research, outreach, and faculty learning. It has also learned that documentation, coordination, and shared accountability need to become more consistent so that progress does not depend mainly on individual commitment. This reflection remains grounded in evidence, consultation, and humility. (8)(10)

Learning from Mistakes: Preparation, Humility, and Repair in Community Placements

A past community-based clinical placement experience made visible how harm can occur when students enter First Nations community contexts without sufficient preparation, humility, and intercultural communication skills. Rather than presenting the details of that experience directly in a public-facing report, the College can hold the learning: community concerns must be heard; responsibility must be acknowledged; students need preparation before entering community settings; and repair requires working with the community to support respectful, meaningful learning before placements continue. This example reinforces that good intentions are not enough if listening, relationship, and respect are missing. (10)(14)

Symbols, Learning, and the Need for Structural Support

Symbols such as the wahkohtowin / wâhkôhtowin symbol, orange shirts, lanyards, and Indigenous visual markers can help signal commitment, but symbols alone do not create safety. They must be supported by learning, relationship-building, policy, accountability, and everyday practice.

The College is working to ensure that the meaning behind these symbols is clearly explained and connected to action. (8)(10)

Stories of Transformation

The true measure of impact lies not only in recognition events, but in whether Indigenous students, faculty, staff, alumni, and communities

experience belonging, respect, support, and accountability. Indigenous Achievement Week and alumni stories can help make Indigenous nursing leadership visible, while the College also names the supports and barriers that shape those experiences. (2)(11)

The College's Indigenous alumni videos and CRNS truth and reconciliation resources can continue to support orientation, onboarding, course learning, and wider College reflection where appropriate. Their value depends not only on circulation, but on whether they are connected to dialogue, learning, and follow-up within College processes. (8)(15)(16)

Faculty learning is also part of the story. Consultation materials describe white settler faculty members working to uplift Indigenous scholars' work rather than claiming authority to teach Indigenous culture. This is an important example of humility. At the same time, student voices, including Indigenous student voices, remain underused in shaping the next phase of the work. Future engagement must be respectful, consent-based, and non-extractive. (8)(10)

These stories therefore carry several fundamental commitments at once: Representation is not only recognition, but meaningful voice; Safety and Wellness depend on whether students and faculty experience support; and Right Relations require that stories are gathered and shared with consent, purpose, and care. (1)(2)(8)

Supporting Indigenous Voices and Acknowledging What Is Not Yet Known

College reflection highlighted the importance of supporting Indigenous voices, including Dr. Holly Graham's earlier work in the College of Nursing, her research grounded in wahkohtowin / wâhkôhtowin, mentorship of Indigenous undergraduate nursing students, large-scale anti-racism learning for faculty and staff, and continued lunch-and-learn sessions after moving to the College of Medicine. The College also recognizes the need to preserve institutional memory, support Indigenous leadership, and rebuild structures for guidance and accountability where gaps have emerged. (10)

Stories of Transformation

Supporting Indigenous Graduate Pathways: Scholarships, Research, and Future Faculty Development

This section describes graduate scholarships and graduate pathways as part of a developing effort to support Indigenous graduate education, research, and future faculty pathways. The focus is on access, belonging, mentorship, financial support, and preparation for scholarly and academic roles. (1)(17)

The Journey

College graduate program data indicate that in 2024-2025, 15.2% (36/237) of graduate students in the MN-Professional Practice, MN-Thesis, and PhD programs self-declared as being of Indigenous ancestry, increasing from 6.9% in 2020-2021.

The same source reports increasing Indigenous representation in the MN-NP program, with 27.9% reported for 2025-2026. These figures are used as College administrative data to describe progress while recognizing that numbers alone do not capture belonging, support, or completion. (4)(17)

Graduate equity-seat admissions, scholarships, bursaries, and awards are described as supports for Indigenous graduate pathways. This includes attention to recruitment, advising, financial support, research opportunities, and pathways into scholarly and academic roles. (17)(18)(19)

Graduate students and faculty are engaged in Indigenous health and health equity learning and research through courses such as NURS 814.3 Indigenous Health Policies, the Aboriginal Health LibGuide, and advising support. This work is described specifically and cautiously, without presenting all graduate programs as fully Indigenous. (17)

Evolution and Commitment

The 2025-2026 graduate recruitment strategy and donor-funded scholarships are developing supports for Indigenous graduate pathways. This work is connected to

the longer-term goal of recruiting and supporting Indigenous graduate students and future scholars. (17)

The College recognizes the need for deeper Indigenization within graduate curriculum. The Role of Providers in Indigenous Wellness course, offered through an MOU, is an example of interdisciplinary Indigenous health learning that can support graduate students and faculty in strengthening cultural safety, allyship, and reconciliation-oriented practice. (17)

Reflection

The Role of Providers in Indigenous Wellness course and related graduate learning opportunities form part of reconciliation-oriented education and cultural safety learning. This course is referenced in the internal Graduate Programs Story used for this report; it does not, on its own, fulfil the TRC Calls to Action or fully prepare students to provide culturally safe care without ongoing practice, reflection, and accountability. (17)

Future

Future graduate work will focus on strengthening Indigenization and allyship learning, reviewing graduate programs through an Indigenous lens, and continuing to recruit and support Indigenous graduate students and future scholars. These priorities are part of a broader pathway from graduate education to research, teaching, and future faculty development. (17)

In this work, graduate pathways bring Representation and Renewal together with Creation and Stewardship. The goal is not only to increase numbers, but to support Indigenous graduate students, future scholars, and faculty pathways through accountable structures, culturally safer learning, and clear supports. (1)(17)

Stories of Transformation

Healing Waters, Global Horizons: The Evolution of Indigenous Nursing Research

Past

Dr. Holly Graham's leadership as Indigenous Research Chair in Nursing is an important part of the College's research story. Her contribution is acknowledged as a significant part of the College's learning, while recognizing that broader research culture change remains ongoing. (4)(20)

Present

The College has faculty members engaged in Indigenous health and health equity research, including work related to chronic illness, oral health, housing and food insecurity, social determinants of health, maternal health, and community-engaged research. These examples are presented carefully, without overstating the scope or impact of projects beyond the available source information. (20)

Research examples are presented only where they are supported by project information. (20)

Reflection

The research reflection emphasizes relational accountability, Indigenous research ethics, Indigenous methodologies, and community benefit where these are supported by faculty research practices. It avoids language that presents research as "sacred" unless that framing is directly grounded in the Indigenous Strategy or approved Indigenous guidance. (1)(20)

Future

Future research directions include attracting Indigenous scholars and graduate students, supporting Indigenous health research, and revising graduate programs to strengthen pathways for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit scholars. These are ongoing commitments rather than completed outcomes. (20)

In the research story, Creation, Stewardship, and Right Relations remain connected. Research is described not only by topic or funding, but by whether it respects

Indigenous methodologies, supports Indigenous leadership and ownership where applicable, and contributes to community benefit without overstating impact.

(1)(20)

Stories of Transformation

Planting Seeds of Discovery: The Undergraduate Summer Research Fellowship

Past

The Undergraduate Summer Research Fellowship is an emerging pathway to introduce undergraduate nursing students, including Indigenous students and students from other equity-deserving groups, to research. The program's purpose and design are described without overstating its impact before outcome data are available. (21)

The "Recognizing Research Potential: Undergraduate Summer Research Fellowships" were designed to introduce undergraduate nursing students to scientific inquiry and support early research exposure before students leave their undergraduate training. The fellowship acts as a bridge, highlighting the College of Nursing's research signature areas and guiding students through the rigorous practical processes required to conduct high-quality nursing research. These eight-week projects, running from July 1 to August 31, initially provided a maximum of four awards per year: one project for each of our three Signature Areas, and three additional fellowships reserved specifically for equity-deserving groups. This includes persons of Indigenous ancestry, visible minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and members of the LGBTQ2IA+ community.

Present

The Undergraduate Summer Research Fellowship is ongoing, and College internal administrative data reports that the number of Indigenous, Métis, and Inuit fellowships increased to three in 2026. The fellowship is described as a developing

pathway for research exposure, mentorship, and possible transition into graduate study and research careers. (21)

Reflection

Increasing research fellowship opportunities for Indigenous undergraduate nursing students is a tangible step toward supporting research pathways. In this report, “Indigenous” is used inclusively to refer to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, consistent with Section 35 terminology and official Indigenous Strategy language. The focus is mentorship, access, and research skill development, rather than implying that the College gives students ancestral knowledge or validates Indigenous knowledge. (21)

Future

Future monitoring will focus on whether fellowship participation supports Indigenous students’ transition into graduate nursing programs, research assistant roles, presentations, publications, or academic and research careers. These outcomes will help the College understand whether the fellowship is supporting sustained pathways, not only short-term participation. (21)

For the fellowship pathway, Creation and Renewal are meaningful only when paired with Representation, Safety, and Wellness. The College can describe the fellowships as a developing pathway for research exposure, mentorship, and future graduate study, while still monitoring whether these opportunities lead to sustained support and measurable outcomes. (1)(21)

The Future: Planting for the Seventh Generation

Looking forward, the College will focus on a smaller number of practical priorities that can be advanced with care, monitored over time, and strengthened through relationship. The next phase is intentionally framed to avoid overpromising: actions are broad enough to guide College-wide work and practical enough to be carried forward through existing and emerging structures.

These priorities are presented thematically because the next phase of ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan will require education, student support, faculty and staff learning,

governance, recruitment, relationship-building, and accountability to work together. The College will continue to learn from past experiences, including mistakes, and use that learning to strengthen future decisions.

Education, Curriculum, and Intercultural Communication

A key next step is to explore an Indigenous Health Certificate or related learning pathway that could support undergraduate and graduate learners in developing deeper knowledge of Indigenous health, cultural safety, intercultural communication, anti-racism, and respectful clinical practice. This is framed as a feasibility and curriculum-planning priority rather than a completed commitment.

The College can also continue strengthening Indigenous health learning in graduate programming, including opportunities that support nurse practitioners, graduate students, and faculty to connect Indigenous health content with practice, policy, research, and community relationships. This work can be developed with appropriate guidance and aligned with accreditation expectations, curriculum expertise, and Indigenous leadership.

Student Support, Mentorship, and Pathways into Nursing

The next phase will strengthen relationships and peer mentoring for Indigenous pre-professional, undergraduate, and graduate students. This may include creating opportunities for Indigenous pre-professional students to connect with current nursing students, staff, faculty, leadership, alumni, and graduate students who can help demystify nursing pathways and support belonging.

Recruitment will continue across pre-professional, undergraduate, and graduate pathways, but the College has learned that recruitment must be connected to belonging, completion, licensure support, and future career pathways. Graduate students may also play an important role in mentoring others, encouraging Indigenous nurses to pursue graduate studies, and building pathways toward teaching, research, and scholarly careers.

Faculty, Staff, Clinical Instructor, and Leadership Development

The College will continue education for faculty and staff as an ongoing process, not a one-time training requirement. Learning opportunities such as Indigenous-led sessions, anti-racism learning, Turtle experiential learning, College forums, and other professional development opportunities can support reflection on personal and professional interactions, relationships, engagement, and accountability.

The College will also continue active recruitment and mentorship of Indigenous First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples as staff, clinical instructors, contract teachers, lab/simulation/virtual reality instructors, teaching assistants, faculty members, and leaders. This includes supporting Indigenous students and recent graduates to explore program delivery roles and longer-term academic or instructional pathways.

Governance, Guidance, and Shared Accountability

A renewed Indigenous advisory or governance structure is an important future priority. Re-establishing or strengthening an Indigenous advisory committee or similar structure could provide guidance for curriculum, student support, community engagement, faculty development, research, and accountability. This structure can help ensure that Indigenous engagement and co-creation are built into decisions that affect Indigenous students, staff, faculty, and communities.

The College can also continue strengthening formal processes for responding to racism, harassment, discrimination, and conflict. These processes need to be clear, accessible, and accountable, while also allowing for educational, restorative, and relationship-strengthening approaches where appropriate.

Community Relationships, Clinical Learning, and Outreach

The College will continue building relationships with Indigenous communities, schools, organizations, and clinical partners. Future work may include growing Ambassador outreach and relationship-building in high schools, exploring support groups for Indigenous graduate students, engaging Indigenous role models, and strengthening community-informed pathways into nursing.

This work must be grounded in ongoing engagement rather than one-time outreach. Formal processes for engaging with communities on an ongoing basis can help ensure that clinical placements, learning opportunities, and future program delivery are developed with humility, preparation, and respect. This may include exploring increased Indigenous clinical placements, on-reserve placement processes, and feasibility work for program delivery or placements with First Nations communities.

College-Wide Engagement and Monitoring

The College Forum and other engagement opportunities can help bring the report back to faculty, staff, and students, invite discussion about shared responsibilities, and identify how people across the College can contribute. Ongoing monitoring will need to focus not only on activities completed, but on whether they strengthen relationships, improve student experience, support Indigenous faculty and staff, and change everyday practice.

The next phase will therefore focus on a manageable set of priorities: exploring an Indigenous Health Certificate or related learning pathway; renewing Indigenous advisory/governance structures; continuing faculty and staff education; strengthening Indigenous student mentorship and recruitment across pathways; actively recruiting and mentoring Indigenous staff, clinical instructors, and faculty; and building stronger community relationships, clinical learning processes, and restorative approaches to harm and conflict. These priorities are practical, but they still require sustained attention, humility, and follow-through.

Closing Story: Learning to Listen Before Acting

The following story is included from the College's BSN Program Report as a reflective closing piece for this report. (14)

At the edge of a quiet forest, where the trees whispered in the wind and the air always smelled like rain, there lay a small, hidden pond. Its water shimmered even on cloudy days, and those who approached it felt a quiet calm settle deep in their chest. The Elders said the pond held healing powers-but only for those who understood how to care for it.

Long ago, seven guardians came to protect the pond, each carrying one of the Seven Sacred Teachings.

First came Beaver, who built carefully along the pond's edge. He taught that wisdom meant using knowledge for good, never taking more than needed and always thinking about the future.

Next was Buffalo. She stood strong and steady, reminding all who visited that every life-plant, animal, and human-deserved respect. She showed that even the smallest ripple in the water mattered.

Bear walked the shoreline at dawn. He taught that courage wasn't about being fearless-it was about doing what was right, even when it was difficult. When people came who did not understand the pond's sacredness, Bear stood firm.

In the tall grasses nearby lived Eagle, who soared high above the pond. Eagle reminded everyone that love meant caring deeply-not just for the pond, but for all living things connected to it.

Then there was Raven. He taught honesty by example-living truthfully and speaking with integrity, reminding others to be honest with themselves and others.

Wolf traveled in the forest with his pack. He showed that humility meant understanding your place in the world-not above the pond, not separate from it, but part of it.

Finally, Turtle rested at the water's edge. Slow and steady, Turtle reminded everyone that truth is lived through actions. Caring for the pond wasn't just something you said-it was something you did every day.

Coyote came to the pond as a proud healer, carrying his tools and a strong desire to help others. He soon discovered that no one could drink directly from the pond to receive healing; instead, the water had to be offered by another. This realization excited Coyote, because he believed he could now truly help the others in the forest-he could finally make a direct impact. Eager to begin, he settled beside the water's edge with a cup in hand, ready to offer healing water to anyone in need.

At first, he helped with good intentions, quickly offering water to those in need. But over time, he began to act without fully listening, speaking with certainty even when

unsure, and trying to fix problems too quickly. He created systems to manage his care, yet in doing so, he became increasingly distant from the very creatures he was trying to heal.

Beaver noticed that Coyote wasn't taking time to learn from the pond.

Buffalo saw that he wasn't honoring the creature asking for help.

Bear recognized that Coyote avoided admitting when he was unsure.

One day, Coyote made a greater mistake than he had before.

A young visitor came to the pond carrying a deep, quiet hurt. Without pausing, Coyote rushed forward, certain he could help. He spoke over them, assuming he understood their pain, and offered the pond's water before they were ready to receive it. As the water touched the visitor's lips, the pond grew still-unnaturally quiet.

The visitor turned away, not healed, but carrying more weight than when they had arrived.

For the first time, Coyote felt something shift within him.

He sat at the edge of the pond in silence. No one came to correct him. The guardians did not shame him, but neither did they intervene. The stillness stretched on, asking something of him.

After some time, Eagle came and sat on Coyote's shoulder.

She did not speak right away. She sat and listened-to the wind, to the water, and to him. At first, Coyote allowed it. He even welcomed her presence. But as Eagle gently reflected what she had witnessed, her words stirred discomfort in him. He snapped at her, defensive and unsettled, unwilling to fully face what he had done.

Eagle did not leave.

Instead, she remained steady. When Coyote's anger softened into silence, she offered him a gift-not something he could hold, but something he would need to learn.

She gave him the teaching of Wahkotowin-the understanding that all relationships are interconnected, and that responsibility lives within those connections. That to truly help another, one must listen, respect, and walk alongside them, not ahead.

Coyote sat with this gift.

And for the first time, he realized that healing was not about giving the water-it was about being in right relationship with those who came to the pond and the seven guardians that protected it.

With this new understanding, Coyote began to change how he cared for the pond. He sought out Beaver, who showed him how to reinforce and protect the shoreline. Together, they shared knowledge and made careful plans to sustain the pond for the future. From Buffalo, Coyote learned how to show respect to every creature who came seeking healing, recognizing each one as worthy of care and dignity.

Coyote's natural curiosity guided him to observe and learn more deeply, finding thoughtful ways to better support those who came to the water. Bear stood beside him, teaching him how to remain grounded and steady, offering quiet strength when it was needed most. Wolf spent time with Coyote as well, helping him understand how to work within the pack-learning that leadership is shared, and that at times, meant stepping back. Raven continued to watch Coyote intently, speaking with honesty when needed.

At the water's edge, Turtle continued to watch as Coyote rebuilt, offering guidance with patience and care. Above them all, Eagle soared, reminding Coyote of the broader view and the responsibility that comes with it.

In time, the pond began to feel different-steadier, more connected. And Coyote, no longer working alone, became part of something much greater than himself.

A Final Reflection on Our Shared Journey

“We are all in this together.”

The College of Nursing honours the gift of ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan by understanding this work as an ongoing responsibility, not a completed achievement. The past five years show meaningful movement in access, curriculum, student support, research, outreach, and faculty learning; they also reveal unfinished work, including uneven curriculum integration, inconsistent documentation, gaps in completion and licensure supports, reliance on a small number of Indigenous leaders, and the need for clearer shared accountability.

Moving forward, the seven fundamental commitments - Safety, Wellness, Stewardship, Representation, Right Relations, Creation, and Renewal - must be held together in daily practice. They must shape how the College listens, prepares students for community and clinical learning, supports Indigenous students and colleagues, addresses racism and bias, and follows through when harm or gaps become visible.

The next phase calls for humility, stronger intercultural communication, clearer structures, renewed guidance, and sustained action. It also calls for courage to keep learning from mistakes, to repair relationships when needed, and to ensure that commitments are lived, reviewed, and renewed over time. (1)(3)(8)(10)(14)

References

1. University of Saskatchewan. (2021). ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan: Indigenous Strategy for the University of Saskatchewan. <https://indigenous.usask.ca/ohpahotan-oohpaahotaan/framework.php>
2. College of Nursing, University of Saskatchewan. (n.d.). Indigenous (First Nation, Inuit, and Métis) Initiatives. <https://nursing.usask.ca/research-initiatives/indigenous.php>
3. Office of the Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement. (2026). Phase 4 ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan: The Gift - Past, Present, and Future reporting guidance. Internal OVPIE document.
4. College of Nursing. (2026). Internal administrative data reviewed for the ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan Phase 4 Report. Internal College source document.
5. University of Saskatchewan. (n.d.). Indigenous Student Achievement Pathways (ISAP). <https://artsandscience.usask.ca/students/learning-communities/isap/>
6. University of Saskatchewan. (n.d.). Science Ambassador Program. <https://artsandscience.usask.ca/scienceoutreach/ambassador.php>
7. USask Nursing. (2024, May 10). College of Nursing launches Ambassador Program. <https://nursing.usask.ca/news/2024/20240510-college-of-nursing-launches-ambassador-program.php>
8. College of Nursing. (2024). PLAN 2025: Indigenous Update - Planning and Priorities. Internal College document.
9. Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing. (2022). CASN Accreditation Standards and Framework. https://accred.casn.ca/content/user_files/2023/10/EN-CASN-Accreditation-Standards-Aug-30-2022-plus-TRC.pdf
10. College of Nursing. (2026). Internal consultation synthesis and planning priorities for ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan Phase 4 reporting. Internal College source document.
11. USask Nursing. (2026, March 12). Nursing students receive Indigenous Achievement Awards. <https://nursing.usask.ca/news/2026/20260312-nursing-students-receive-awards.php>
12. USask News. (2022, June 9). USask celebrates new northern nursing graduates. <https://news.usask.ca/articles/colleges/2022/usask-celebrates-new-northern-nursing-graduates.php>
13. Gabriel Dumont Institute. (2024, January). Saskatchewan's Next Generation of Leaders Symposium for Post-Secondary Students. <https://gdins.org/about/events/saskatchewans-next-generation-of-leaders-symposium-for-post-secondary-students/>
14. College of Nursing. (2026). ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan BSN Program Report. Internal College source document.
15. USask Nursing. (2023). Indigenous Alumni Video Series. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RTiHtFOaijI>
16. College of Registered Nurses of Saskatchewan. (n.d.). A Commitment to Truth & Reconciliation. <https://www.crns.ca/about-us/embracing-truth-and-reconciliation/>
17. College of Nursing. (2026). Graduate Programs Story. Internal College source document.

18. USask Nursing. (2023). Graduate Student Reconciliation Award Information. <https://nursing.usask.ca/documents/indigenous-initiatives/reconciliation-award-information-2023.pdf>
19. USask Nursing. (n.d.). Graduate Awards. <https://nursing.usask.ca/awards/graduate.php>
20. College of Nursing. (2026). Nursing Research Indigenization Story. Internal College source document.
21. College of Nursing. (2026). Recognizing Research Potential: Undergraduate Summer Research Fellowships Story. Internal College source document.