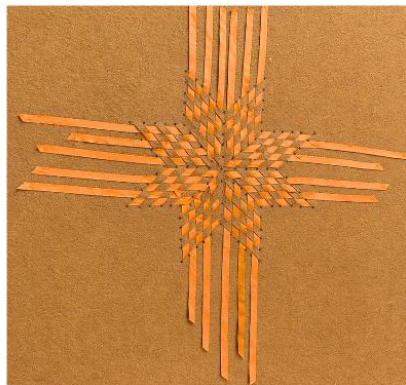




EDWARDS
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Edwards School of Business Phase 4 Reporting



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Acknowledgements

This report was developed through a collaborative and reflective process that engaged staff and faculty across Edwards School of Business. Units were invited to engage in conversations to reflect on their initiatives, practices, and experiences in relation to the ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan commitments and to document this information in shared Excel-based templates. This approach ensured that contributions were grounded in lived experience, program knowledge, and ongoing work.

In addition to these direct inputs, the reporting process drew on existing Edwards documents, internal reports, and previously developed materials to provide continuity and reduce duplication of effort. Time was intentionally set aside to collectively review, discuss, and reflect on the information gathered, allowing for shared sense-making, identification of themes, and consideration of gaps, challenges, and future opportunities.

Artificial intelligence tools were used as a supporting mechanism to assist with organizing, synthesizing, and compiling large volumes of contributed information into a coherent format. The use of AI did not replace reflection or decision-making; rather, it supported the team by increasing efficiency and allowing more time and attention to be focused on interpretation, dialogue, and critical reflection. All content included in this report was reviewed, refined, and validated by staff to ensure accuracy, context, and alignment with the values and intent of the Indigenous Strategy.

Indigenous artwork featured on the cover page is credited to the respective artists, listed in clockwise order beginning from the top left:



- 1) *Astam My Child* - Dante Carter (B.Comm., 2023)
- 2) *Celebrating Generations* - Simone McLeod
- 3) *kiskinwahamâtowtin* - Danielle Kehler (B.Comm., 2022)
- 4) *Mistatimôk Blanket Project* - Edwards staff, faculty, and senior leadership
- 5) *Ribbon Skirt* - Dana Carriere (Current Staff Member, MBA, 2016)

These artworks are among a larger collection of pieces displayed within the Edwards School of Business that were commissioned or purchased from Indigenous students, alumni, staff, and artists across Canada. Photographs featured on the cover page were taken by Colten Swales-Sorenson.

Introduction

At the Edwards School of Business (Edwards), our mission is to enable learners to become socially conscious professionals through transformative educational experiences and we create knowledge that positively impacts businesses and communities in Saskatchewan and beyond¹. Central to this mission is a commitment to cultivating ethical, inclusive, and reciprocal relationships with the communities we serve.

Edwards is committed to integrating Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into our curriculum and our research, fostering meaningful relationships with Indigenous Peoples and communities, and creating an inclusive campus environment for Indigenous students, faculty, and staff².

This report tells the story of Edwards' Truth and Reconciliation journey to date – where we were in 2021, where we are now, and where we are going. It reflects on past approaches, identifies key learnings and changes to date, and outlines how Edwards will continue to advance reconciliation in alignment with ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan. We are shifting our focus from isolated or performative actions towards a more intentional, embedded, and sustainable approach that weaves Indigenous commitments across teaching and learning, research, wellness, and community engagement.

Our Truth and Reconciliation Journey

At the 2022 ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan fall symposium, representatives from Edwards reflected that the School was at the very early stages of its Truth and Reconciliation journey. At that time, Edwards acknowledged several critical challenges: engagement/allyship that at times seemed performative; limited Indigenous content and perspectives within curriculum; insufficient Indigenous representation in decision-making; and concerns from Indigenous students regarding safety, belonging, and visibility within the School³. Collectively, these reflections revealed that Edwards had largely been taking a “checklist” approach to Truth, Reconciliation, and Indigenization rather than engaging in meaningful actions.

Indigenous Initiatives Working Group

In Fall 2022, the Edwards Indigenous Initiatives Working Group was established to bring together students, faculty, and staff. At its inception, the Working Group recognized Edwards was in the early stages of its reconciliation journey and therefore education and awareness (including about the truth) was an important place to start. Many of the early

¹ *Mission*, Edwards School of Business Strategic Plan 2023-2026

² *Values, Respect and Reconciliation*, Edwards School of Business Strategic Plan 2023-2026

³ *Where we have been*, Edwards ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan Fall Symposium 2022 Presentation

initiatives of this group were focused on education, awareness, and truth via lunch and learns with guest speakers. Over the last four years, the group has supported dialogue, shared learning, and relational accountability, and has helped identify both immediate actions and longer-term priorities aligned with ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan.

Collaboration with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner

In 2024, Edwards participated in a Treaty Learning Journey with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner. Approximately 20 champions (staff, faculty, and leaders) gathered over multiple weeks to learn about truth and reconciliation from Indigenous Elders and knowledge keepers. This was followed by a reflective exercise to understand where we, as an organization, had made progress in our reconciliation journey, and where we still had work to do. The collaboration concluded with a report of actionable next steps.

Collaboration with Indigenous Works/Luminary

In 2023, Indigenous Works/Luminary, a non-profit Indigenous NGO, facilitated sessions over multiple weeks to reflect on and identify where changes could be made to curriculum across Edwards programs to Indigenize our teaching and learning. These sessions included faculty, staff, and leaders. This collaboration also concluded with a report of actionable next steps.

Indigenous Allyship Project

Building on the work of the Indigenous Initiatives Working Group, the Indigenous Allyship Project was initiated to deepen Edwards' understanding of allyship and to explore how business schools can meaningfully support Indigenous students and communities. The research project (funded by the Business Schools Association of Canada, with support from Luminary/Indigenous Works) was guided by two central research questions:

- How can business schools become better allies to Indigenous business students as a pathway to addressing the engagement gap?
- What does allyship with Indigenous Peoples mean and how can better allyship improve the readiness of business schools and organizations to take part in meaningful engagement and allyship with Indigenous stakeholders?

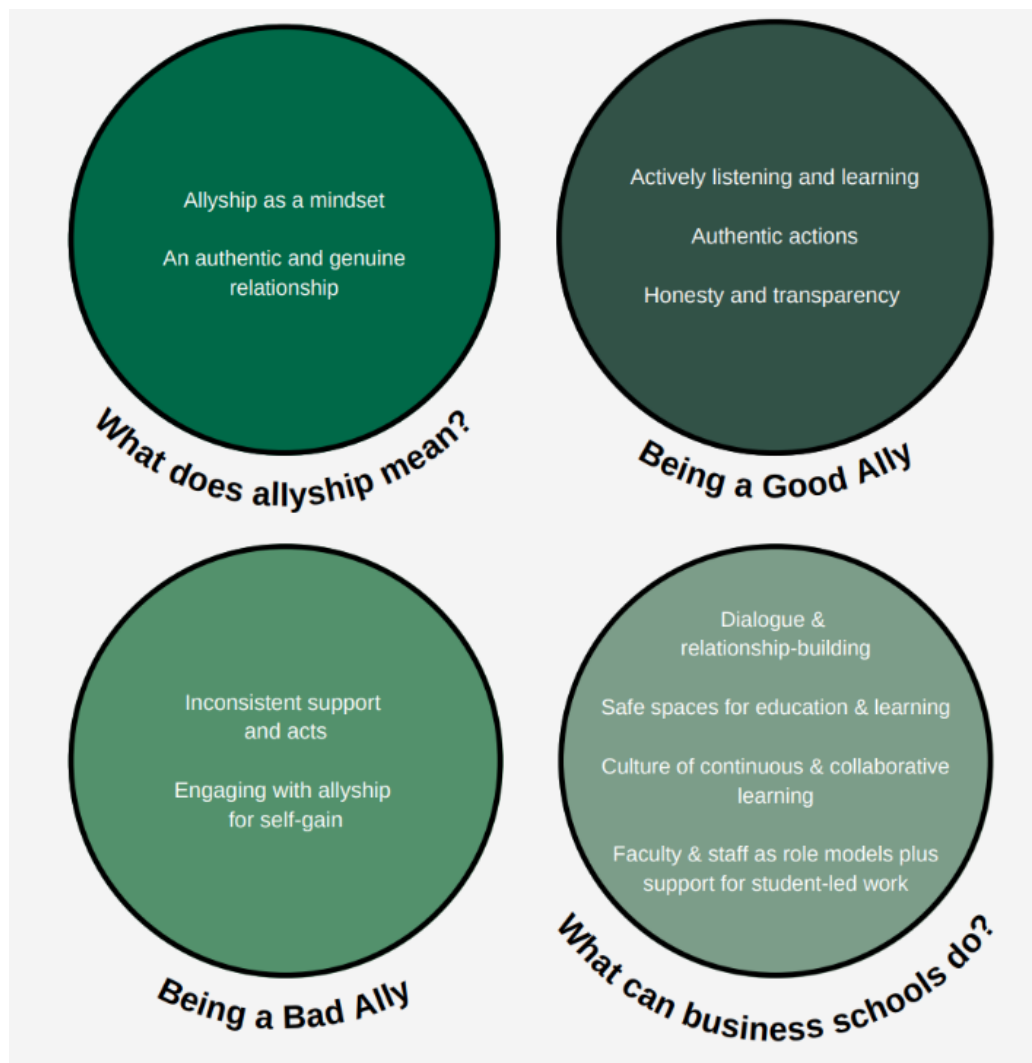
The research was conducted by a collaborative team of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Edwards faculty and students, reflecting a commitment to relational accountability, shared responsibility, and impactful mentoring of Indigenous students. To explore these questions, students, staff, faculty, and members of College leadership were invited to participate in sharing circles. These gatherings created space for participants to reflect on lived experiences, institutional practices, and assumptions related to allyship, engagement, and belonging within a Canadian business school context.

Key findings from the study, presented in a report to the Canadian Business Schools Association and presented in-person to a forum of Canadian business school Deans in Fall 2022, included:

- It is relatively easy to define what being a good ally is and is not, but it is not that easy to take steps to become a good ally. There is significant willingness to become an ally, but there are many fears, uncertainties, and barriers.
- Edwards has not done enough to promote and model allyship or to provide the necessary education and awareness needed, and our students are looking to the College to take on a more active role. Dedicating the necessary resources, capacity, and expertise is key.

Additional findings are captured in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1 Key Findings from Indigenous Allyship Project



The outcomes inspired us to identify, at the time, several long-term goals and potential initiatives:

- To demonstrate active and ongoing allyship within and outside the school. This includes recognizing the need for faculty to engage and model good allyship as well as continuing to create opportunities to gather, share and learn from each other.
- To develop and engage in processes designed to critically review and rethink our curriculum, while intentionally and thoughtfully incorporating Indigenous perspectives, knowledge, and worldviews.
- To rethink physical spaces at Edwards. We recognize that our building and spaces reflect colonial architecture and structures, and we are considering what can be done to create an inclusive and safe space the community that Edwards is asking for.
- To continue to develop our Indigenous Strategy in a way that is focused on establishing a baseline for education for students, faculty, staff, and leadership at Edwards.

The Edwards Strategy

These reflections and learnings were instrumental as Edwards embarked on its strategic planning process, resulting in the 2023-2026 Edwards School of Business Strategic Plan (Figure 2). Rather than positioning Indigenous initiatives as a standalone area, the strategic plan – inspired by the USask plan – intentionally weaves a commitment to meaningful collaboration with Indigenous Peoples and communities across all strategic pillars.

Strategic initiatives and collaborations have emerged across research, teaching and learning, wellness, community engagement, and external partnerships. In parallel, new roles and supports focused on inclusion, student wellness, and community connection have been introduced to strengthen capacity and accountability.

By adopting this weave approach, Edwards is deliberately moving away from ad-hoc activities toward a model that embeds reconciliation across structures, processes, and decision-making. This approach reflects a growing commitment to critical systems change and to sustaining reconciliation efforts beyond individual initiatives or champions.

Edwards is now beginning work on its next strategic plan, which will align with the incoming university-wide strategic plan being developed under the new President. This presents an important opportunity to build on the progress reflected here. We look forward to incorporating lessons learned from this reflective process to further strengthen our approach, ensuring that commitments to reconciliation, collaboration, and systems-level change remain embedded and actionable in the next phase of our strategic direction.

Figure 2 Edwards Strategic Plan



Phase 4 Reporting

Edwards approached Phase 4 reporting as a collective effort rather than a centralized reporting exercise. Preparing this report became an opportunity for shared reflection, learning, and dialogue across Edwards, reinforcing that Truth and Reconciliation work is a shared responsibility embedded throughout the School; it is not owned by any single unit or individual.

To support this approach, the ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan seven commitments were used as a guiding framework for conversation and reflection. Rather than serving as a checklist, these frameworks helped create a common language and structure that units could use to engage meaningfully with their teams.

Units were invited to use the framework to facilitate thoughtful discussions within their respective areas. These conversations encouraged teams to reflect on their initiatives, where they have seen successes or early impacts, and where challenges or tensions remain. Importantly, units were also asked to consider where work is still needed, what gaps persist, and how systems, practices, or ways of working may need to continue to evolve. This approach emphasized honesty, learning, and critical reflection over performative reporting. Through this process, many units observed that their work aligned with multiple commitments simultaneously, reinforcing the interconnected nature of reconciliation.

By engaging units in reflection rather than submission, Phase 4 reporting became an extension of Edwards' broader shift away from isolated actions toward embedded, relational, and systems-oriented change. The insights shared through this process informed the narratives that follow in this report and strengthened collective understanding of where Edwards is on its Truth and Reconciliation journey, where progress is being made, and where continued listening, learning, and action are required.

We report our work in a way that maps it onto the seven commitments of ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan. Even though we do not specifically map it, we acknowledge that our work also aligns with various calls and commitments captured in: Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, United Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, National Indigenous Economic Strategy's Calls to Economic Prosperity, and Calls to Justice from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

Appendix A describes individual initiatives in detail, including how they support the 7 Commitments. In this section of the report, we weave the story of our initiatives together into a series of reflections.

The 7 Commitments

As Edwards began mapping its initiatives, reflections, and outcomes to the seven commitments, it became clear that many efforts simultaneously contribute to multiple commitments. Curriculum initiatives intended to improve safety have influenced wellness and stewardship; investments in Indigenous spaces have supported representation, belonging, and right relations; and relational work has created the conditions for creativity and renewal. For this reason, the sections that follow should be read not as discrete silos, but as overlapping and mutually reinforcing stories of learning and change.

This section reflects an intentional shift away from checklist-based reporting toward an approach grounded in reflection—we are grateful to the Phase 4 Reporting framework/process for guiding us in this direction. The narratives under each commitment describe not only initiatives and emerging impacts, but also challenges, tensions, and lessons learned. Where appropriate, they also acknowledge areas where work is still in development or where Edwards is continuing to listen, learn, and adapt. In keeping with Phase 4 expectations, this approach emphasizes critical systems change over individual activities.

Together, the seven commitments provide a structure for understanding Edwards' Truth and Reconciliation journey to date as we explore how relationships have evolved, how practices have shifted, and how institutional thinking continues to grow. They also serve as a foundation for articulating future commitments, ensuring that reconciliation remains an

ongoing responsibility embedded across teaching and learning, research, governance, student experience, and community engagement.

Commitment 1: Safety

Creating and realizing inviting, welcoming, and safe spaces for Indigenous Peoples, free from racism and oppression

Across programs and units, meaningful progress has been made in advancing safety through intentional learning, culturally affirming spaces and programming, and Indigenous-centred supports. Anti-racism and anti-oppression learning opportunities, coupled with visible Indigenous spaces such as the Rawlinson Centre for Indigenous Business Students, have contributed to increased awareness, trust, and a stronger sense of belonging for Indigenous students and employees.

At the same time, this work highlights that safety is not created through one-time learning or symbolic actions. From our experiences, we recognize the need for sustained, Indigenous-led learning and consistent institutional practices that reinforce psychological and cultural safety across all environments.

Ongoing Challenges & Learning

- Safety cannot be assured when efforts are siloed (vs. system-wide) and sporadic (versus consistent).
- Indigenous faculty, staff, and students often continue to carry the emotional labour of navigating unsafe or uncertain situations.

Forward-Looking Opportunities

- Embed anti-racism learning as a sustained practice across curriculum and professional development.
- Strengthen clarity and processes around reporting, accountability, and feedback mechanisms.
- Continue investing in Indigenous-specific spaces, supports, and cultural programming as foundations of safety.

Commitment 2: Wellness

Supporting holistic, culturally grounded health and wellness for Indigenous Peoples

Wellness initiatives have increasingly reflected Indigenous understandings of whole persons, relationships/kinship, and balance. Supports such as culturally grounded advising, food security initiatives, ceremony, and community-based programming have demonstrated the importance of addressing academic success alongside material, emotional, spiritual, and relational needs.

Experience has shown that wellness is deeply interconnected with belonging and trust. When students feel supported as whole people, engagement and the ability to succeed improve. However, ongoing financial pressures and complex life circumstances continue to negatively impact Indigenous learners, reinforcing the need for stable, proactive supports.

Ongoing Challenges & Learning

- Wellness needs often surface reactively rather than preventatively.
- Short-term or limited funding, or donor funding with specific terms of reference, can constrain the impact and/or sustainability of supports.

Forward-Looking Opportunities

- Continue shifting from crisis-based responses to proactive and preventative wellness models.
- Strengthen integration between academic advising, financial support, and cultural wellness.
- Use student feedback to better understand how wellness initiatives affect engagement and success.

Commitment 3: Stewardship

Honouring, protecting, and responsibly integrating Indigenous knowledges, cultures, and protocols

Progress under stewardship has been evident through curriculum development, ethical research practices, Indigenous art and visibility, and partnerships grounded in reciprocity. Core courses such as COMM 247.3: Introduction to Indigenous Business in Canada (a core required course for students in the Bachelor of Commerce) and MBA 823.3: Principles of Indigenous Business and Engagement in Canada (a core required course for all students in the Master of Business Administration) demonstrate growing commitment to Indigenous knowledges within academic contexts, while BRIDGE Knowledge Centre-led research and applied learning reinforce ethical engagement with Indigenous communities.

These efforts have reinforced that stewardship is not simply inclusion, but responsibility — requiring care, respect, and accountability over time. They have also revealed that stewardship depends on institutional support structures that allow Indigenous knowledge holders to engage meaningfully without being overburdened.

Ongoing Challenges & Learning

- Risk of Indigenous content being treated as supplementary and separate rather than foundational and integrated.

- Growing demand for Indigenous expertise without parallel growth in structural/systemic supports.

Forward-Looking Opportunities

- Continue embedding Indigenous knowledges within core curricula and elective courses.
- Strengthen supports and inclusion for Indigenous faculty, instructors, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers.
- Further formalize ethical research and engagement practices across units.

Commitment 4: Representation

Increasing Indigenous presence, visibility, and leadership across the institution

Significant strides have been made to increase Indigenous representation through staff roles, student recruitment and retention efforts, Indigenous-specific spaces, curriculum, and visual recognition across campus environments. Indigenous art, storytelling, and leadership roles have made Indigenous presence more visible and valued.

At the same time, experience has shown that representation alone is not sufficient. Representation must be accompanied by voice and decision-making authority to avoid being performative.

Ongoing Challenges & Learning

- Indigenous leadership capacity remains limited relative to overall size of Edwards.
- Risk of concentrating responsibilities on a small number of Indigenous staff.

Forward-Looking Opportunities

- Continue investing in Indigenous staffing, leadership pathways, and mentorship.
- Ensure Indigenous representation is paired with influence in program design and decision-making.
- Track representation alongside retention and experience indicators.

Commitment 5: Right Relations

Uplifting relationships grounded in trust, reciprocity, and accountability

Right Relations has emerged as a foundational commitment woven across nearly all initiatives. Relationship-based programming with Indigenous organizations, co-created Executive Education offerings, BRIDGE partnerships, and community-informed curriculum development demonstrate a growing commitment to reciprocity rather than transactional engagement.

Wâhkôhtowin (reciprocity, relationships) and keeoukaywin (visiting, listening, learning) emerged as key themes from Edwards sharing circles about Indigenous allyship. We have learned that right relations require time, humility, and showing up as whole people. Trust and respect are built through listening, adapting, and responding — and we have learned these are quickly undermined when our (often colonial) processes move faster than relationships.

Ongoing Challenges & Learning

- Relationships and relationship knowledge are often held by individuals rather than embedded in systems.
- Institutional processes and timelines can conflict with relational approaches.

Forward-Looking Opportunities

- Better document and share relational practices and lessons learned.
- Build continuity/succession plans so relationships are not disrupted by staff turnover.
- Continue prioritizing Indigenous-initiated and Indigenous-defined partnerships.

Commitment 6: Creation

Supporting creative, innovative, and culturally responsive forms of learning and expression

Creation has been expressed through new courses, experiential learning, cultural programming, storytelling, Indigenous art initiatives, and different approaches to teaching and evaluation (e.g., reflective practice). These initiatives demonstrate an early willingness—albeit not yet systemic or widespread—to move beyond conventional academic structures and embrace Indigenous ways of knowing, doing, and being.

This work highlights the value of creativity as both pedagogy and practice. However, it also requires institutional and individual flexibility.

Ongoing Challenges & Learning

- Innovative initiatives can remain peripheral without long-term support or widespread adoption.
- Evaluation of creative impact is not always straightforward.

Forward-Looking Opportunities

- Continue creating space for experimentation and Indigenous-led innovation.
- Develop evaluation approaches that value qualitative and narrative evidence.
- Integrate creative initiatives into long-term planning rather than pilot-only models.

Commitment 7: Renewal

Ensuring long-term transformation, continuity, and responsiveness

Renewal is evident in mentorship programs, leadership development, pipeline pathways, and program accessibility adjustments. Together, these initiatives reflect a shift toward future-oriented, strategic thinking rather than short-term success.

A key learning has been that renewal depends on critical systems changes. This message was reinforced by Dr. Angela Jaime in her keynote address at the ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan spring symposium in April 2026 where she highlighted the need for structural changes to policies, data practices, funding models, and accountability mechanisms.

Ongoing Challenges & Learning

- Systems continue to reflect colonial, western perspectives.
- Long-term impacts of current renewal efforts are not always immediately visible.

Forward-Looking Opportunities

- Align policies, data systems, funding models, and accountabilities more closely with Indigenous priorities.
- Track long-term outcomes such as retention, graduation, and leadership development.
- Maintain momentum through ongoing reflection and accountability.

While the preceding section reflects on initiatives, commitments, and institutional learning, the following section shifts focus to student voice. It presents quantitative and qualitative data capturing student perceptions of Edwards' commitment to Indigenization and reconciliation, providing important insight into how this work is experienced by learners.

Student Perceptions of Edwards' Commitment to Indigenization and Reconciliation

As part of the annual graduating Bachelor of Commerce (B.Comm.) student survey, students were asked to reflect on their overall experience at Edwards, including how much they believe the School cares about a range of institutional priorities. Of the graduating cohort, 80 students responded, using a five-point scale where 1 indicated “*doesn't care at all*” and 5 indicated “*cares a lot*.” Results related to Indigenization and reconciliation were among the strongest across all areas assessed. A majority of respondents indicated that Edwards “*cares a lot*” about reconciliation (56.25%) and Indigenization (55.0%), and more than 80% of respondents rated each area positively (4 or 5). Only a very small proportion of

students expressed low perceptions of care. These findings suggest that graduating B.Comm. students clearly recognize Edwards' commitment to Indigenization and reconciliation as visible, meaningful, and integral to their overall student experience.

When compared with other institutional priorities included in the survey, Indigenization and reconciliation consistently ranked among the top areas of perceived care. Both dimensions received higher "cares a lot" ratings than areas such as academic research, innovation, sustainability, internationalization, well-being, and feelings of belonging, and were among the strongest performers on combined positive ratings (4 or 5). Together, these results indicate that Edwards' efforts related to Indigenization and reconciliation are not only clearly perceived by students, but also stand out relative to other priorities, reflecting sustained impact and alignment with student values and experiences.

The strong survey results related to Indigenization and reconciliation are supported by consistent qualitative evidence from the Rawlinson Centre annual report, which documents sustained investments, culturally grounded supports, and student-identified impacts related to belonging, financial stability, recognition, and persistence throughout the student lifecycle.

Culturally Safe Space and Belonging

Graduating students' strong perceptions of care related to Indigenization and reconciliation are reinforced by the Rawlinson Centre's role as a consistent, culturally safe space that reduces isolation and supports belonging, particularly for students who have relocated from home communities. Multiple student testimonies emphasize Rawlinson Centre as a "second home," a place of comfort, cultural continuity, and emotional safety, directly influencing well-being and persistence.

Reduced Financial Stress Enabling Academic Focus

Student reflections consistently identify financial awards, emergency bursaries, and residence supports as having a tangible impact on their ability to remain enrolled, focus on studies, and persist to graduation. Students explicitly connect Rawlinson Centre-supported awards with reduced stress, improved academic focus, and confidence in continuing their degrees, aligning with survey responses indicating high levels of perceived institutional care.

Visibility and Recognition of Indigenous Achievement

Survey perceptions are supported by visible and meaningful recognition of Indigenous students through Indigenous Achievement Week, Indigenous Graduation ceremonies, and peer-nominated awards, which affirm Indigenous identity and accomplishments within the

School. Students describe these moments as validating and motivating, reinforcing a sense that Indigenous success is valued and celebrated, not marginalized.

Relational Programming that Builds Community and Trust

Bannock chats, beading workshops, ribbon skirt and shirt workshops, smudging, and IBSS-led events provide relational, low-barrier points of connection for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. Student feedback highlights these spaces as instrumental in forming friendships, mentoring relationships, and support networks, contributing to stronger perceptions of inclusion, reconciliation, and care.

Sustained Support Over Time, Not One-time Interventions

The survey trend showing stronger perceptions among graduating students aligns with evidence that Rawlinson Centre-supported initiatives are ongoing and longitudinal, including tutoring (255+ hours provided), emergency assistance, advising, mentoring, and repeated cultural programming across the academic year. Students explicitly reference cumulative support over multiple years as central to their success and persistence.

Institutional Commitment Demonstrated Through Investment

Perceptions of care are further reinforced by significant, visible investment in Indigenous student success, including the creation of a Rawlinson Centre Coordinator role, a major endowment gift, Rawlinson Centre renovation, and expanding operating budgets focused on recruitment, retention, and student supports. This sustained investment signals institutional accountability and long-term commitment rather than symbolic engagement.

Key Reflections and Learnings

The key takeaways for Edwards from all this work, and to guide our path forward, is that wâhkôhtowin (reciprocity, relationships) and keeoukaywin (visiting, listening, learning) must be at the core of everything we do. Guided by these teachings, the following areas of focus shape our path forward.

Prioritizing Long-Term Relationship Building

We need to invest in deep, personal, individual, and sustained relationship building within First Nations schools communities before we can expect more Indigenous students to want to come to Edwards.

A story to illustrate is at the Prince Albert Campus, where we have an on-site Student Recruitment & Success Coordinator (since December 2025) that is leading sustained outreach and relationship-building with secondary schools and Indigenous communities across the Prince Albert region, with a particular focus on First Nations schools and

Northern communities. Efforts have centered on establishing Edwards School of Business as a visible, accessible, and welcoming option through direct engagement with educators, participation in school-based recruitment activities, and presence at regional and community-hosted career fairs. Meaningful connections are being developed with Indigenous organizations and communities through attendance at cultural and educational events that emphasize trust-building and dialogue over transactional recruitment.

Together, these activities reflect a relational, community-informed approach to Indigenous engagement focused on long-term presence, awareness-building, and pathway development rather than short-term recruitment outcomes.

Walking Forward in Reconciliation Through Indigenous Mentorship and Trust

Our ability to move forward in our reconciliation journey depends on Indigenous mentors with whom we have close, trusting relationships—people who can guide us thoughtfully and responsibly.

To share a past experience, an Elder generously served on the hiring committee for our Student Support and Outreach Coordinator role housed in the Edwards School of Business. We felt strongly that the person in this position needed to be a good fit working with all students, including Indigenous students. The Elder's involvement gave us confidence in the process and reassurance that the final choice was informed by Indigenous perspectives and knowledge.

The Elder's participation in the hiring process was exceptional. This person brought deep insights to the discussion and was a true collaborative partner. Their contributions strengthened both the quality and the integrity of the decision-making process.

Following that experience, we hoped to involve the Elder more substantially in broader strategy-building work at Edwards. When we reached out, they were very open and willing. However, coordinating meeting times and sustaining momentum proved difficult. Upon reflection, part of the challenge stemmed from the fact that our engagement had been episodic rather than relationally grounded over time.

This experience reinforced an important lesson: when relational closeness exists—when relationships are continuous, meaningful, and nurtured beyond specific tasks—collaborating on complex initiatives like strategy building becomes much easier. Reconciliation work depends not on one-off engagements, but on sustained relationships.

Breaking Down Silos to Strengthen Indigenous-Centered Work

We need to be less siloed within Edwards about who does Indigenous-centered work.

Indigenous-centered work at Edwards has too often relied on the knowledge, labour, and emotional responsibility of a small number of Indigenous staff and faculty, creating unsustainable pressure and risk of burnout. This includes the expectation that Indigenous faculty will carry primary responsibility for teaching Indigenous content in core required courses such as COMM 247.3 and MBA 823.3, positioning this work as individual rather than collective. Meaningful progress requires a shared and coordinated approach in which responsibility for Indigenous-centered work is distributed thoughtfully across departments, units, and leadership, rather than concentrated in specific roles or individuals. Moving forward, there is a need to break down silos within Edwards by strengthening collaboration, supporting non-Indigenous faculty to engage responsibly with Indigenous content, and embedding Indigenous perspectives more meaningfully across the curriculum—not only within designated courses. This shift recognizes that Indigenous-centered work is both a shared responsibility and an institutional commitment, grounded in relationship, care, and collective accountability.

Critical Systems Change

Dr. Angela Jaime, during her tenure as a leader at USask, framed critical systems change as the next and necessary phase of our reconciliation work. We recognize that this stage involves transforming deeply held colonial, Western assumptions about knowledge, learning, achievement, and success, and intentionally shifting both systems and mindsets toward a new and shared “normal.” This phase is essential—and also the most challenging—because it requires change at structural, cultural, and institutional levels.

While initiatives and discrete projects may feel more achievable, they are not an alternative to systems change. Rather, we see them as critical groundwork. These initiatives provide the learning, awareness, and shared understanding needed to prepare individuals and communities for deeper transformation. In this sense, initiative-level work functions as a necessary foundation for future, sustained systems change rather than a substitute for it.

While critical systems change is a decades-long journey involving global stakeholders, there are meaningful actions we can take at Edwards—as well as advocacy efforts we can advance—that contribute to this broader transformation. These may include (but are not limited to):

- Alternative forms of student assessment, including oral and other non-traditional approaches
- Competency-based approaches to assessment and evaluation

- Advocacy for students, faculty, and staff experiencing systemic barriers
- Relationship-based approaches to recruitment and retention for students, faculty, and staff
- Transformation of course content and curricula
- Integration of Indigenous knowledge into tenure and promotion standards
- Leadership development and recruitment practices that emphasize competency, action, and allyship among senior leaders

Continuing Our Truth and Reconciliation Journey

At Edwards, our Truth and Reconciliation journey has not been limited to the last five years. While many early efforts were never formally documented, we know that as early as 1994-95, the School launched one of the first Aboriginal Business Education programs in Canada—an innovative initiative that demonstrated a strong commitment to Indigenous business education. In the years that followed, dedicated leadership and focused programming continued to advance Indigenous initiatives within the School.

Today, we stand more than 30 years removed from that original program (which is no longer in operation) and more than two decades beyond subsequent periods of focused leadership and strategy in this space. This history reflects a long-standing awareness and engagement with Indigenous inclusion and education. At the same time, it invites reflection: despite these early efforts and moments of progress, our journey has not advanced as far or as consistently as it could have.

Rather than looking back and lamenting the slow pace of change, we are grateful to have opportunities—such as in writing this Phase 4 Report—to reflect on our experiences and the challenges and opportunities they present. We look forward to the next phase.

Appendix A: Indigenous Initiatives at Edwards

This section is organized to support both accountability and reflection. The first paragraph situates each initiative within the ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan commitments, outlining how the work aligns with and advances the Indigenous Strategy. The second paragraph describes the specific initiatives and activities undertaken across units. The final paragraph offers reflective analysis, identifying key challenges, lessons learned, and opportunities to strengthen and deepen this work moving forward.

Anti-racism and Anti-oppression Learning

These initiatives advance **Safety** by directly addressing racism and discrimination through structured learning experiences focused on anti-racism, anti-oppression, bias awareness, and Indigenous-approved educational approaches. They support **Right Relations** by encouraging humility, allyship, and critical self-reflection among Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants. They contribute to **Creation** by embedding new reflective practices, pedagogies, and learning models that challenge colonial norms and support cultural awareness.

This work spans structured and embedded learning opportunities focused on power, privilege, allyship, and systemic racism. Examples include engagement in the Treaty Learning Journey through the Office of the Treaty Commissioner, curriculum work with Indigenous Works/Luminary, facilitation of the Kairos Blanket Exercise, participation in the Rock Your Roots Walk for Reconciliation (Figure 3) and anti-racism workshops incorporated into both undergraduate and graduate student programming and staff learning. Executive Education embeds unconscious bias and inclusive leadership content across programs such as *Inclusive Leadership*, *Leadership Essentials*, and *Effective Executive*, with growing opportunities to align this learning more intentionally with Indigenous-led content. BRIDGE contributes through applied research, exchanges, and events that raise awareness of structural inequities.

Figure 3 Edwards Faculty and Staff at the Rock Your Roots Walk for Reconciliation



While this work has contributed to increased awareness and learning, reflection has highlighted opportunities to strengthen its consistency and impact. Learning experiences have at times occurred as one-off activities rather than as sustained, scaffolded components embedded across programs, and the integration of Indigenous-led and Indigenous-approved content has been uneven, particularly within Executive Education. In addition, non-Indigenous participants demonstrate varying levels of readiness to engage deeply with discomfort, accountability, and ongoing allyship. Moving forward, there is an opportunity to more intentionally embed anti-racism learning within curriculum and program design across all courses, not just in Indigenous-specific offerings such as COMM 247.3 and MBA 832.3. Further opportunities include increasing Indigenous partnership and leadership in facilitation and content development and incorporating structured reflection following learning activities to better assess learning outcomes beyond participation and support deeper, sustained engagement.

Indigenous-specific Safe Spaces

Dedicated Indigenous spaces foster **Safety** and **Wellness** by providing culturally affirming, welcoming environments grounded in Indigenous values and protocols. These spaces advance **Representation** through visible Indigenous presence within academic environments and support **Right Relations** by facilitating gathering, connection, and

community building. They contribute to **Creation** by enabling Indigenous-led programming, ceremony, and cultural expression.

The Rawlinson Centre for Indigenous Business Students (Figure 4), a space for all students at Edwards, serves as a culturally affirming space for gathering, advising, wellness programming, and ceremony. It supports undergraduate and graduate Indigenous students and hosts cultural programming, advising appointments, tutoring, and community-building activities. Its revitalization and staffing anchor Indigenous presence within Edwards.

Figure 4 Rawlinson Centre for Indigenous Business Students



As the Rawlinson Centre continues to grow as a hub of support and community, reflection has highlighted both capacity-related challenges and opportunities for deeper impact. Increasing demand for space, programming, and individualized supports must be balanced within existing physical and staffing constraints, particularly as awareness and utilization increase. There is also an ongoing need to ensure that all Indigenous students—especially new, transfer, and graduate students—are aware of and feel invited into the space early in their academic journey. Looking ahead, there are opportunities to continue expanding programming that intentionally integrates academic, cultural, and wellness supports, to strengthen the visibility of the Rawlinson Centre as a central hub for Indigenous business

students across undergraduate and graduate programs, and to further use the Centre as a platform for cross-unit collaboration that reinforces Indigenous presence and belonging throughout Edwards.

Director, Indigenous Business Education and Engagement

In 2025 a new Director of Indigenous Business Education and Engagement role was introduced at the School. The addition of this role enables a more intentional, coordinated, and strategic approach to Indigenous engagement across the School. The director supports **Right Relations** and **Reciprocity** by strengthening partnerships with Indigenous communities and Knowledge Keepers, while advancing **Representation** and **Reconciliation** through leadership in recruitment, retention, and inclusion of Indigenous students, faculty, and staff. The role contributes to **Responsiveness** and **Accountability** by embedding Indigenous strategy, action planning, and evaluation into the School's senior leadership structures, and fosters **Renewal** by guiding curriculum, research, and institutional practices that integrate Indigenous knowledges and perspectives in meaningful and sustained ways.

In practice, this role leads the development and implementation of an Indigenous strategy aligned with college and university priorities, working closely with senior leadership to establish clear goals, metrics, and reporting processes. It supports curriculum development by collaborating with faculty to integrate Indigenous perspectives and approaches across programs and advances experiential learning opportunities that build cultural competence. The role also leads efforts to strengthen collaborations with Indigenous communities and organizations. In addition, it supports Indigenous-focused research, student recruitment and success initiatives, and the development of processes and programming that enhance Indigenous inclusion and engagement across the School.

Reflection on this role highlights both its transformative potential and the complexity of the work. Establishing a director-level position signals a shift from fragmented or project-based efforts to a more strategic, sustained, and accountable approach; however, meaningful change requires alignment across multiple units, consistent resourcing, and shared responsibility beyond a single role. The position must navigate competing priorities, resistance to change, and the relational and emotional labour inherent in this work. Moving forward, there is an opportunity to further embed Indigenous strategy into core decision-making processes, strengthen mechanisms for accountability and measurement, and ensure that responsibility for advancing this work is broadly distributed. Continued investment in relationship-building, coordination, and leadership at all levels will be essential to deepening impact and ensuring that progress is both sustained and system-wide.

Indigenous Advising & Support Roles

Indigenous advising and support roles strengthen **Safety** and **Wellness** by providing culturally informed guidance and advocacy for students. These roles advance **Representation** by embedding Indigenous leadership and lived experience within institutional structures and support **Right Relations** through trust-based relationships. They contribute to **Renewal** by sustaining long-term Indigenous student pathways, retention, and success.

Key roles include the Indigenous Achievement Advisor, Student Support & Outreach Coordinator, Student Recruitment and Success Coordinator (PA Campus), and Rawlinson Centre Coordinator. These staff provide holistic advising, early-warning outreach, academic and personal support, and navigation of financial and wellness services, supporting Indigenous learners across undergraduate and graduate programs.

Reflection on Indigenous advising and support roles highlights both the strength of this work and the pressures placed on a small number of Indigenous staff. These roles carry significant emotional and relational labour, particularly as they often serve as primary points of contact for students navigating complex academic, personal, and systemic challenges. Advisors also regularly encounter barriers that extend beyond unit-level authority, requiring navigation of broader institutional systems that are not always well aligned or responsive. Moving forward, there is an opportunity to clarify and strengthen referral pathways between academic, wellness, and financial supports to ensure students experience a more coordinated system of care. Continued emphasis on proactive outreach, including early-warning processes and regular check-ins, can help shift supports from reactive to preventative. There is also an opportunity to more intentionally use insights gained through advising to inform program design, policy discussions, and system-level improvements that reduce recurring barriers for Indigenous learners.

Wellness & Ceremonial Supports

Ceremonial and culturally grounded wellness practices directly advance **Wellness** by recognizing holistic Indigenous understandings of health, balance, and belonging. They strengthen **Right Relations** by respecting Indigenous protocols and spiritual practices, and contribute to **Creation** by embedding Indigenous approaches to well-being within academic and community settings.

Supports include smudging and ceremonial opportunities in the Rawlinson Centre, culturally grounded wellness conversations, Mental Health First Aid training for staff, and access to culturally safe spaces. These practices align with Indigenous holistic views of wellness and are embedded alongside academic supports.

Reflection on wellness and ceremonial supports highlights the importance of continued growth in both physical space and institutional knowledge. Access to spaces that are appropriate for ceremony remains limited across some program locations, which can constrain the ability to offer these supports consistently. In addition, ongoing staff education is needed to ensure protocols are understood and practiced respectfully across contexts. Looking forward, there are opportunities to more intentionally embed ceremony and cultural wellness into student programming and key milestones, rather than relying on ad hoc or situational inclusion. Strengthening collaboration with Elders and Knowledge Keepers can further guide respectful practice, while continued efforts to normalize holistic Indigenous approaches to wellness alongside academic success measures will support more complete, culturally grounded student experiences.

Food Security & Emergency Funding

Food security programming and emergency supports promote **Wellness** by addressing material and financial barriers that impact student success. These initiatives strengthen **Right Relations** by reducing systemic inequities and demonstrating institutional responsibility and care. They contribute to **Renewal** by improving retention, persistence, and long-term academic outcomes.

Initiatives include food cupboards, grocery gift cards, bannock chats, seasonal hampers, transportation assistance, residence supports, and emergency financial aid through Rawlinson, Coutts, and donor funds. These supports directly reduce financial stressors that impact retention and student success.

Reflection on food security and emergency funding highlights both the importance of these supports and the structural pressures that necessitate them. Financial insecurity remains a persistent and systemic challenge for some students, often intersecting with broader barriers related to housing, transportation, and family responsibilities. In addition, reliance on limited or short-term funding sources can restrict the sustainability and predictability of supports. Looking ahead, there is an opportunity to strengthen donor engagement and pursue longer-term funding strategies that provide greater stability and flexibility. Increased coordination and visibility of available supports may also enable students to access assistance earlier, reducing the likelihood of crisis-based interventions. Further, examining anonymized trends in usage can inform broader institutional advocacy and contribute to system-level discussions about affordability, access, and student well-being.

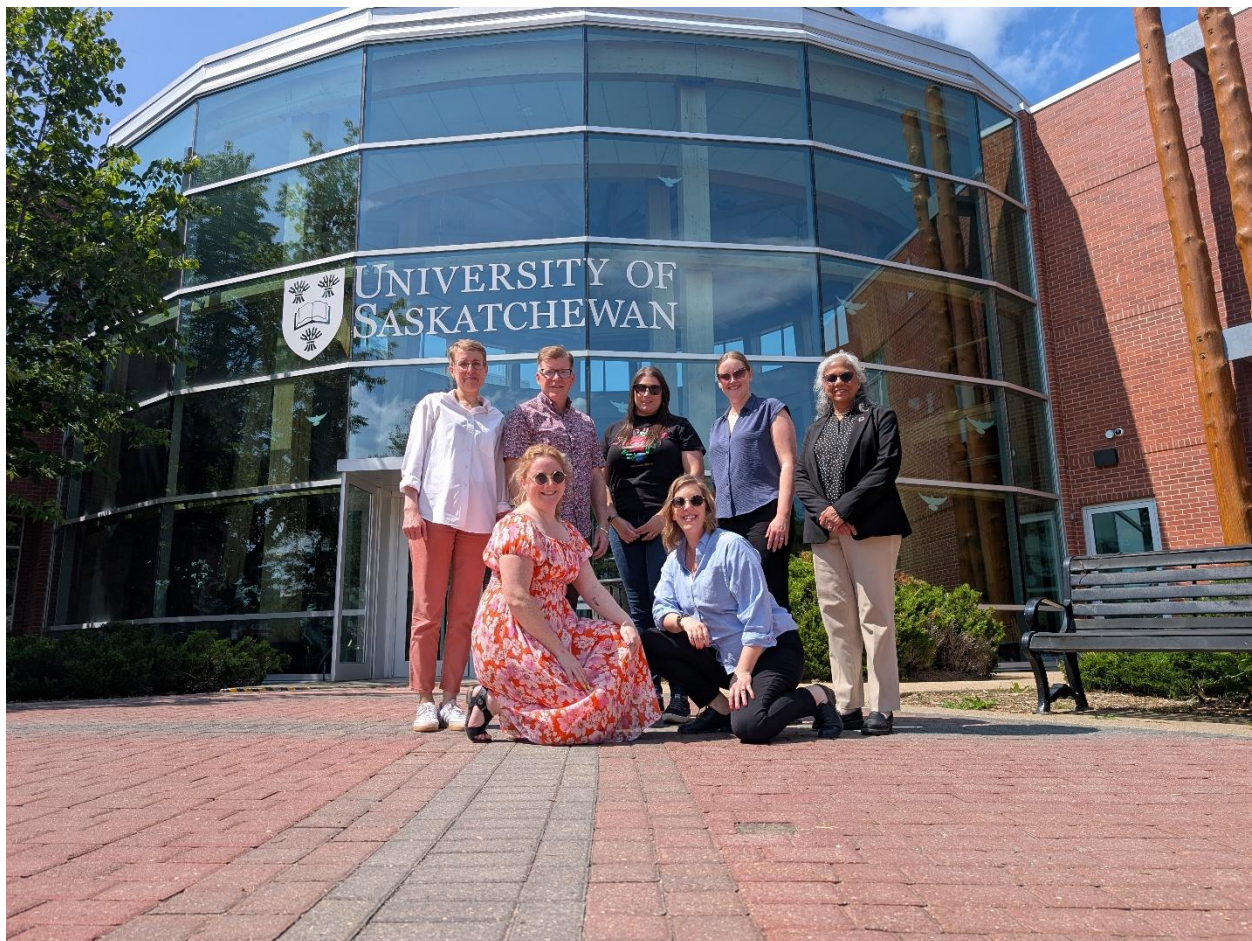
Expansion to Prince Albert Campus

Prince Albert Campus expansion programming supports **Safety** and **Wellness** by reducing geographic, financial, and social barriers that can impact access to education and student

success. This initiative strengthens **Right Relations** by meeting learners where they are and responding to regional and community-specific contexts, while increasing **Representation** by supporting greater participation of Indigenous and northern learners. It contributes to **Renewal** by creating sustainable, flexible pathways into Edwards programs beyond the Saskatoon campus.

Initiatives include the delivery of undergraduate degree and certificate programming at the Prince Albert Campus through in-person, hybrid, and online class offerings, expanded access for Northern and Indigenous students, and program adaptations that reduce travel, relocation, and related cost pressures. These efforts directly support accessibility, persistence, and long-term engagement by bringing Edwards programming closer to learners' home communities and lived realities.

Figure 5 Edwards Visit to Prince Albert Campus, June 2025



Reflection on the expansion to the Prince Albert Campus highlights both the long-term potential of this work and the practical factors shaping its growth. Awareness and visibility of Edwards programming in Prince Albert remain ongoing challenges, particularly in

ensuring prospective students and communities understand that Edwards operates locally and what programs are available. Program structure also presents limitations, as restricted first-year offerings can deter students who have completed partial coursework or who are unable or unwilling to relocate to Saskatoon. Relationship-building in the region requires sustained time and presence, especially where schools and communities may already have established relationships with other institutions, and logistical factors such as weather and transportation affect participation in outreach and engagement activities. At the same time, strong institutional support and infrastructure provide a solid foundation for growth, and a consistent, relationship-based presence is creating opportunities to deepen trust with Indigenous and Northern communities. Expanding programming beyond the first year in Prince Albert offers a significant opportunity to improve retention, particularly for students relocating from Northern regions, while a strategic focus on locally commuting students and school-hour engagement supported by facilitated transportation may further improve accessibility and sustainable enrollment growth over time.

Indigenous Orientation & Transition Programming

Orientation and transition initiatives foster **Safety** and **Wellness** by creating supportive, culturally respectful entry points into academic environments. They enhance **Representation** by centering Indigenous students in early university engagement and strengthen **Right Relations** through relationship-based programming. These efforts support **Renewal** by smoothing pathways into and through post-secondary education.

Programming includes Indigenous student welcome events, collaboration with ISAP Summer Start, 2+2 articulation agreement with SIIT, transfer student socials (including SIIT transfers), and the MBA orientation at Wanuskewin. These activities create culturally grounded entry points and support transitions into Edwards programs.

Reflection on Indigenous orientation and transition programming highlights the importance of consistency, continuity, and relational depth. Reaching all Indigenous students across multiple entry points, programs, and pathways remains an ongoing challenge, particularly as students enter Edwards through diverse routes and timelines. There is also a need to ensure that orientation and transition activities remain relational and relationship-based, rather than transactional or event-focused. Looking ahead, there are opportunities to expand culturally grounded approaches—such as land- and place-based experiences at Wanuskewin—to reinforce belonging from the outset. Strengthening connections between transition programming and ongoing academic, cultural, and wellness supports can help create a more seamless student experience, while the intentional use of reflection activities offers valuable insight into early student experiences and emerging transition-related barriers.

Indigenous-integrated Curriculum

Curriculum that meaningfully integrates Indigenous perspectives demonstrates **Stewardship** of Indigenous knowledges and intellectual traditions. It strengthens **Representation** by embedding Indigenous content across programs and supports **Right Relations** through respectful and informed engagement. These efforts contribute to **Creation** by developing new courses and learning experiences and support **Renewal** by shaping future graduates with deeper understanding and respect for Indigenous realities.

Examples include COMM 247.3: Introduction to Indigenous Business in Canada (previously COMM 347.3: Indigenous Business in Canada), MBA 823.3: Principles of Indigenous Business and Engagement in Canada, Indigenous guest speakers in graduate and undergraduate classes, and integration of Indigenous-led content within Executive Education programs (e.g., Indigenous governance, labour relations, inclusion). Curriculum renewal in COMM 115.0 and 120.0, required non-credit courses in the Indigenous Business Administration Certificate (IBAC) program, also supports this initiative. In addition, Edwards engaged Indigenous Works/Luminary in collaborative work focused on identifying pathways and strategies to Indigenize business school curriculum, helping to inform future curriculum development through Indigenous-informed analysis and dialogue. Future initiatives include one-week intensive courses on Indigenous supply chain and a course that engages with the World Indigenous Business Forum in Winnipeg.

COMM 247.3/347.3 was initially offered as an elective course; in 2021 it became a required course for all B.Comm. students, and in 2026 it will be repositioned as a second-year course. Student feedback identified the need for earlier exposure to these competencies, and placing the course earlier in the program will allow for continued scaffolding of Indigenous business knowledge, skills, and perspectives across subsequent coursework and learning experiences.

While we recognize that there has been some resistance to requiring students to complete an Indigenous business course, many students acknowledge the importance and relevance of the content:

*I have really enjoyed taking COMM 347. Overall, the course was very educational, and I will continue to use the knowledge I learnt moving forward. I believe that Edwards making this a core class will result in an **impact to society and the business world in Saskatchewan**. It will lead to impacts that include **being more inclusive to Indigenous people and businesses** and will further journeys of truth and reconciliation.*

- Student feedback from COMM 347.3 (now COMM 247.3)

As part of our reflection on curriculum, Edwards has also been reassessing the Indigenous Business Administration Certificate (IBAC). Admissions to the program are currently paused as we consider its purpose and impact. Originally designed as a pathway program for Indigenous students, IBAC addressed barriers that have since been reduced through changes to B.Comm. admissions processes. In its current form, the program name can be misleading, as the core curriculum is not Indigenous-focused, raising concerns about tokenism. While IBAC has provided valuable learning community supports, we see an opportunity to strengthen and broaden these wraparound supports across all Edwards programs. In response, applicants to the program are now being directed to the one-year Certificate in Business (CBUS), which offers a more accessible entry point and allows students to complete a credential within a shorter timeframe. This shift also responds to patterns of attrition in the two-year IBAC structure and reflects a commitment to ensuring students leave with a recognized credential, while we explore more inclusive and sustainable models of support for all learners.

Reflection on Indigenous-integrated curriculum highlights both meaningful progress and important considerations for sustaining impact. There remains a risk that Indigenous content may be perceived as an “add-on” rather than as foundational to business education, particularly when integration is uneven across programs or limited to specific courses. In addition, growing demand for Indigenous perspectives places pressure on a relatively small pool of Indigenous instructors, facilitators, and Knowledge Holders. Looking ahead, there are opportunities to continue strengthening core curriculum, ensuring Indigenous perspectives remain central rather than peripheral. Supporting non-Indigenous faculty with guidance and resources—while centering Indigenous leadership and authority—can further deepen integration across courses. Expanding the use of reflective and qualitative assessment will also help capture the impact of this learning on students’ understanding, perspectives, and future professional practice.

Land- and Place-based Learning

Land-based learning advances **Stewardship** by honouring Indigenous relationships to land and place. It supports **Wellness** through connection to land and community, strengthens **Right Relations** through engagement with Indigenous histories and territories, contributes to **Creation** through experiential learning methods, and supports **Renewal** by reshaping learning environments and educational values.

Examples include class-based experiential learning such as trips to Wanuskewin, engagement with Elders, land-based teachings embedded in courses like COMM 442.3: Natural Resource Management (Figure 6), and applied learning tied to Indigenous community contexts.

Figure 6 COMM 442 Natural Resource Management Course



Reflection on land- and place-based learning highlights both the strong educational impact of these experiences and the practical considerations that shape participation. Transportation, scheduling, and accessibility continue to pose challenges, particularly for activities such as visits to Wanuskewin, and participation can be uneven when land-based learning opportunities are optional rather than embedded within course requirements. These experiences have underscored the importance of intentional design to ensure equitable access and consistent engagement. Looking ahead, there are opportunities to more fully integrate land-based learning into required coursework, pair experiential activities with structured reflection to deepen learning, assess impact, and strengthen partnerships with local Indigenous cultural sites to support sustained, reciprocal engagement. Together, these steps can help ensure land- and place-based learning remains accessible, meaningful, and central to Indigenous-informed education at Edwards.

Indigenous Faculty & Elder Engagement

Engagement with Indigenous faculty (primarily sessional lecturers teaching COMM 247.3), Elders, and Knowledge Keepers strengthens **Stewardship** of Indigenous knowledge systems and increases **Representation** within teaching and learning spaces. These relationships deepen **Right Relations** through respect for Indigenous expertise and contribute to **Creation** by enabling Indigenous-led, knowledge-centered learning experiences.

Engagement occurs through Indigenous guest speakers, Elder participation in classes and ceremonies, Indigenous facilitators in Executive Education programs, and Indigenous-informed research partnerships supported by BRIDGE. Courses such as COMM 247.3 and MBA 823.3 intentionally centre Indigenous instructors and perspectives.

Reflection on Indigenous faculty and Elder engagement highlights the importance of care, intentionality, and sustainability in how Indigenous expertise is engaged within teaching, learning, and programming. There are ongoing challenges in recruiting and retaining Indigenous faculty, as well as in building strong pathways for Indigenous graduate students who represent future faculty members. Strengthening recruitment and support for Indigenous graduate students is critical to developing a sustainable pipeline that can increase Indigenous faculty representation over time. There is an ongoing need to ensure that Indigenous contributors are not overburdened, repeatedly drawn upon, or positioned in tokenized roles, particularly as demand for Indigenous perspectives continues to grow. Navigating scheduling, compensation, and protocol respectfully also requires time, clarity, and shared understanding across units. Looking ahead, there are opportunities to further formalize engagement practices aligned with Indigenous guiding principles to support consistency and respect, and to shift from one-time guest appearances toward longer-term, relationship-based engagement. Future considerations also include exploring the establishment of an Indigenous Executive in Residence role, which could provide sustained leadership, mentorship, and guidance across curriculum, programming, and community engagement. Creating space for faculty learning from Elders and Indigenous leaders beyond single sessions can further deepen impact and support more sustained integration of Indigenous knowledge systems across courses and programs.

Cultural Programming & Storytelling

Cultural programming and storytelling initiatives support **Wellness** by fostering belonging and cultural continuity. They enhance **Representation** by uplifting Indigenous voices and narratives and strengthen **Right Relations** through shared learning and celebration. These efforts contribute to **Creation** by centering Indigenous stories, arts, and ways of knowing.

Programming includes beading circles, crafting workshops, storytelling Lunch & Learns, ribbon skirt workshops, Rawlinson Centre cultural events, and collaboration with the Indigenous Business Students' Society (IBSS). These activities strengthen cultural continuity and belonging.

Reflection on cultural programming and storytelling highlights the balance required to sustain culturally safe, meaningful experiences while remaining open and inclusive. Maintaining cultural safety—particularly for Indigenous students and community members—can require careful consideration of format, participation, and facilitation, especially as interest from non-Indigenous participants grows. Capacity to offer frequent programming is also influenced by staffing, space, and the relational labour involved in organizing and facilitating these activities. Looking ahead, there are opportunities to expand collaboration with the Indigenous Business Students' Society (IBSS) and student leaders to share leadership and build programming sustainability. Storytelling also presents an opportunity to function not only as programming, but as a reflective and evaluative practice that captures impact through lived experience. Further integration of cultural activities alongside academic milestones and program touchpoints can help normalize Indigenous presence and strengthen belonging throughout students' academic journeys.

Indigenous Art & Visibility Initiatives

The integration of Indigenous art and visual recognition across spaces advances **Stewardship** by honoring Indigenous cultures and histories. These initiatives strengthen **Representation** through visible Indigenous presence and support **Right Relations** by acknowledging Indigenous lands and peoples. They contribute to **Creation** by embedding cultural expression into everyday institutional environments.

Initiatives include commissioning and displaying Indigenous artwork (showcased and celebrated through an Edwards Indigenous Art Tour), cultural and language decals in the main entrance, Calls to Action, Calls to Economic Prosperity and Calls to Justice banners in the Edwards parking loop, Red Dress installations, Edwards-branded orange shirts designed by an Indigenous alum (Figure 7), the creation of a library of Indigenous books available for borrowing in the staff and faculty lounge (Figure 8), and broader visual recognition of Indigenous presence across learning environments.

Figure 7 Orange T-Shirt Designed by Dante Carter (B.Comm. 2023)



Figure 8 Faculty & Staff Indigenous Library



Reflection on Indigenous art and visibility initiatives highlights the importance of moving beyond symbolic inclusion toward deeper, sustained engagement. While visual recognition of Indigenous presence plays a critical role in acknowledging lands, histories, and cultures, there is an ongoing need to ensure that these elements are accompanied by appropriate context, interpretation, and storytelling to support learning and understanding. Without this care, there is a risk that visibility initiatives may be experienced as static or performative rather than relational and pedagogical. Looking ahead, there are opportunities to further integrate Indigenous art and visual elements alongside teaching, orientation, and community-building activities, using art as a catalyst for dialogue, reflection, and learning. Expanding partnerships with Indigenous artists and knowledge holders can also support more dynamic, evolving expressions of Indigenous presence across Edwards spaces while reinforcing respectful engagement and reciprocity.

Recruitment, Retention & Awards

Targeted recruitment, retention strategies, and financial awards support **Wellness** by reducing financial stress and barriers to participation. They enhance **Representation** by increasing Indigenous participation across programs and strengthen **Right Relations** through equitable access. These initiatives contribute to **Renewal** by sustaining Indigenous student success over time.

Examples include application fee waivers, Indigenous-specific entrance and continuing awards (Rawlco, FNBC, Coutts, Thompson, WBM), dedicated residence spots, SIIT recruitment pathways, and Indigenous student learning communities. These initiatives are supported by targeted outreach and advising.

Reflection on recruitment, retention, and awards highlights the critical role financial and pathway supports play in supporting Indigenous student success, while also underscoring persistent systemic barriers. Financial pressures continue to present challenges for some students, even when awards and supports are available, and complex or fragmented application processes can unintentionally create access barriers. These experiences point to the need for continued simplification, coordination, and transparency in how supports are communicated and delivered. Looking ahead, there are opportunities to further strengthen recruitment and retention pathways with SIIT and other partners, ensuring smoother transitions and clearer progression routes. Greater alignment between awards, advising, and holistic student supports can enhance their overall impact, while improved, targeted communication about funding opportunities may help students access supports earlier and with greater confidence.

Indigenous Partnerships & Co-created Programs

Partnership-based programs demonstrate **Stewardship** through ethical and respectful collaboration with Indigenous communities. They embody **Right Relations** by centering reciprocity and co-creation, support **Creation** through jointly developed programming, and contribute to **Renewal** by building long-term community and institutional capacity.

Executive Education delivers co-created programming with Indigenous organizations such as SIGA, Meadow Lake Tribal Council, Northlands College, and Saskatoon Tribal Council. BRIDGE supports long-term community-engaged research partnerships grounded in reciprocity and co-creation. Edwards maintains membership in the Leadership Circle Program with Indigenous Works, a national community that supports Indigenous inclusion.

Reflection on Indigenous partnerships and co-created programs highlights the relational strength of this work, alongside opportunities to strengthen continuity and accountability. Many partnerships are currently sustained through relationship-specific knowledge held by individuals, which can create vulnerability when roles or staffing change. In addition, while relationships are guided by trust and reciprocity, there are limited formal indicators to consistently assess partnership quality, impact, and mutual benefit. Looking ahead, there is an opportunity to more intentionally document and share partnership practices, lessons learned, and guiding principles to support continuity and institutional learning. Continued emphasis on co-design approaches within Executive Education and BRIDGE can further strengthen reciprocity and relevance, while exploring longer-term agreements—where appropriate—may support stability, shared expectations, and sustained community and institutional capacity building.

Indigenous Education and Economic Development Events

These initiatives advance **Right Relations** by fostering meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities, organizations, and knowledge networks through presence, participation, and relationship-building. They support **Representation** by ensuring Indigenous voices, businesses, and perspectives are visible and engaged within educational and economic development spaces. This work also contributes to **Creation** by opening pathways for new partnerships, collaborative learning opportunities, and community-informed programming, while reinforcing **Renewal** through continued engagement with evolving Indigenous-led conversations, priorities, and practices in business and education.

This work includes participation by faculty and staff in a wide range of local, national, and international events and gatherings, such as the Indigenous Business Students' Society Gala, SOAR Indigenous Entrepreneurship Pitch Competition, Saskatchewan Indigenous

Business Gathering, AFOA Saskatchewan Conference, National Building Reconciliation Forum, World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education, and Luminary International Indigenous Innovation Summit, as well as community-based events including local powwows and the Rock Your Roots Walk for Reconciliation. Edwards also engages in campus-based initiatives such as Indigenous Achievement Week, Indigenous Student Experience Day, Indigenous Summer Institute, and the Building Intercultural Resilience Mentorship Program. Institutional relationships are further supported through membership in the Indigenous Works Leadership Circle and an academic partnership with Luminary, which connects the School to Indigenous businesses, innovators, and communities. In addition, Edwards contributes through sponsorship and support of initiatives such as the SOAR Indigenous Entrepreneurship Competition and the FHQ Developments Indigenous Economic Development Forum.

While these efforts reflect meaningful engagement and growing visibility, reflection highlights opportunities to deepen impact through more intentional and sustained relationship-building. Engagement has at times been dispersed across individuals rather than coordinated strategically, and there is a need to strengthen consistent presence within local Indigenous communities and business networks. Moving forward, there is an opportunity to shift from primarily event-based participation toward longer-term, reciprocal partnerships that advance shared goals in research, teaching and learning, and Indigenous student success. Strengthening coordination across units, prioritizing local engagement, and fostering ongoing collaboration with Indigenous partners will further support the development of mutually beneficial and sustainable relationships.

Indigenous Research Impacts

Indigenous-focused research at Edwards advances **Stewardship** by respecting Indigenous knowledge systems, community priorities, and ethical research protocols, and contributes to **Right Relations** through partnership-based, community-engaged approaches grounded in reciprocity and accountability. This work also supports **Creation** by generating new knowledge, methodologies, and applied insights related to Indigenous economies, governance, entrepreneurship, technology adoption, and community well-being. Through the involvement of Indigenous graduate and undergraduate researchers, it further contributes to **Renewal** by building research capacity and pathways for Indigenous students within academic and applied research contexts.

This work includes a growing body of faculty-led publications, community-engaged research projects, and grant activity addressing Indigenous and Northern realities, including themes such as ethical space, economic reconciliation, Indigenous entrepreneurship, rural and northern development, telehealth, cooperative development,

and corporate responsibility. Research has been supported through a combination of external grants (e.g., SSHRC Insight, Insight Development, and Connection grants), internal Edwards seed, dissemination, and completion funding, and partnerships facilitated through BRIDGE. Edwards faculty maintain active research relationships with multiple First Nations and Northern communities across Saskatchewan, as well as professional organizations supporting Indigenous entrepreneurship and economic development. Indigenous students have been engaged as honours and graduate researchers, with several receiving competitive national and institutional awards to support Indigenous-focused research and knowledge mobilization.

While meaningful progress has been made, reflection has identified ongoing challenges related to capacity, systems, and sustainability. There remains a limited number of research-active faculty working in Indigenous research spaces, and a lack of Indigenous faculty supervisors, which can constrain Indigenous student participation and supervision capacity at both honours and graduate levels. Institutional research and evaluation systems are not always well aligned with Indigenous, community-based, or applied research timelines, methodologies, or outputs, and tenure, merit, and promotion structures may not consistently recognize or reward this work. Faculty have also expressed hesitation in engaging in Indigenous-focused research due to unfamiliarity with methodologies, engagement protocols, or community connections. Moving forward, there are opportunities to strengthen coordinated support through BRIDGE by facilitating community–faculty matchmaking, supporting ethical engagement processes, and reducing the burden on individual researchers to establish relationships independently. Additional opportunities include strengthening research awareness among students, expanding mentorship and pathway development for Indigenous student researchers, and continuing to examine how institutional systems can better support, value, and sustain Indigenous and community-engaged research at Edwards.

Ethical Indigenous Research Practices

Ethical research practices advance **Stewardship** by respecting Indigenous knowledge systems, data sovereignty, and community protocols. They strengthen **Right Relations** by ensuring research is conducted in partnership, with consent, accountability, and benefit to Indigenous communities.

BRIDGE applies Indigenous research principles (e.g., OCAP®, CARE, community-based participatory approaches) in applied research projects. This includes ethical engagement, data governance, and respect for Indigenous knowledge holders and community priorities.

Reflection on ethical Indigenous research practices highlights both the commitment to respectful, partnership-based research and the system-level constraints that can shape

this work. Navigating institutional research policies and processes that were not originally designed around Indigenous research ethics can create friction and require additional advocacy, interpretation, and time. Building trust-based research relationships with Indigenous communities also necessitates longer timelines that may not always align with traditional academic or funding cycles. Looking ahead, there are opportunities to continue formalizing ethical frameworks within BRIDGE-led projects to provide clearer guidance and consistency, and to more intentionally share lessons learned with students and faculty to strengthen research literacy and accountability across the School. Further supporting Indigenous data sovereignty practices will remain critical to ensuring research is conducted in ways that are respectful, reciprocal, and beneficial to Indigenous communities over the long term.

Mentorship & Leadership Development

Mentorship and leadership initiatives support **Wellness** through culturally relevant guidance and role modeling. They strengthen **Representation** by cultivating Indigenous leadership, reinforce **Right Relations** through trust-based relationships, and contribute to **Renewal** by developing future Indigenous leaders.

Initiatives include Indigenous mentorship programs connecting students with Indigenous mentors, peer mentorship, leadership training through Executive Education offerings (e.g., DISC), and co-op pathways with Indigenous employers and community partners.

Reflection on mentorship and leadership development highlights both the relational strength of these initiatives and the need for intentional design to sustain them over time. Maintaining sufficient mentor capacity and ensuring effective, meaningful matching can be challenging, particularly as demand grows and mentor availability varies. There is also a need to balance formal program structure with the flexibility required to honour relational, community-based approaches to mentorship. Looking ahead, there are opportunities to strengthen connections between mentorship, co-op placements, and longer-term career pathways, supporting continuity from education into the workforce. Expanding leadership development opportunities tailored specifically to Indigenous students can further build confidence, skills, and networks, while capturing mentor and mentee reflections offers valuable insight into program impact and areas for refinement, helping to inform future leadership pathway development.

Indigenous Communications & Outreach

Communications and outreach initiatives increase **Representation** by centering Indigenous stories, imagery, and voices. They strengthen **Right Relations** through

respectful engagement and contribute to **Creation** by supporting Indigenous-designed narratives, materials, and communication strategies.

Efforts include Indigenous-focused website content, newsletters, dedicated outreach emails, Indigenous student storytelling (photos, videos), Indigenous-designed promotional materials, and communications highlighting Indigenous events, awards, and achievements.

Reflection on Indigenous communications and outreach highlights the importance of relevance, intentionality, and balance. Ensuring that communications reach Indigenous students in meaningful ways—rather than contributing to information overload—remains an ongoing challenge, particularly given the volume of institutional messaging students receive. There is also a need to balance celebration of successes with transparency about ongoing challenges and areas for growth, so that communications remain authentic and trustworthy. Looking ahead, there are opportunities to continue prioritizing Indigenous-designed communications that reflect Indigenous perspectives, aesthetics, and storytelling traditions. Using storytelling not only as a communications tool but also as evidence of impact can help surface lived experiences and outcomes that are not captured through quantitative measures alone. Further aligning communications with recruitment and retention goals offers an opportunity to strengthen coherence across outreach, engagement, and student support efforts.