

## **Letter of Understanding**

Between St. Francis Xavier University (hereafter referred to as the University)

And

St. Francis Xavier Association of University Teachers (hereafter referred to as StFXAUT)

Re: Hiring Process for Positions for Indigenous Scholars

To assist in recruitment and retention of Indigenous scholars, the University may choose to post faculty positions without a home Department specified in the posting. Hiring for these positions will follow the process in Article 2.1.1 except as specified below.

1. For positions designated for Indigenous scholars, an Indigenous Scholars Hiring Committee (the "Committee") shall be formed consisting of the Academic Vice-President and Provost who shall serve as chair and four (4) Faculty members (one from each Faculty). A representative of People and Culture or the Office of Human Rights and Equity will sit on this Committee (non-voting).
2. The Committee will be appointed through mutual consensus of the StFXAUT and the University. At least one voting member of the Committee must identify as Indigenous.
3. Before other hiring activities commence, all members of the Committee will participate in a learning session jointly organized by the StFXAUT and the University to familiarize them with the process and its unique parameters, its significance, the intended roles of those to be hired, and considerations specific to the hiring of Indigenous scholars (such as lived and professional experience, substantial community and cultural engagement, Indigenous ontologies and pedagogies - ways of knowing and being).
4. The search shall be for those individuals who identify themselves as Indigenous. The Committee shall approve, by majority vote, the draft advertisements for the authorized positions. The advertisement shall ask each applicant to identify the Academic Unit(s) which they anticipate joining and to provide evidence of their cultural heritage. The advertisement shall state a preference for applicants of Mi'kmaw cultural heritage as appropriate. The University will take reasonable steps to verify the successful applicant's cultural heritage.
5. One or more individuals will be appointed by the University, in consultation with the Association, who will be available to assist any potential applicants in preparing their application, guide them throughout the interview, selection, and negotiation process, and assist them during their transition to the new position. If external to the University, these individuals will be appropriately compensated for their role.
6. After receiving applications for the positions, the Committee shall consult extensively with all relevant Academic Units to appropriately match qualified potential candidates with the needs of individual Academic Units. The curriculum vitae and cover letters submitted by candidates shall be forwarded to the Evaluation Committee in the potential destination Academic Unit, which shall have an opportunity to comment on the applications. If in support of a candidate, an Evaluation Committee shall clearly indicate the expected contributions of the candidate to their assigned Unit, anticipated course offerings, and how the candidate will complement the current programs and offerings of the unit.

7. Following the consultation process, the Committee shall establish shortlists for each position in accordance with the procedures of 2.1.1. The shortlists shall be made available to all relevant Academic Units. Not all Academic Units consulted on candidates will necessarily have candidates on the shortlist. Members of the Academic Units who wish to comment on the shortlists have five (5) working days to make their views known to the Committee. The Committee shall then finalize the shortlists which shall be redistributed to the members of the relevant Academic Units and copies thereof provided to the applicable Dean(s) and the AVP.
8. The Committee Chair shall arrange interviews as qualified candidates are identified. Each candidate shall be given the opportunity to meet with the Director of People and Culture or designate, the Dean, the Associate Vice President, Research and Graduate Studies and the Academic Vice-President and Provost. Whenever possible, all eligible members of the relevant Department, School, or IDP shall have an opportunity to meet with the candidates. All eligible members of the Department, School or IDP shall be invited to submit individual written comments to the Committee.
9. Each interviewed candidate shall, whenever possible, deliver a lecture or participate in a seminar involving students. Members of the local Indigenous communities will be invited to participate in the presentations and asked to provide feedback. Orientation, transportation, and a meal with the candidate and members of the Committee will be provided.
10. At the discretion of the Committee, candidates may be interviewed on a rolling basis as applications are received. The Committee may recommend the hiring of candidate(s) at any time following the interview process.
11. The rest of the selection process shall follow Article 2.1.1 of the Collective Agreement unless otherwise agreed by the Parties.
12. Cross-Appointments or the inclusion of teaching/service responsibilities in another Academic Unit will not be made without a clear indication in the Letter of Appointment of the division of responsibilities of the candidate to the individual Academic Units, with a recognition that the candidate will be evaluated for tenure/promotion in the Academic Unit of the primary appointment.

To assist those hired:

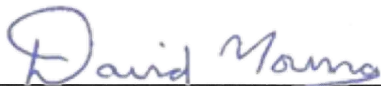
13. In recognition of the heavy service and mentoring demands placed on Indigenous faculty, the standard teaching assignment for the first five years of the tenure-track appointment will be reduced by three (3) credits.
14. An Indigenous Scholars Navigator, who is not hired under the terms of this LOU, will be appointed to support and mentor individuals hired under this LOU. This navigator will provide mentoring with respect to individuals' rights and responsibilities as specified in the Collective Agreement and will coordinate meetings and activities of the group of individuals hired under this LOU in order to provide support and additional mentoring. If external to the University, suitable compensation will be provided for the Navigator.

15. The University and StFXAUT acknowledge that there often is work (e.g., community-based work) undertaken by Indigenous individuals that is not recognized in the Collective Agreement. The parties are committed to developing updated guidelines to recognize individuals hired under this LOU for cluster activities, additional responsibilities, traditions, and community involvement where relevant. These guidelines will be provided to Evaluation Committees including the Rank and Tenure Committee. These updated guidelines will be available to individuals who are hired under this LOU upon the start of employment.

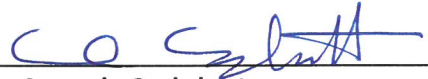
To facilitate the process:

16. Guidelines<sup>1</sup> for strengthening the hiring initiatives will be developed throughout the process to assist in the allocation and advertisement for positions, the interview and hiring process, retention and progression of successful applicants, and the evaluation procedures and criteria.

Signed at Antigonish, Nova Scotia this 31<sup>st</sup> day of March 2025.



**Dr. David Young**  
For the StFXAUT



**Dr. Amanda Cockshutt**  
For the University

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<sup>1</sup> See *Strengthening Indigenous Hiring Initiatives – An Overview*, Memorial University, July 2021.

