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UNH FACULTY SENATE MOTION # XXVI-M26 Faculty Senate Endorses the Land, Water, and Life Acknowledgement Statement

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**UNH FACULTY SENATE
MOTION # XXVI-M26**

4/11/2022

Faculty Senate Endorses the Land, Water, and Life Acknowledgement Statement

1. **Motion presenter:** Ivo Nedyalkov on behalf of the Research and Public Services Committee
2. **Dates of Faculty Senate discussion:** 3/28/2022 and 4/11/2022
3. **Rationale:** Based on the Indigenous Peoples' Land Acknowledgement report, it is important that the faculty senate endorses the Land, Water, and Life Acknowledgement statement and recommends appropriate follow-up actions.
4. **Motion:** Faculty Senate Endorses the Land, Water, and Life Acknowledgement Statement (appendix 4.1)

The motion recommends that the administration take the following actions:

1. The Land Acknowledgement statement be read at large university events, including the First-year Orientation and Graduation.
2. Support the work and mission of the UNH's Native American and Indigenous Studies' Minor.
3. Encourage UNH faculty members to continue developing new and/or updating existing courses to better reflect Indigenous heritage (e.g., by providing curriculum development funding).
4. Support students and faculty members' research about Indigenous heritage.
5. Create and maintain collaboration with Indigenous populations and researchers.
6. Develop a strategic plan to recruit and retain Indigenous students, faculty, and staff.
7. Update the RSPC of the faculty senate on the implementation of items 1-6 in two years.

The Faculty Senate instructs the Ad-Hoc Committee on Diversity Requirement in General Education consider the importance of Indigenous heritage in the development of the framework, objectives, and student learning outcomes for the General Education Diversity Requirement.

5. **Senate action:** The motion passed with 55 in favor, 1 opposed and 1 abstention.

6. **Senate chair's signature:**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Foley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Appendix 4.1

Land, Water, and Life Acknowledgement Statement:

“As we all journey on the trail of life, we wish to acknowledge the spiritual and physical connection the Pennacook, Abenaki, and Wabanaki Peoples have maintained to N’dakinna (homeland) and the aki (land), nibi (water), lolakwikak (flora), and awaasak (fauna) which the University of New Hampshire community is honored to steward today. We also acknowledge the hardships they continue to endure after the loss of unceded homelands and champion the university’s responsibility to foster relationships and opportunities that strengthen the well-being of the Indigenous People who carry forward the traditions of their ancestors.”

Background

The University of New Hampshire (UNH) must be held accountable for its role in inflicting generational trauma because of Indigenous land dispossession for its own profit. Therefore, UNH should continue its efforts to seek out ways to boost its Indigenous student population, relationships with local tribes, and development of curriculum highlighting Indigenous heritage in the state and beyond. Endorsing Land acknowledgment is only one action in an array of possible conciliatory and restorative justice efforts.

As a step toward conciliatory and restorative justice, UNH Faculty Senate must endorse the Land, Water, and Life Acknowledgement Statement to create and honor the relationships with and history of Indigenous Peoples and take further action to support Indigenous sovereignty and advocate for land reparations. In the Spring 2021, the Associate Vice President of Community, Equity, and Diversity and Chief Diversity Officer at University of New Hampshire, Nadine Petty, convened a committee, which included Indigenous tribal leaders, and Indigenous and non-Indigenous faculty, staff, and administrators, to craft a land recognition statement in order to recognize the importance of Indigenous heritage, acknowledge the dispossession of Indigenous land, and continue focusing on building a better future for everyone, including local Indigenous populations.