

UPDATE ON YELLOWQUILL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

RE: THE GOVERNMENT OF MANITOBA THROUGH THE ADVANCED EDUCATION DEPARTMENT WILL RECOGNIZE YELLOWQUILL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE AS A POST SECONDARY INSTITUTE

“Aboriginal people have both the right and the responsibility to educate their people” – it was this vision that inspired Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council to establish Yellowquill College in 1984. The Council understood that a better future was possible through a First Nation owned and operated post-secondary institute that provided an alternative for aboriginal adults wanting to pursue their educational goals. Their vision was to create a school respectful of First Nation culture and founded on traditional First Nation values such as honesty, humility, truth, bravery, love, respect and wisdom; a place where students could pursue a quality education in a welcoming and supporting environment.

Yellowquill University College is Manitoba's only First Nation owned and operated post-secondary institution. YQUC began in 1984 and has experienced had considerable growth since its inception. YQUC is in the process of becoming a recognized post-secondary Institution through the Department of Advanced Education. This should be completed by April 2026. YQUC prides itself in delivering an education that is culturally-based and has real meaning for the students.

“The vision of our Elders is to witness the training of our men and women in the physical, mental and spiritual spheres to bring about the development of their moral character to produce a future high quality leadership in economic, social and community within Manitoba, Canada and North American society (Chief Ken Chalmers, 2021)”.

Yellowquill University College, in partnership with the Province of Manitoba – Department of Advanced Education, are currently working through the development process for YQUC to become a recognized post-secondary institute in Manitoba. This is with the understanding that Yellowquill University College will retain their First Nation-ness. This process began in 2021 and was accelerated in January 2025.

It is clear that there is a need for a First Nation-controlled University College in Manitoba that responds directly to First Nation/Indigenous needs. There is a definite gap in the current post-secondary systems regarding how their programs are developed and delivered to the First Nation population. It is important that the curricula and materials used are conducive to the reality of First Nation needs.

Yellowquill has more than proven their worth in the post-secondary arena over the past 41 years and are prepared to move forward.

TRANSITION FROM COLLEGE TO A UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

In 2021, Yellowquill College, through its Board of Directors operated on the belief that it is in the spirit of their sovereignty and self-determination that gave them the right to offer higher learning and post-secondary education. The Chiefs/Board of Directors are mindful of the recommendations regarding education put forth by the *Royal Commission on Aboriginal People (RCAP)*, and the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)*, as well as the *United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)* that recognizes the right of Indigenous people to establish their own institution of higher learning.

The Board of Directors have acknowledged and endorsed Yellowquill College to have the ability to offer college and university-level degree programs. As a result, Yellowquill College became Yellowquill University College on February 25, 2021 by way of a Resolution passed by the Council of Chiefs/Board of Directors of the Institute:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: The Chiefs, through their own authority as sovereign First Nations recognize and acknowledge that Yellowquill College has the power and rights to grant advanced degrees of bachelor and master level programs; that these programs will be established by the Board of Yellowquill College; and that Yellowquill College will create university-college level programs which progress to greater credentialing of First Nations students.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: The DOTC Chiefs assert the Right to Education and affirm the authority for Yellowquill College to develop as a college/university institution and will now be known as Yellowquill University College. (February 2021)

In 2021, YQUC developed and offered their first two degree programs: Bachelor of First Nation Studies and the Bachelor of Education Degree Program.

In 2024, YQUC received Degree granting status through the Provincial Degree Granting Legislative Statute.

In 2025, YQUC developed and began offering the Bachelor of Relational Studies (post diploma) Degree.

From 2021 to 2025 YQUC has been meeting with the Department of Advanced Education and related departments

ACCREDITATIONS and CERTIFICATIONS

Yellowquill University College is accredited by the **National Indigenous Accreditation Board (NIAB)** and has been since 2017. This Board serves as an independent body through which members work cooperatively to ensure education programs and institutions embody and are grounded within local Indigenous knowledge systems.

Yellowquill University College is also has accreditation by the **World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium (WINHEC)** and received that accreditation in 2017. The NIAB and WINHEC accreditation recognizes Indigenous-controlled institutions that respect the basic standards of post-secondary education with an emphasis on the culture and traditions. These Boards are committed to using local Indigenous knowledge, ceremonies, and language to guide and express approaches to the accreditation of education programs.

Yellowquill University College is also a founding member of the **National Association of Indigenous Institutes of Higher Learning (NAIIHL)**.

The Aboriginal Financial Managers Diploma Program partners with the **Aboriginal Financial Officers Association (AFOA)**. Some of the courses are transferrable to attain the Certified Aboriginal Financial Management Diploma.

The First Nation Addiction and Mental Health Diploma assessment was completed and it is now accredited with the **Indigenous Certification Board of Canada (ICBOC)**.

Bachelor of Relational Studies Degree Program accreditation is underway. That accreditation is with the **National Accreditation Board of Canada in partnership with the Social Work Association of Canada**. The first step of “candidacy” has been achieved and upon graduation of the first class 2026 YQUC will receive that accreditation. This accreditation will also be recognized by the College of Social Workers of Manitoba.

The First Nation Child and Family Service Diploma was included in the **CFS Legislation** through the Regulations section as a recognized Education and Training program.

Degree Granting status through the Degree Granting Legislation of Manitoba – June 2024 for the Bachelor of First Nation Studies and the Bachelor of Education. All teachers who graduate with the Bachelor of Education are eligible for the Manitoba Teachers Certificate.

CONCLUSION:

Currently, Yellowquill University College continues to meet with the Advanced Education department to finalize the Yellowquill University College Act; ensure Legislative requirements are met, and to work through the operations and financial aspects of the Institute.

There will be some re-organization occurring during the new fiscal year beginning April 2026. This will not disrupt operations at Yellowquill and students will not be affected directly.

Yellowquill University will become larger and more programs will be offered in the near future.

THIS IS EXCITING NEWS FOR OUR INSTITUTION !!