2024/25 UNDRIP Alignment Committee Final Report to

NASSS Board of Directors (October 24, 2025)

Committee Members: Vicky Paraschak (chair), Miruthula Queen Anbu, Sean Seiler, Nik Dickerson, Jennifer Wigglesworth, Cristine Vlcek (resigned in early 2025 for personal reasons)

Number of meetings: 10

Key Activities: Following the passing of our draft bylaw change in late 2024, we began operating as a standing committee of NASSS. Key activities this year include creating a process to receive guidance from the Indigenous Advisory Council, ensuring Indigenous elements were incorporated into 2025 conferences in Seattle and Vancouver, and drafting a 3-year Strategic Plan that was initially distributed for NASSS membership input to address the 2023 UNDRIP Alignment Resolution. Elements of the Resolution Framework that direct our actions are outlined in **bolded text**, along with our efforts over the year to address them. All resolutions from our 2024 report were supported by the NASSS Board and implemented. The only change (included as a recommendation this year) was that the President-Elect, rather than the President, oversee the land acknowledgements needed for the conference.

Budget Details: The Committee has a budget allotted to them up to $1000 US. We have been given approval for honoraria of $250 CAN and free conference registration for Zoe and Santana, two Indigenous youth who will provide the Welcome at the Vancouver conference. Those who provide the Welcome and the Presidential Panel on Puyallup Engagement in the World Cup in Seattle will receive the gift of a print by an Indigenous artist; this cost is being covered by Sean Seiler. We have Committee members preparing a poster with the land acknowledgements for the Conference, which will be posted at Registration for both Conferences – we will be claiming the costs for printing these two posters once they are completed, but expect the cost will not exceed $300 US. Janice Forsyth, who is providing SEEDS members with an online presentation on Indigenous research methodologies, has been granted free registration (by Travers) as thanks. There are also up to ten free registrations offered for interested local Indigenous and/or BIPOC individuals at both conference sites, approved (with thanks from us) by our President-Elect.

Resolution Framework

NASSS unequivocally commits to UNDRIP's aim of respecting Indigenous peoples' rights and pledges to uphold these principles in its activities and initiatives, to promote the value of Indigenous peoples' participation, ways of knowing/being/doing, and sovereignty in the realms of sport, recreation and physical culture, and to contribute to the broader efforts of reconciliation and respect for Indigenous peoples' rights.

- We discussed various ways of sharing knowledge about issues and activities related to Indigenous sport and physical culture with the NASSS membership, including the idea of a newsletter, inclusion as part of the annual conference, and a site on the NASSS website dedicated to information about Indigenous sporting activities and issues. We have included this as one element (#3) in the draft 3-year Strategic Plan (see Appendix A).
- We worked with the President-Elect to ensure Indigenous elements (land acknowledgement and welcome) were suitably included at both conference sites. We ensured the land acknowledgements were posted on the NASSS website and

will be available in poster format at the Registration desk for both conference sites.

NASSS also commits to aligning its constitution, bylaws, policies, and procedures manual with the principles and articles of UNDRIP.

- Included the Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC) as an integral part of committee operations
- Modified the 2024 approved operating code for our Committee, including the timeline for identifying IAC members, and clarified the process of sharing information with and gathering information from those members (see Appendix B).
- We consistently shared our efforts with other NASSS committees such as the DCCC, SEEDS, conference organizers, the NASSS Board and the conference Accessibility sub-committee. We found this to be an effective way to see how our joint interests might inform/assist each other. For example, we assisted SEEDS in their desire to have a speaker on Indigenous research methodologies for the participants, by speaking with Janice Forsyth, who agreed to do this.
- We generated a guideline for consideration when land acknowledgements are being created each year for the upcoming conference (see Appendix C)

NASSS will strike a UNDRIP Alignment standing committee that will take on as its first order of business drafting both the Terms of Reference for that committee and a NASSS five-year implementation and accountability plan.

- Submitted a resolution that was passed by the NASSS membership following the 2024 Annual Meeting, which established the UNDRIP Alignment Committee as a Standing Committee of NASSS in the bylaws.
- Generated a draft 3-year Strategic Plan, distributed it for feedback from the NASSS membership (see Appendix D for results) and completed a revised 3-Year Strategic Plan for consideration by the NASSS membership (See Appendix A).

NASSS will advocate for support for Indigenous-led sporting initiatives and for including Indigenous peoples in the planning and participation of international sporting events, respecting Indigenous territorial laws and protocols.

- The Presidential Panel on Puyallup engagement in the World Cup in Seattle provides members with this information
- We consider actions for this resolution point (see Appendix E) as part of element #3 of the draft Strategic Plan, which focuses on providing Indigenous histories and cultural practices within NASSS and enhancing awareness of Indigenous histories and cultural practices within sports practices more broadly.

NASSS will strive to ensure that its activities and initiatives are inclusive of Indigenous peoples and reflect the diverse cultures and the physical and sporting activities of Indigenous peoples.

- This fits with element #1 in the draft Strategic Plan - creating safe and ethical spaces in NASSS.

Recommendations Approved by the NASSS Board

That the NASSS president-elect takes on responsibility for learning about the Indigenous peoples of the location where NASSS conference will be held and prepare a meaningful land acknowledgement for use at the conference, and that the land acknowledgement be posted on the NASSS website as part of Conference information each year.

That the practice of offering a small number (e.g., 10) free conference registrations out to local interested Indigenous and/or BIPOC individuals be continued.

That the Board endorse the UNDRIP Alignment committee in moving forward to finalize, with NASSS membership approval, the attached three-year Strategic Plan (See Appendix A)

That the Board endorse inviting local Indigenous artists to bring their products for sale at the Calgary conference next year as a pilot exploration of this idea.

That the NASSS Board actively consider opportunities for holding its conferences in Indigenous-owned locations and involve a member of the UNDRIP Alignment Committee in future conference site selections.

That the Board endorse the updated Operating Code for the UNDRIP Alignment Committee. (See Appendix B)

That Sean Seiler be appointed Chair-Elect, and Vicky Paraschak be appointed Chair for the UNDRIP Alignment Committee for 2025/26.

Appendix A: 3-Year UNDRIP Alignment Strategic Plan for NASSS

Background Context:

In November 2022, NASSS president Michelle Richardson created an Ad Hoc committee to explore the alignment of NASSS practices with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). NASSS' *NASSS resolution to Commit to the UNDRIP Aim of Respecting Indigenous Peoples' Rights* was passed unanimously by our membership in November 2023. The next year, a bylaw establishing the UNDRIP Alignment Committee as a standing committee of NASSS was passed by our membership to operationalize this NASSS resolution. The Committee was then directed to draft both Terms of Reference for said committee, which was completed in November 2024, and develop a Strategic Plan.

The Committee completed an initial draft of a three-year Strategic Plan. As a part of ethics guiding this Committee's actions, we then reached out to the membership to assist in co-creating this Plan in the following ways: (1) peer review and (2) solicit feedback on the four elements we are recommending, along with potential ways that we can together be accountable in working towards a collective vision of NASSS: ***an academic organization aligned with UNDRIP by November 2028***, as laid out in the NASSS resolution.

We requested anonymous feedback on our draft over a two-week period. Seven responses were received, and the feedback was appreciated and taken into consideration in the next draft we generated. Feedback was largely supportive of the draft Strategic Plan's four elements, with more comments/concerns raised over the annual goals that would address each element. We shared the updated draft with the NASSS membership for any further input (none was received) and asked for **approval of the four elements** from the NASSS Board, which was given. We also provided lists of potential/possible ways that each element could be addressed (see *Strategic Plan Appendix* below), recognizing there are many ways to contribute towards each element.

Implementation:

Each year (for the next three years) the UNDRIP Alignment Committee will, as its first item of business, identify at least one goal for that year that they will tackle for each of the approved four elements, and construct a timeline for completion. They will report on their progress to the Board and to the NASSS Membership as part of their committee's Final Report, and the same process will begin again with the next Committee. We feel this process ensures that the broad framework of the Strategic Plan remains in place (i.e., the elements), and that maximum flexibility is accorded to each new Committee, so that they can select preferred actions that align with their interests/strengths to contribute towards each element. This process also ensures that accountability occurs annually to both the Board and the NASSS membership, thereby detailing our efforts in moving towards the realization of our 2023 *NASSS Resolution to Commit to the UNDRIP Aim of Respecting Indigenous Peoples' Rights*. We recognize that the Strategic Plan needs to be able to adapt and grow as needs, desires, and potential new challenges emerge, which will remain an option available for consideration by the UNDRIP Alignment Committee. We also acknowledge that efforts to align NASSS practices with UNDRIP may require additional labour from NASSS members. UNDRIP Alignment Committee members will need to take that possibility into consideration as part of their engagement in this process and be transparent about such implications.

Four Key Elements of the 3-Year Strategic Plan (approved by the NASSS Board)

1. ***Creating safe and ethical spaces in NASSS*:**

NASSS recognizes the unique challenges faced by Indigenous peoples in the realms of sports and academia and the need for specific measures to ensure their full and equitable participation (NASSS resolution); and sports as a platform for promoting cultural understanding, mutual respect, and peace among different peoples (NASSS resolution). Hence, NASSS commits to fostering an inclusive environment in sports that respects and celebrates the cultural diversity and heritage of all its members (NASSS resolution), having access to fair procedures for conflict resolution and effective remedies for infringements of rights. This requires the construction of an ethical and safe space where we work to listen, repair, pay attention, and maintain relationships to develop trust, safety, and care. In doing so, NASSS will ensure that its activities and initiatives are inclusive of Indigenous peoples and reflect the diverse cultures and the physical and sporting activities of Indigenous peoples (NASSS resolution), and foster mentoring and belonging for NASSS Indigenous students and professors (UNDRIP Alignment Committee Final Report, 2024).

2. ***Structural alignment of NASSS with UNDRIP*:**

NASSS commits to aligning its constitution, bylaws, and policies and procedures manual with the principles and articles of UNDRIP (NASSS resolution).

3. ***Enhancing awareness of Indigenous histories and cultural practices within NASSS and within sport practices more broadly:***

UNDRIP underscores the importance of Indigenous peoples' right to learn about/tell/share/ construct/record their histories and the necessity for non-Indigenous peoples to learn about Indigenous histories/cultures/ways of knowing and being (NASSS resolution); NASSS is an organization committed to the communication and application of accurate knowledge about sport and society through teaching, research, and social action; and to promote the value of Indigenous peoples' participation, and ways of knowing/being/doing (NASSS resolution).

4.***Sharing Truth and Reconciliation activities tied to UNDRIP, including ongoing and historical knowledge about and advocacy related to Indigenous peoples' engagement in sport in mainstream and Indigenous sporting spaces:***

UNDRIP emphasizes the rights of Indigenous peoples to participate fully in mainstream services as distinct peoples, to maintain and strengthen their cultural institutions and traditional physical cultural practices, to be free from discrimination, and to access meaningful physical cultural practices (NASSS resolution); the need for specific measures to ensure their full and equitable participation; advocate for support for Indigenous-led sporting initiatives and for including Indigenous peoples in the planning and participation of international sporting events, respecting Indigenous territorial laws and protocols (NASSS resolution); enhancing education opportunities for NASSS members concerning UNDRIP and Indigenous ways of knowing/being/doing more broadly; acknowledging sovereignty in the realms of sport, recreation and physical culture, and contributing to the broader efforts of reconciliation and respect for Indigenous peoples' rights.

Strategic Plan Appendix: Potential/Possible Actions to Work Towards the Four Elements

1. ***Creating safe and ethical spaces in NASSS:***

- understanding the environment and addressing discriminatory behaviours with a process to address them
- surveying NASSS membership to gain an understanding of the cultural climate
- designing an intervention strategy shaped by NASSS membership perspectives
- developing a protocol for racist treatment, perhaps through an Ombudsperson
- creating practices that strengthen the dignity of all members and their unique identities, both within NASSS and between NASSS and outside Indigenous groups
- addressing settler allyship, including addressing microaggressions, white fragility, and other associated discomforts tied to UNDRIP alignment
- creating a code of conduct that members should agree to when registering for the conference. This would include racist treatment but also other forms of discrimination. A process to address violations is very important as well.
- working with other NASSS committees to construct spaces for knowledge exchange as opposed to knowledge dissemination
- ensuring that arrangements are made for cultural practices, such as smudging, if requested by an Indigenous conference presenter
- creating unique practices within NASSS that specifically acknowledge the sovereignty of Indigenous members
- creating an Indigenous mentorship program
- creating a scholarship for Indigenous graduate students to help them attend NASSS

2. ***Structural alignment of NASSS with UNDRIP:***

- implementing ways that this committee can effectively interface with other NASSS committees in areas of shared concern (e.g., working with Scholars Enlightened Engaged Disrupting Structures (SEEDS), Diversity and Conference Climate Committee (DCCC), etc.).
- examining the NASSS Policies and Procedures Manual (PPM) and recommending, where appropriate, ways the various Board positions and Committee procedures could align with UNDRIP (e.g., incorporating ways that the UNDRIP Alignment committee could work with others in areas of shared concern).
- examining NASSS Board operating codes and recommending, where appropriate, ways they could align with UNDRIP (e.g., formalizing relationships at each conference with the Indigenous peoples of that location).
- examining NASSS bylaws and recommending, where appropriate, bylaw changes to align with UNDRIP

3. ***Enhancing awareness of Indigenous histories and cultural practices within NASSS and within sport practices more broadly:***

- enhancing meaningful NASSS relationships with Indigenous groups linked to the various conference sites and exploring ways to enhance those relationships over time and to direct resources (e.g., financial) to those groups
- formal engagement of local Indigenous groups in conferences as presenters
- considering conference locations tied to Indigenous ownership
- creating and implementing a process for providing NASSS members with updates on

historical and current developments in Indigenous sport and traditional activities (e.g., a location tied to the NASSS website that provides resources such as newspaper articles on current developments in Indigenous sport).
- creating a mentorship process to strengthen member engagement (graduate students, faculty, researchers) in Indigenous ways of knowing/being/doing (e.g., as an element within the SEEDS program).

4. ***Sharing Truth and Reconciliation activities tied to UNDRIP, including ongoing and historical knowledge about and advocacy related to Indigenous peoples' engagement in sport in mainstream and Indigenous sporting spaces:***

- highlighting Indigenous-led efforts to decolonize existing setter colonial relations in sport
- highlighting Indigenous-led cultural resurgence activities tied to sport and traditional physical activities
- documenting government commitments/actions (or not) to address reconciliation with Indigenous peoples tied to sport
- continuing to engage local Indigenous communities at the annual conference (e.g., plenary speakers or panels) to deepen NASSS members' awareness of the diversity of Indigenous Peoples on Turtle Island - this will hopefully help strengthen the membership's knowledge of and commitment to processes of reconciliation.
- creating a section in the annual NASSS program in which issues related to reconciliation, sports, and current issues facing Indigenous groups and individuals are addressed.
- drawing on the substantive expertise within NASSS to address the research needs of sport and recreation organizations—especially Indigenous ones, but also settler organizations. This aligns with Veracini's (2024) argument that settler colonial studies can contribute meaningfully to decolonization by working with settler organizations to help undo their coloniality.

Appendix B: Operating Code for UNDRIP Alignment Special Committee

NASSS United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP) Alignment Committee Codes of Operation

I. UNDRIP Alignment Committee Moral Ethos

a. *The NASSS UNDRIP Alignment committee operates from the moral, ethical, cooperative, and reconciliation framework of The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).*
   i. As such, this committee works to develop a sustainable praxis-oriented framework to advance the implementation of the Declaration in collaboration with Indigenous peoples within NASSS. A praxis that insists on decolonizing, dismantling, and disrupting NASSS' systems and structures that contribute to the reproduction and maintenance of oppressive, racist, sexist, ableist practices of colonialism.

b. *To move towards reorienting NASSS from a decolonial foundation the work of the NASSS UNDRIP Alignment Committee prioritizes the following themes from the UNDRIP articles*
   i. The rights of Indigenous peoples to participate fully in mainstream services as distinct people
   ii. The rights of Indigenous peoples to maintain and strengthen distinct cultural institutions, traditional physical, cultural, and sporting practices
   iii. Freedom from discrimination, racism, and racist treatment
   iv. Indigenous Rights to know their history, and the necessity for non-Indigenous peoples to know Indigenous history
   v. The rights of all Indigenous peoples to have access to meaningful physical cultural practices (e.g. holistic health and social benefits)
   vi. The necessity of direct and immediate action to address these issues

c. *To do this work, the UNDRIP Alignment committee centers the belief that we are all collectively responsible to each other to envision and create a better future for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.*
   i. Thus, we hold ourselves to be primarily responsible to the members of NASSS.
   ii. To develop trust, transparency, and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples through the building of relationships.
   iii. Relationships built on an understanding of Indigenous histories, experiences, and ways of being.
   iv. Relationships that collectively work to imagine and build better futures.

II. The Important Pieces of our Collective

a. *Chairperson*
   i. Every year during the annual meeting of the society, the chairperson-elect of the UNDRIP Alignment Committee shall be selected by the outgoing UNDRIP Alignment Committee for approval by the Board. This individual should exhibit knowledge of and or/commitment to UNDRIP through their actions and/or scholarship and demonstrate facilitative relationship-building practices with

Indigenous colleagues. On the occasion that the candidate is disapproved by the Board, the Committee shall select another candidate for consideration.

ii. The first year the chairperson-elect operates as a member of the Committee.
iii. The second year this individual becomes the Chair of the Committee and serves as an ex-officio member of the NASSS Board.
iv. The third year this individual becomes past-Chair and acts in a mentoring capacity for all Committee members.

b. The Larger Collective of the NASSS UNDRIP Alignment Committee

i. Individuals are selected for a one-year term by the Chair from interested current Committee members and the general NASSS volunteer sign up list.
ii. This Committee consists of at least four NASSS members who, under the leadership of the Chair of the UNDRIP Alignment Committee, and in consultation with the NASSS Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC) make recommendations to the Board about how best to rework dominant practices to align with UNDRIP to make NASSS a more ethical space which recognizes and affirms the well-being and rights of Indigenous peoples.

c. The Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC)

i. To adhere to the moral ethos of UNDRIP we recognize that knowledge is not hierarchical. Nor would we want to place the sole burden of UNDRIP alignment on NASSS Indigenous members while recognizing the centrality of their expertise for effective alignment. Thus, members of this Committee will share Committee minutes with the IAC members and actively seek their advice and guidance on Committee matters.
ii. The IAC provides cross-cultural support and guidance to the UNDRIP Alignment Committee. This ensures an Indigenous perspective is brought to Committee activities. The IAC is composed of at minimum three NASSS members who self-identify as Indigenous.
iii. Following the Annual Conference, the UNDRIP Alignment Committee will put out a call for IAC eligible members, who serve for a one-year term.
iv. Current IAC members will be approached by the UNDRIP Alignment Committee asking about their interest in serving on the IAC for another one-year term prior to the Annual Meeting.
v. If there are insufficient Indigenous volunteers to fill the IAC, then non-Indigenous past members of the UNDRIP Alignment Committee may be considered for a one-year term.

d. Procedure for Members Stepping Down

i. If any member of the NASSS UNDRIP Alignment Committee is unable to complete a term, and the minimum number of members is not achieved, then the Chair of the UNDRIP Alignment Committee may select a replacement. If any member of the NASSS IAC is unable to complete a term, and the minimum number of members is not achieved, then the UNDRIP Alignment Committee, in conjunction with IAC members, may select a replacement. All members of the IAC and the NASSS UNDRIP Alignment Committee must be current members in good standing at NASSS.

e. Ways of Working

i. The committee will hold meetings at a frequency that works best for members.

ii. Work tasks will be done collectively, decision making will be by consensus and the time and energy of members will be key points of consideration when assigning tasks.

III. Developing Relationships and Collective Action through Transparency

a. As the NASSS UNDRIP Alignment committee seeks to collectively work with NASSS membership to imagine and create better futures outside of colonial frameworks, the committee is responsible for facilitating trusting relationships with the larger NASSS membership as well as the Board.

i. To facilitate trust with the larger membership the committee will share their progress with the membership as a matter of transparency.
ii. A separate NASSS UNDRIP Alignment committee email will be used to help facilitate dialogue between general members and the committee.

b. The NASSS Board

i. The committee Chair sits on the Board in an ex officio capacity. This enables the committee to keep informed on broader NASSS issues and bring concerns to the Board for their action.
ii. The committee will submit a report on its progress to the Board two weeks before the NASSS annual conference.

IV. Collaborative Ways of Working

a. The committee operates on a consensus basis. Thus, we talk through matters to achieve a resolution and will continue to talk until we reach a consensus.

b. The committee is also committed to working collaboratively in ways that ensure individuals do not exhaust themselves in trying to complete tasks. Thus, tasks will be completed collaboratively when possible and will be assigned based on members' capacity at that given moment.

c. The committee uses Google Docs for the storage and documentation of meeting minutes, forms, and ongoing work documents.

V. Submission of Work to Develop our Praxis

a. The committee will submit a written report to NASSS membership and the NASSS Board at least two weeks prior to the first day of the NASSS annual members' conference.

b. The Chairperson alongside the chair-elect, and any other volunteers will write the annual report together. This report will also ask for NASSS board members to give feedback on how they are addressing the points of concern of UNDRIP.

c. The report shall include the name of the Committee and its members; date report submitted; who submitted the report; budget requested, approved, and expended (i.e., budget reconciliation); recommendations for changes to the Committee's Operating Code (i.e., feedback loop to enhance effectiveness).

d. The annual report will also show and detail any changes to the Committee's Operating Code that shall be voted upon by the Committee and submitted to the Board for review and adjudication (i.e., approval, disapproval, edits).

VI. Provisions for Paying Back, Developing Relationships, and Educating

a. *The NASSS UNDRIP alignment committee will request an annual budget of up to $1000.00 for actions taken in relation to the committee.*

b. *These funds may address the costs of expertise and protocol (e.g., gifts) involved in collaborative work with Indigenous groups within the host cities of NASSS.*

c. *These funds may also be used to enhance knowledge translation and mobilization of Indigenous matters for NASSS members.*

d. *The Standing Committees shall not deviate from their approved budget without prior written approval from the NASSS Board.*

e. *Compliance will occur with NASSS Bylaws and Treasurer's Policies and Procedures, such as reimbursement.*

Appendix C: Guidelines for Indigenous Land Acknowledgement Statement(s) for Future NASSS Conferences

Please find below some draft guidelines, based on ideas from our UNDRIP Alignment Committee and research, that may be used in generating Land Acknowledgements for future conferences.

1. Committee Reflections on Guidelines for Indigenous Land Acknowledgement Statements from Meeting Minutes:

HOW

- It was recommended that the Land/Territory acknowledgement follow the suggestions from the local First Nation or Tribe (Sep 19, 2025).
    - e.g., Sean mentioned that he followed Puyallup members' suggestions when he prepared the Seattle land acknowledgment, which ensures the comments were meaningful to the person presenting and not just performative.
- It was stated that it should be ensured that a Land acknowledgement is not just performative act (June 25, 2025).
- It was suggested that a Land acknowledgement should promote reflection in the people writing it and those listening to it (Sep 19, 2025).
- It was shared that the intention of a land acknowledgement is to, first, reflect on Indigenous realities of that area for yourself, and then to present information in a way the prompts those listening to enter into reflections as well (Mar 27, 2025).
- It was recommended that the person writing a Land acknowledgement use the process as a means of unsettling themself – holding themself accountable to relevant Calls to Action, to how their research is progressing tied to these issues, and remembering/ensuring that they are not the seen as the expert in these matters, and naming how we're contributing to the system and what they are doing to help change things for the better (May 1, 2025).
- It was noted that there are complexities around using names such as Turtle Island, which are not universally used, so to be mindful of this when writing Land acknowledgements (June 25, 2025).

WHEN

- It was noted that the Land acknowledgement should occur before the blessing or welcome (Aug 13, 2025).

WHERE

- It was suggested that considerations be made for doing the Land acknowledgement outdoors, on the physical landscape (Aug 13, 2025).
- The committee agreed that having a North American wide Land acknowledgement on the front page of the NASSS website wouldn't work well (and is not seen elsewhere), but we did discuss having a statement about NASSS' resolution agreeing to align NASSS with UNDRIP and a brief explanation of UNDRIP (Aug 13, 2025).
- It was suggested to have that Land acknowledgement suitable for each conference as the first page of the NASSS conference information on the conference website. One option could be to put an interactive map on the front page of the NASSS website, with the ability

to have land acknowledgements tied to various areas; these could be added over the years with additional conference sites (Aug 13, 2025).

- It was recommended that the Land acknowledgement be included in the call for sessions and the call for abstracts (May 22, 2025).
- It was suggested that, for future conferences, the incoming NASSS President be asked if the Land acknowledgement could be included at the top of the letters that confirm acceptance of conference papers (May 22, 2025).

2. Research on Guidelines for Indigenous Land Acknowledgement Statements:

Territorial or Land Acknowledgements as Naming Indigenous Land:

"Acknowledging the land is the process of deliberately naming that this is Indigenous land and Indigenous people have rights to this land. It provides an opportunity for us to reflect on our relationship with the land and the continuous process of colonization that deeply impacts activist work" (Amnesty International, 2017).

Territorial or Land Acknowledgements as Sites of Disruption and Resistance:

"If we think of territorial acknowledgements as sites of potential disruption, they can be transformative acts that to some extent undo Indigenous erasure…. The fact of Indigenous presence should force non-Indigenous peoples to confront their own place on these lands" (Vowel, 2024).

"As Amnesty International calls upon the Canadian government to uphold its obligations under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, we must recognize that those rights were stripped and denied using centuries of laws and policies based on legal doctrines such as 'terra nullius', which declared this land empty despite the presence of Indigenous peoples. Acknowledging the land becomes a small act of resistance against this continued erasure of Indigenous people and their rights" (Amnesty International, 2017).

Territorial or Land Acknowledgements as Elevating Indigenous Governance:

A Territorial acknowledgement is an opportunity for hosts to "use the brief moment of acknowledgement to elevate Indigenous society, governance, and jurisdiction" (Khelsilem, a Sḵwx̱wú7mesh councillor).

Territorial or Land Acknowledgements as Relational:

"A good land acknowledgement recognizes not just the Nation or Nations whose territory you are on, but describes your understanding of the relationships between the Nations, and the relationships between the Nations and settlers. This may have been treaties, wampums or covenants between Nations that governed the land before the arrival of settlers, or that were entered into with settlers. You can also acknowledge your relationship with the land and the local Nations including how you might be working towards supporting the Nations' sovereignty" (RAVEN, 2024).

RAVEN's (2024) Guide to Writing a Land Acknowledgement:

"KNOW WHY YOU'RE DOING IT: Territorial acknowledgments are expressions of relationship: to each other, to the lands and waters where we are, to our shared history, and to our common future. We can view ourselves as part of the ongoing continuum of stewardship

of the land and territory. A land acknowledgement can be a way to counteract the ideology of terra nullius and the Doctrine of Discovery by naming that the land was not empty when Europeans first arrived on Turtle Island. It's also a way of interrupting colonial erasure and foregrounding the Peoples whose land you are on ahead of the other work you've come to do.

"KNOW WHOSE LAND YOU ARE ON: While there are many resources for starting points to learn about the land that you are on, relationships are some of the most reliable. Many maps may rely on simplified information, or information gathered by non-Indigenous historians or anthropologists which may not have accurate information. Learning from those further along in the journey of building these relationships, or from the Nations themselves is often more accurate and more fulsome.

"GROUND IT IN HISTORY: Share local impacts of colonialism: dispossession from the land, attempted cultural erasure through residential schools, Indian Act policies and the ongoing crisis of MMIWG. Try to learn from the relationships you build to be as local as possible. Be mindful to also portray Indigenous People's resistance and leadership as it is taking place in the present, where you live.

"HOW DO YOU MODEL IT? Model what concrete actions you are taking to engage in reconciliation, suggest ways for others to get involved, or suggest organizations to donate to that are working towards Indigenous sovereignty—and try not to virtue signal by taking up too much space with your personal history.

"ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR ROLE: Consider what are the Indigenous protocols involved in being a guest, what are your responsibilities to be exercised? To what extent are your events benefiting local Nations? Indigenous nations have specific expectations of guests, and of hosts: this next step requires having actual conversations with Indigenous communities, saying things like "we want to be better guests, how do we do that according to your laws and hey, by the way, what ARE your laws?" and being prepared to hear the answers, even those that are uncomfortable like "give us the land back."

"INCLUDE A COMMITMENT: Moving beyond territorial acknowledgements means asking hard questions about what needs to be done once we're aware of Indigenous presence and ongoing colonialism. This can be especially helpful if you consider it as leading by example. Help other people learn about ways to support local Nations by sharing what you are doing and how they can also get involved" (RAVEN, 2024).

<u>Amnesty International's (2017) Guide to Writing a Land Acknowledgement:</u>

"Name which Indigenous territories you are currently on.

"Explain why you are sharing a land acknowledgement. Explain why you find it important to acknowledge the land.

"Address the relevance of Indigenous rights. Take the time to reflect on these systemic connections. If you find it hard to capture the relationship between the issues you are working on in words, you can also speak to how you and your group will continue to support Indigenous rights in your ongoing activist work.

"Invite an Elder or Indigenous person. You and your group may know an Elder or Indigenous person from the Territory that your event is taking place on who would be happy to be invited to your event to conduct a Territory Welcome. Unless it is explicitly said not to, it's important to pay folks for their time and work, and the traditional protocol of that Nation might mean offering them a gift i.e. tobacco or sage" (Amnesty International, 2017).

References

Amnesty International's (2017) *A Meaningful Land Acknowledgement Example* at https://amnesty.ca/activism-guide/activism-skills-land-and-territory-acknowledgement/?gad_source=1&gbraid=0AAAAD5luGLo1vvyMHZFOuI7pdEES7_mJ&gclid=Cj0KCQjwlMfABhCWARIsADGXdy-BD5_Y1qtYZiEjqPmnuzy5C1Bm0fVttIqD_IJEW7SDHu6B0rRChYQaApvbEALw_wcB

Chelsea Vowell's (2024) *Revisiting "Beyond Territorial Acknowledgments"* at https://apihtawikosisan.com/2024/11/revisiting-beyond-territorial-acknowledgments/

First Nations Health Authority's ( ) *Territory Acknowledgement Information Booklet* at https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Territory-Acknowledgements-Information-Booklet.pdf

Native Governance Center's (2019) *A Guide to Indigenous Land Acknowledgement* at https://nativegov.org/news/a-guide-to-indigenous-land-acknowledgment/

RAVEN Trust's (2024) *Making a Meaningful Land Acknowledgement and Building Relationship* at https://raventrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Land-Acknowledgement-PDF.pdf

Trent University's (2021) *How to Do a Land Acknowledgement* at https://www.trentu.ca/teaching/how-do-land-acknowledgment

Appendix D: Responses to Draft 3-Year Strategic Plan from NASSS Members

UNDRIP NASSS Strategic Plan Feedback Form

7 responses

Publish analytics

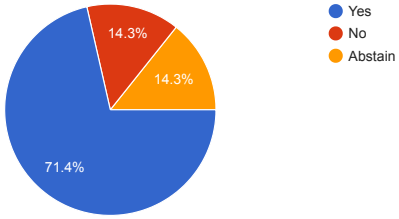
UNDRIP Alignment Committee Three-Year Strategic Plan

Element 1: Creating safe and ethical spaces in NASSS

Do you support the first element of Ethical Spaces being included in the 3-year Strategic Plan?

Copy

7 responses



Do you support the order of goals for the element of Ethical Spaces?

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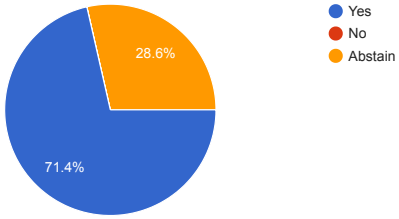
7 responses



Do you have any suggestions for how we might work towards any of the goals?

3 responses

I wonder about the inclusion of addressing settler Allyship in alignment with advancing safe and ethical spaces. Allyship, including addressing microaggressions, white fragility, among other associated discomforts, will be equally necessary to advance the strategic plan.

I think that NASSS needs a code of conduct more broadly that members should agree to when registering for the conference. This would of course include racist treatment but also other forms of discrimination. A process to address violations is very important.

Continue to engage local Indigenous communities at the annual conference (e.g., plenary speakers or panels) to deepen NASSS members' awareness of the diversity of Indigenous Peoples on Turtle Island - this will hopefully help strengthen the membership's knowledge of and commitment to processes of reconciliation.

What comments or questions do you have for the element of Ethical Spaces?

1 response

I don't have questions currently but will reach back out should they arise. Actually, one question I have is regarding how flexible the strategic plan will be. If we aim to include more Indigenous scholars then the plan should also adapt and grow as the needs, desires, and potential new challenges emerge,

Element 2: Structural alignment of NASSS with UNDRIP

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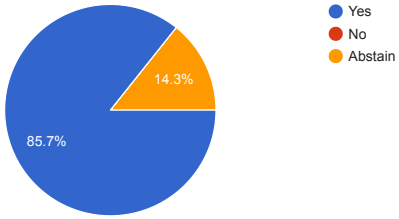
Do you support the second element of Structural Alignment being included in the 3-year Strategic Plan?

7 responses



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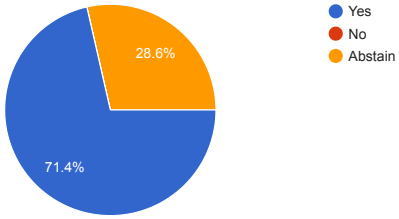
Do you support the order of goals for the element of Structural Alignment?

7 responses



Do you have any suggestions for how we might work towards any of the goals?

1 response

It is exciting to see this work being undertaken. Will it be solely the board to do this work? Or will the membership of NASSS continue to have input?

Do you have any suggestions for how we might work towards any of the goals?

2 responses

In year 3, will the mentorship program extend beyond graduate students to include faculty/researchers?

This pretty much is my suggestion from Ethical Spaces (obviously they are related), so I have no further suggestions!

What comments or questions do you have for the element of Enhancing Awareness?

0 responses

No responses yet for this question.

Element 4: Sharing Truth and Reconciliation activities tied to UNDRIP, including ongoing and historical knowledge about and advocacy related to Indigenous peoples' engagement in sport in mainstream and Indigenous sporting spaces

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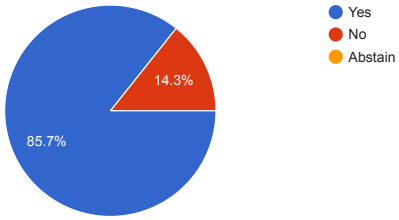
Do you support the fourth element of Truth and Reconciliation being included in the 3-year Strategic Plan?

7 responses



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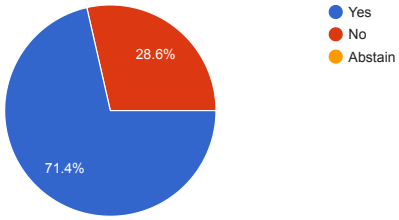
Do you support the order of goals for the element of Truth and Reconciliation?

7 responses



Do you have any suggestions for how we might work towards any of the goals?

3 responses

Nothing at this time.

Create a section in the annual NASSS program in which issues related to reconciliation, sports, and current issues facing indigenous groups and individuals.

Treating Caribbean nations like second thoughts is unacceptable. The order is also brutal.

What comments or questions do you have for the element of Truth and Reconciliation?

3 responses

Nothing at this time.

This further marginalizes the marginalized.

It's unclear why they're staged in years in order of one 'country' at a time... especially considering there is considerable and ongoing pushback by some nations from being looped into their political country - rather than Turtle Island or a broader conceptualization of land and stewardship.

If you would like to leave your email here for the UNDRIP Alliance Committee to reach out to you!

Email Address:

3 responses

[redacted]

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Appendix E: Resolution to Commit to the UNDRIP Aim of Respecting Indigenous Peoples' Rights

Authors/Supporters: UNDRIP Alliance Committee*, Adam Ali, Beth Cavalier, Marianne Clarks, Jesse Couture, Nathan Victor Fawaz, Janice Forsyth, Alexandra Giancarlo, Audrey Giles, Matthew Hodler, Melody Huslage, Janelle Joseph, Jordan Koch, Jay Laurendeau, Tricia McGuire-Adams, Jeff Montez de Oca, Moss Norman, Christine O'Bonsawin, Danielle Peers, Travers, Natalie Welch

RECOGNIZING sport and recreation as inextricably tied to the ongoing and genocidal project of settler colonial systems in still-settling states and the intertwining of settler colonialism with other vital systems of power and privilege (e.g., racialization; disability; cisheteronormativity; etc.)

WHEREAS the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), adopted in 2007 by the United Nations General Assembly, recognizes the right of Indigenous peoples to self-determination, including the freedom to pursue their economic, social, and cultural development;

WHEREAS UNDRIP emphasizes the rights of Indigenous peoples to participate fully in mainstream services as distinct peoples, to maintain and strengthen their cultural institutions and traditional physical cultural practices, to be free from discrimination, and to access meaningful physical cultural practices;

WHEREAS UNDRIP underscores the importance of Indigenous peoples' right to learn about/tell/share/construct/record their histories and the necessity for non-Indigenous peoples to learn about Indigenous histories;

WHEREAS UNDRIP calls for the promotion of respect for and full application of the provisions of the Declaration (i.e., UNDRIP) and follow-up on the effectiveness of the Declaration;

WHEREAS UNDRIP acknowledges the contributions of all peoples to the diversity and richness of civilizations and cultures;

WHEREAS UNDRIP focuses on preventing forced assimilation and destruction of culture, maintaining and developing contacts and relations across borders, and having access to fair procedures for conflict resolution and effective remedies for infringements of rights;

WHEREAS the North American Society for the Sociology of Sport (NASSS) recognizes the importance of these rights and principles in the context of sports, physical activities, and reconciliation;

WHEREAS NASSS acknowledges the unique challenges faced by Indigenous peoples in the realms of sports and academia and the need for specific measures to ensure their full and equitable participation;

WHEREAS NASSS understands the role of sports as a platform for promoting cultural understanding, mutual respect, and peace among different peoples;

WHEREAS NASSS commits to fostering an inclusive environment in sports that respects and celebrates the cultural diversity and heritage of all its members;

WHEREAS NASSS believes that sport is deeply implicated in the social and cultural wellness of communities and individuals;

AND WHEREAS NASSS is an organization committed to the communication and application of accurate knowledge about sport and society through teaching, research, and social action;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT

NASSS unequivocally commits to UNDRIP's aim of respecting Indigenous peoples' rights and pledges to uphold these principles in its activities and initiatives, to promote the value of Indigenous peoples' participation, ways of knowing/being/doing, and sovereignty in the realms of sport, recreation and physical culture, and to contribute to the broader efforts of reconciliation and respect for Indigenous peoples' rights.

NASSS also commits to aligning its constitution, bylaws, and policies and procedures manual with the principles and articles of UNDRIP.

NASSS will strike an UNDRIP Alignment standing committee that will take on as its first order of business drafting both the Terms of Reference for that committee and a NASSS five-year implementation and accountability plan.

NASSS will advocate for support for Indigenous-led sporting initiatives and for including Indigenous peoples in the planning and participation of international sporting events, respecting Indigenous territorial laws and protocols.

NASSS will strive to ensure that its activities and initiatives are inclusive of Indigenous peoples and reflect the diverse cultures and the physical and sporting activities of Indigenous peoples.

*The UNDRIP Alliance Special Committee was charged by the NASSS president in 2022 to explore how NASSS can align more closely with the UNDRIP. Members include: Vicky Paraschak (chair), Miruthula Queen Anbu, Anna Baeth, Cheryl Cooky, Umer Hussain, Dewitt King, Autumn Martin, Andrew Meyer, Roc Rochon, Sean Seiler, Bachir Sirois-Moumni, Tavis Smith, Cristine Vlcek and Faye Linda Wachs.