



UPDATED: 1/20/26

To: Dr. Matthieu Boyd and Dr. Ben Rifkin,
Co-Chairs, Governance Steering Council

Re: Response to Land Acknowledgment Proposal

Dear Dr. Boyd and Dr. Rifkin:

On behalf of the Council for Community Success, we appreciate the opportunity to provide input on the consideration of a land acknowledgment for Fairleigh Dickinson University's New Jersey campuses submitted to us on December 18, 2024. At our October 22, 2025, meeting, the council engaged in a rich and thoughtful discussion about this proposal. We affirm the importance and intent of this initiative and strongly support the establishment of a land acknowledgment as a meaningful step in recognizing the histories, cultures, and contributions of Indigenous peoples and their enduring connection to the land on which our campuses stand. This effort which should be embraced as an institution, will reflect FDU's shared commitment to community, mutual respect, understanding, and learning.

To ensure this work is both impactful and sustainable, we recommend that the Council for Community Success collaborate with other relevant university committees and councils (i.e., Cultural Event Programming Advisory Council) to develop, implement, and sustain a meaningful acknowledgment process. We have learned through our exploration that our colleagues at FDU Vancouver have modeled this well through their Indigenous Strategy Working Group, which meets regularly and partners with Len Pierre Consulting (<https://www.lenpierreconsulting.com>) as part of the Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB) requirement.

Projected Budget Needs:

Consultation Cost Per Hour	Estimated Number of Hours of Support
\$300*	3
Total: \$900	

**Rate provided by Len Pierre Consulting*

We suggest that FDU approach this as a comprehensive institutional initiative, aiming for a coordinated release in 2026. Coincidentally, November is Native American Heritage Month (<https://www.bia.gov/NNAHM>), offering an ideal opportunity to launch this initiative through campus-wide education and dialogue around this important effort. The initiative might include:

- A formal land acknowledgment statement issued by the University;
- A celebration or recognition event honoring Indigenous communities and their heritage;
- An accompanying educational offering (e.g., panel discussion or workshop, and a resource page) that deepens understanding of the historical and contemporary significance of the acknowledgment;
- Strategic hiring of faculty and staff representing or specializing in Indigenous communities and studies; and
- Development of collaborative partnerships for research, education, and cultural engagement with Indigenous communities.

We emphasize that this should **not** be a one-time initiative, but part of an ongoing institutional commitment to awareness, reflection, and engagement.

For reference, we encourage consideration of the following models:

- Montclair State University – New Jersey Center for Indigenous Justice: <https://www.montclair.edu/new-jersey-center-for-indigenous-justice/about-us/>
- University of British Columbia – Indigenous Strategic Plan: <https://isp.ubc.ca/homepage/the-action-plan/>

We look forward to collaborating in the spirit of shared governance to advance this meaningful institutional effort.

Sincerely,

Zakia Clay and Rosa Hanco
on behalf of Council for Community Success