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Developing Ethical Research Practices Between Institutional and Community Partners: A Look at the Current Base of Literature Surrounding Memorandums of Understanding in Canada

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Abstract

Few institutionalized examples exist wherein Indigenous communities have participated in the co-development of ethics initiatives. This article explores one such process—the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). A MOU is a document created between institutional and community research partners to outline project guidelines. Based on Canadian MOUs developed between 1980 and 2016, this research has four objectives; (a) to describe current trends of MOU use and recognition in research; (b) to describe the challenges of collaborative research and how MOUs might mitigate them; (c) to understand if a standard MOU is feasible; and (d) to offer policy suggesting for implementing MOUs. Local MOUs mark a way for engaging in good research practices that actually benefit the involved community.

Developing Ethical Research Practices Between Institutional and Community Partners: A Look at the Current Base of Literature Surrounding Memorandums of Understanding in Canada

We need not dig too deeply into the history of research to see how Indigenous communities have been exploited, subjected, and harmed by their involvement in research (Adams et al., 2014; Brant Castellano, 2004; Deloria, 1995; Smith 1999). Today, however, we are witnessing an incredible and hopeful transformation in the way research is being done in the Indigenous community context. Particularly positive is the growth in Indigenous self-determination practices applied to research (Kovach, 2009; Louis, 2007; Smith, 1999). Now, more than ever before, we are witnessing a considerable growth in the number of Indigenous communities and organizations not only participating in research but leading and executing research with the goal of making positive changes (Richmond, 2016).

In addition, Canadian Research Ethics Boards (REBs) that govern and grant research projects using the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS)[1] continue to rethink and redevelop their institutional policies to better protect Indigenous communities and support researchers involved in Indigenous-based research (Tobias, Richmond, & Luginaah, 2013). For example, the TCPS contains key concepts, definitions, and methods for interpreting and applying the ethics framework in an Indigenous context. Researchers are expected to read the TCPS and reflect these principles in their ethics proposal prior to approval. However, amidst the inclusion of these promising protocols, collaborative Indigenous-based research is not without concerns. In particular, there are few institutionalized examples of Indigenous communities having participated in the co-development of research ethics initiatives and protocols for governing research. This article explores one such process, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Indigenous partners or communities and institutional research partners.[2]

In the most general sense, an MOU is both a process and a tool for collaborative research. It is an active, living document used between research partners to develop, discuss, and physically outline the ethical, moral, and practical guidelines and protocols that will be used throughout the research project. Despite some recognition within the research community of the value of MOUs, how they come to exist, and the actual adoption by researchers have not been systematically examined in the academic literature. What

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[1] The Interagency Advisory Panel on Research Ethics—known as the Panel—was jointly created in 2001 by Canada's three federal research agencies, Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), to promote the ethical conduct of research involving human participants using the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (TCPS). The Panel is responsible for developing, interpreting, and implementing the TCPS. Under the TCPS, any institution conducting research involving humans "shall establish or appoint REB(s) to review the ethical acceptability of all research involving humans conducted within their jurisdiction or under their auspices, that is, by their faculty, staff or students, regardless of where the research is conducted, in accordance with this Policy [the TCPS]" (CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC, 2010, Article 6.1).

[2] For our purposes, Indigenous partners are considered any Indigenous group or organization. Please see link for further clarification of terms http://www.naho.ca/publications/topics/terminology/. Institutional partners refer to any Canadian research institution that receives and administers funding from the Agencies (CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC) to conduct research involving humans.

does the current research base surrounding the use of MOUs in research look like, and what indications does it give us? Why are MOUs created and how? What factors lead to successful collaborative research, what factors challenge it, and do MOUs offer a way to bridge these challenges? Given Indigenous differences across Canada, can or should MOUs be standardized? In this article, we seek to answer these questions as we explore the base of MOUs developed for research in Canada in the past 35 years, as well as the base of literature surrounding MOU development and implementation in research. It is our goal to collate this information so that it may inspire and encourage others to engage with MOUs in their research practice and work towards implementing the MOU process as a research standard. This article follows in six sections: literature review, methodology and analysis, key findings, discussion, policy implications, and conclusion.

Literature Review

In Canada, the term "Indigenous" refers to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples (Government of Canada, 2017). This culturally diverse population share a historically negative relationship with research (Ten Fingers, 2005). Past research practices illustrate two common trends (Stiegman & Castleden, 2015): the dismissal of Indigenous knowledge as "unscientific" and ultimately of limited value (Castleden, Morgan, & Lamb, 2012; Kovach, 2009), and a lack of transparency about research intent (Assembly of First Nations Environmental Stewardship Unit, 2009). Perhaps the most prolific example comes from the Nuu-Chah-Nulth people where investigators took 885 blood samples under the auspices of carrying out research to explore the high rate of arthritis in their nation (Hawkins & O'Doherty, 2011). Once the original study was complete, the blood samples were retained and analyzed in a secondary analysis in genetic anthropology, without the Nuu-Chah-Nulth's consent (Hawkins & O'Doherty, 2011). Indeed, neglect toward collaborative, community-based research principles has inarguably been an underlying tone of past colonial research (Assembly of First Nations Environmental Stewardship Unit, 2009; Wallerstein & Duran, 2006).

 Yet, increasingly, the use of community-based principles in collaborative research is becoming recognized as a best practice approach and goal for working with Indigenous peoples and communities (Koster, Baccar, & Lemelin, 2012; Mulrennan, Mark, & Scott, 2012; O'Neil, Elias, & Wastesicoot, 2015; Reading & Nowgesic, 2002). According to Mulrennan et al., (2012), the collaborative process connects Indigenous and Western paradigms in order to transition away from traditional (colonial) research methods—from something done on Indigenous Peoples to something done with or for Indigenous Peoples (Koster et al., 2012). Institutional researchers and Indigenous partners recognize the value of working together to develop new research practices that foster relationship building for mutually (or community exclusive) desired outcomes (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 2001; Mulrennan et al., 2012). Many academics agree that community partners should have greater control over the research process, and that participation in research should lead to tangible benefits at the community level (Bull, 2010; Mulrennan et al., 2012; Parry, Salsberg, & Macaulay, 2009; Restoule, Hopkins, Robinson, & Wiebe, 2015; Thom, 2006; Wenzel, 1999). However, a lack of official research procedures makes the practical implementation of this goal challenging. Additionally, while the core principles of the TCPS (CIHR, NSERC, & SSHRC, 2014) make it clear that old institutional research practices that considered Indigenous communities to be passive data subjects are no longer acceptable, they still occur (Koster et al., 2012).

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is one method of formally and practically engaging with collaborative research concerns (Espey, 2002; Elias, O'Neil, & Sanderson, 2004; O'Neil, Elias, & Wastesicoot, 2005). Although its initial use is difficult to pinpoint, MOU development relates to movements of self-determination, recovery from colonialism, and restoration of cultural values (Ball & Janyst, 2008) that continue to spark Indigenous interest in research. The MOU represents an applied practice to doing Indigenous research that can significantly enhance both opportunities and outcomes. Overarching goals of creating an MOU are (a) to ensure increased community control, (b) to set meaningful controls on the research, and (c) to improve the outcomes for the Indigenous partner (Czaykowska-Higgins, 2009). Unfortunately, the adoption of MOUs by institutional researchers has been inconsistent. Despite the value of MOUs, their development can be complicated and time consuming, and there is no one best way to construct MOUs. Within the academic literature, there has been no systematic review that examines what this process of collaboration means in a more practical way. It is here that our study hopes to contribute.

Methodology and Analysis

Several questions were presented in the introduction related to MOU use in research within Indigenous and institutional partners. From these questions, we developed four research objectives:

a. To understand how or if MOUs are currently used in research, and if they are understood as a "best practice" for collaborative research with Indigenous partners;

b. To understand the challenges associated with doing collaborative research between Indigenous and institutional partners, and the role MOUs might play in bridging these challenges;

c. If developing a standard MOU that can be used as an obligatory step in the overall research process with enforceable protocols is desirable and feasible; and

d. To offer policy suggestions for implementing MOUs as a standardized research practice.

A content-based literature review was conducted in June 2016 with the goal of collecting, as comprehensively as possible, all MOUs developed in Canada for research purposes, and all published literature that looked at MOU development and use in research. We collected copies of MOUs, published articles where researchers had created and used an MOU in their research,[3] as well as published sources where researchers referenced MOU development or use but did not necessarily use one in their research. A keyword search was done in the following databases: Google Scholar, EBSCO Host, Western University Shared Library Catalogue, and Proquest. We used multiple combinations of words referring to:

a. Memorandums of Understanding, including Memorandum of Understanding, MOU, mou, memorandum, and

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[3] We emailed authors who described using an MOU to request copies. We were unsuccessful in gaining access to the physical MOUs; however, their published articles are included as the 40 articles in this research.

    b.   Indigenous Peoples in Canada, including Indigenous, Native, Aboriginal, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.

We restricted our search to include only MOUs and literature created and published in Canada, and only sources by research institutions and Indigenous partners for research purposes. Sources were included if they were an MOU developed between an Indigenous and institutional research partner, or if they addressed one of the following:

    a.   The importance of an MOU,

    b.   Types of protocols in an MOU,

    c.   General or community specific aspects of an MOU,

    d.   Additional context on MOUs with Indigenous communities,

    e.   Best practices for research with Indigenous Peoples, with reference to MOUs somewhere, and

    f.   Researchers' responsibilities to community members or partners, with reference to MOUs somewhere.

We limited our search to English and included a time frame of 1980 to 2016 (current) to increase relevance. We classified institutional partners as a research institution—university, government organization, or health organization—or as an individual researcher or group of researchers affiliated with one of those institutions. Institutional partner and institutional researcher are used interchangeably. We classified Indigenous partners based on the terminology "community" developed by the National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO) in Canada, which includes peoples living on a reserve, off a reserve in urban areas, and Inuit communities.

We also reached out via email to researchers we knew had used an MOU and to authors identified during our literature review who had used an MOU for research to request copies of their MOU. The Executive Director of Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre (SOAHAC), who had an MOU with London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC), and two other Indigenous communities, who had an MOU with institutional partners, kindly shared their MOUs; however, we were unsuccessful with the literature review authors. All other MOUs and sources were found via our keyword search. Our research yielded a total of 19 MOUs and 40 additional sources relating to MOUs in research.

To respond to our objectives, we undertook a descriptive and thematic analysis of the 19 MOUs and 40 articles. We explored the geographic region of the MOUs, research areas explored, and key elements of MOUs. The MOUs also provided context to our thematic findings. MOUs were coded based on research themes or type of partnerships and analyzed using a thematic content review of key components, which accounted for variations in terms or concepts that addressed the same overall components of the MOU. Although we tried to be comprehensive in our search, our analysis was limited to MOUs we could physically get a copy of. Each of the 40 sources were organized and coded based on

area of research and research theme. We also conducted a thematic analysis of the 40 sources, drawing out several interesting themes.

<div align="center">**Findings**</div>

The findings of this article have been split into descriptive and thematic. The descriptive findings give some indication as to how and if MOUs are being used in research, and if they are understood by research partners, particularly institutional partners, as a best practice for collaborative research. The thematic findings focus on the content of the articles, particularly context surrounding MOU development and implementation, and research between institutional and Indigenous partners more generally.

Descriptive Findings

Although not necessarily generalizable, descriptive findings provide a basic understanding of MOU adoption in research and their recognition within the research community. Each MOU was organized by geographic location, time frame, and type of research (see Appendix 1). By geographic location, two of the MOUs were on a national scale, 14 were provincial, and 3 were community specific with 2 located in London, Ontario, and 1 in Vancouver, British Columbia. See Figure 1 for breakdown by province and territory. It is interesting to note that two of the "province-based" MOUs were with Métis communities.[4] Comparing geographic location to MOU adoption, we found that British Columbia and Manitoba had the highest number of existing (or accessible) MOUs with five (four provincial and one community specific) and four (provincial), respectively.

It appears that British Columbia and Manitoba may be leading the way for MOU use; yet, the small sample of MOUs makes it difficult to conclude. The low number of community-specific MOUs led us to believe that MOUs are generally not shared publicly, nor do they seem to be commonplace for university researchers. The two local MOUs based in London, Ontario were shared with us only because of personal phone calls we made to communities we knew had an MOU in place. Therefore, as a note of caution, we offer a qualifying statement that our list is by no means an exhaustive analysis of community-specific MOUs. Interestingly, most of the MOUs were reserve or community-based with provincial institutions as partners, with only two of the community-specific MOUs—SOAHAC and City of Edmonton with the Métis Nation of Alberta—found between urban partners.

Recall that in conducting our review we limited our search to those written from 1980 to 2016 (current). Interestingly, all the MOUs found were developed and implemented after the year 2000, illustrating that MOUs are a relatively recent research practice. Most of the MOUs ($n = 13$) were developed between 2010 and 2016. Categorizing by type of research, we found that 5 of the 19 MOUs were created for health-based research, 4 for education research, 2 each for environment, culture and heritage preservation, as well as reconciliation and recognition research. One MOU fell under each of the following categories of research: duty to consult, research partnership, litigation, and child welfare (Figure 2). While not conclusive due to the limitations stated, the prevalence of MOU development in

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[4] Métis Nation of Alberta and the City of Edmonton, and the Government of Canada and the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) are provincial MOUs with Métis partners.

these areas of research might be indicative of current research trends with education and health-based research with First Nations taking the lead in MOU development and implementation.
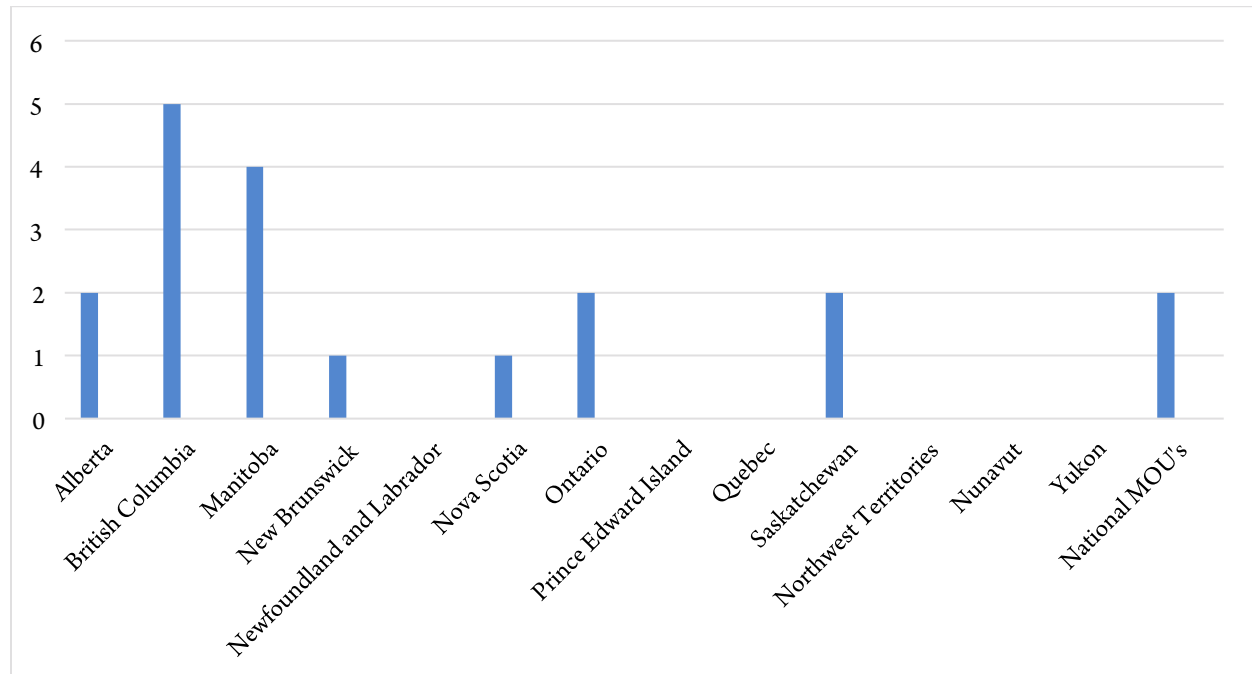

Figure 1. **Number of MOUs by Province and Territory**

Our search also yielded 40 sources relating to MOUs in research. We found discussion papers ($n = 24$), research codes of conduct or guides ($n = 4$), conference presentations ($n = 2$), MOU newsletter updates ($n = 2$), case study ($n = 2$), editorial ($n = 1$), commentary ($n = 1$), project report ($n = 1$), newspaper article ($n = 1$), review article ($n = 1$), and a generic MOU template ($n = 1$). See Appendix 2 for an alphabetical list of articles by author. Each article was organized and coded by overarching area of research including health, environmental, or sociocultural. We found 12 health-based sources, 6 environmental, and 22 sociocultural. After reading each article, we categorized them further based on research theme of source including education, policy, knowledge and cultural preservation, research partnership, governance, ethics, and cultural safety (Figure 3). Across all areas of research (health, environmental, and sociocultural), we found research partnership and ethics to be the most explored research themes with 10 and 9 sources, respectively. Regarding the content of the 40 articles, 25 articles discuss or mention an MOU, whereas the other 15 focused more on community-based research and best practices with Indigenous communities in Canada. Of those 25 articles, 7 discussed the development of an MOU as a part of their research partnership with Indigenous communities.[5]

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[5] Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2011, 2012; Ball & Janyst 2008; Leatherland & Miller 2012; Rowley, 2013; Styres, Zinga, Bennett, & Bomberry, 2010; Thom, 2006.
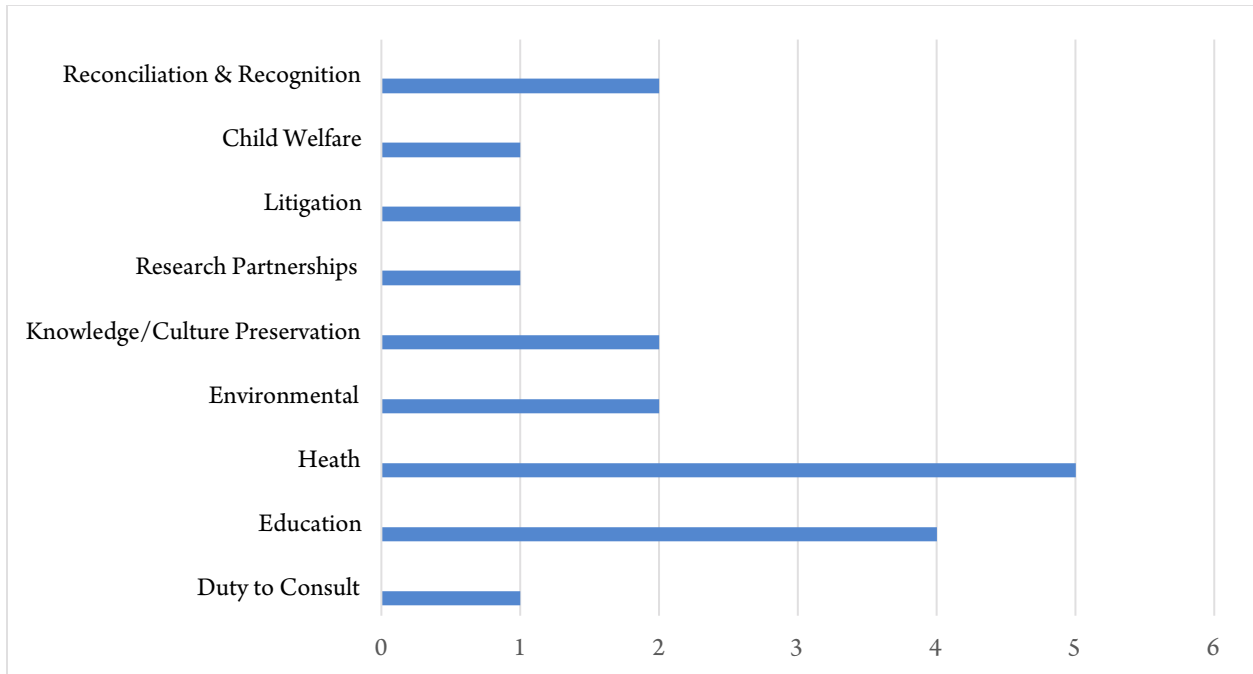
Figure 2. Number of MOUs by Research Theme
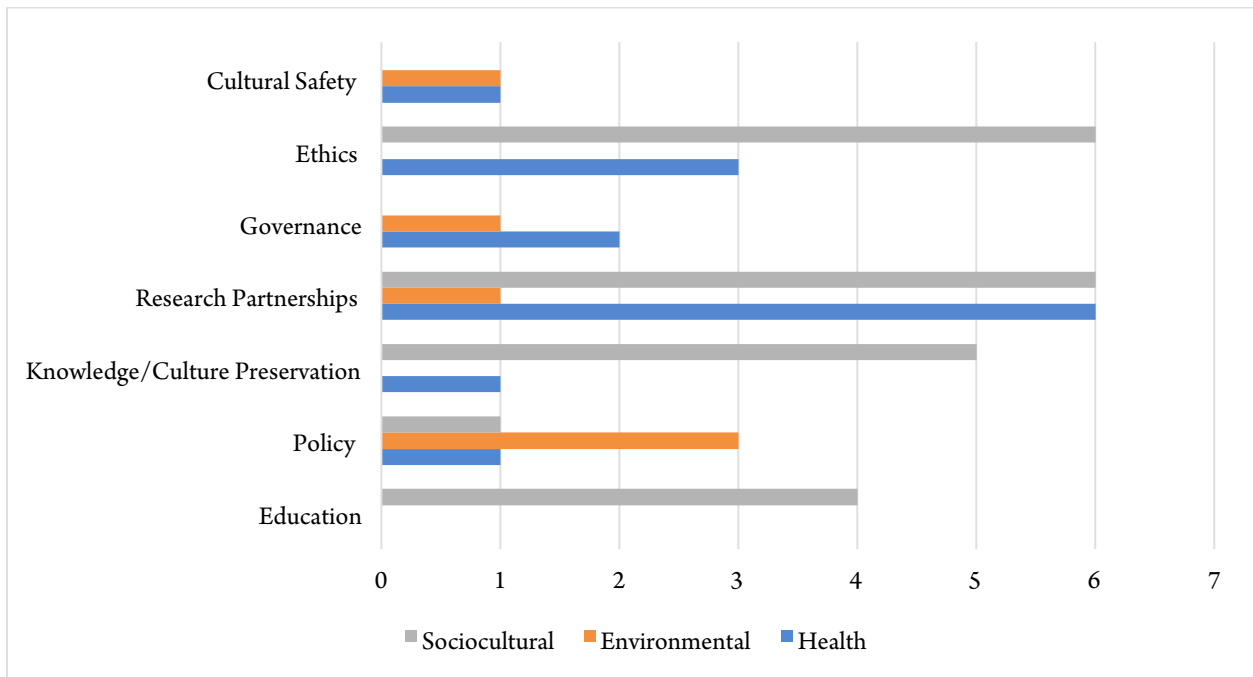
Figure 3. Number of Articles by Area of Research and Research Theme

Thematic Findings

In addition to the descriptive categorizations, after reading the 19 MOUs and 40 articles, we also found a several interesting themes:

    a.   Challenges associated with collaborative research generally,

    b.   Research guideline restrictions,

    c.   How MOUs might bridge these challenges and other benefits of creating an MOU, and

    d.   Community-specific aspects and key features of an MOU.

Most of the 40 articles focused on collaborative research practices more generally with an MOU used as an example. Therefore, a number of our findings are based on collaborative research practices with Indigenous partners more broadly with commentary offered on how MOUs might fit into these findings.

Challenges restricting successful collaboration. A common theme throughout the literature was that successful (Indigenous-focused) collaboration is challenging. In fact, challenges associated with collaborative research are often heightened in an Indigenous context (Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies, 2003). In general, partnership development between Indigenous and institutional organizations is not a streamlined or straightforward process (Brascoupé & Waters, 2009; Kahnawake Schools Diabetes Prevention Project [KSDPP], 2007), resulting in several Indigenous and institutional partner challenges that may restrict or hinder MOU development. Institutional partner challenges for collaboration often relate to their role as researchers and the institutional expectations that exist in that role that limit the desirability of MOUs. Some common challenges for institutional partners found in the literature include:

    a.   *Balancing responsibilities.* Researchers often have multiple responsibilities to the Indigenous partner, academic institution, and funding agency[6] that can be difficult to balance (Styres et al., 2010, Restoule et al., 2015).

    b.   *Multi-site and community context.* Challenges associated with negotiating multiple partner and protocol responsibilities can be heightened when research is conducted in a multi-site and/or multi-community context. For instance, the Kahnawake Schools Diabetes Prevention Project (KDSPP) partners with three academic institutions.

    c.   *Data control and access.* Institutional researchers have historically claimed ownership over data and analysis with researchers expected to build their careers off publishing research (Bull, 2010). However, institutional ownership is contrary to best practices that suggest Indigenous partners determine ownership within an MOU (The First Peoples' Heritage,

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[6] While many researchers may not actually receive funding from external sources like SSHRC, most researchers and institutional partners do or are expected to apply to funding organizations in hopes of receiving funding, and thereby they must follow their application protocols.

Language, and Culture Council, 2004; Walpole Island First Nations & The University of Western Ontario, 2009).

d. *Time, money, and energy requirements.* Collaborative research (and MOU development) is predicated on relationship building (Styres et al., 2010). Developing relationships takes time, and institutional researchers interested in working with Indigenous partners can expect increased time, money, and energy requirements that are not always conducive to institutional or career-based expectations (Cargo & Mercer, 2008: Rowley, 2013).

Many of the challenges faced by institutional researchers also generate Indigenous-specific concerns regarding collaborative research. We found that challenges restricting Indigenous partners in collaborative research are often a result of their historical "lack of role" within the research process that continues to undermine their full collaborative participation in research today. Some common challenges found in the literature include:

a. *Lack of formal regulating body.* Indigenous partners have historically been awarded considerably less power in the research process (Castleden et al., 2012). Without a formal regulating body, institutional researchers are not required to consult with Indigenous partner in the early stages of development such as applying for ethics (although many do), positioning institutional partners as primary researchers and experts in the field (Castleden et al., 2012).

b. *Data control and access.* Community members often do not have access to the raw data, manuscripts published in an academic journal, or the opportunity or capacity to analyze and interpret data (Koster et al., 2012).

c. *Cultural values and protocols.* Indigenous partners are also often forced to work within institutional protocols and restrictions due to their institutional partners (Kaufert, 2007), which may neglect existing community protocols and the incorporation of cultural practices.

d. *Access to funding.* Related to cultural values and protocols, not having access to funding was a common critique of traditional collaborative research practices (Martin, Macaulay, McComber, Moore, & Wien, 2006). While some institutional researchers may allocate time and money to include some traditional practices (Ball & Janyst, 2008), it is not necessarily required.

Research guideline restrictions. Related to the previous finding, many of the challenges restricting research partners in collaborative research stem from institutional research standards and guidelines that clash with Indigenous principles or protocols (Bull, 2010; Parry et al., 2009; Schnarch, 2004). Research standards and guidelines, such as those mandated by REBs, govern the research process. These, in turn, shape the expectations placed on institutional researchers and the role Indigenous partners tend to be allocated in the research process. The challenges for successful collaboration discussed above, are not new. Nor are they specific to the MOU process. Rather, they are an outcome of research guideline restrictions that impede institutional partners' desire and ability to take up collaborative research practices like an MOU and restrict Indigenous partner's role in the research process as partners. Research institution and funding agency guidelines limit both institutional and Indigenous partners by

placing restrictions on how research can be conducted (Meijer Drees, 2001). For instance, it is part of REB protocols that the researcher develops interview guides and other research tools prior to the project gaining ethics approval, which inhibits collaborative principles. Additionally, the historical devaluing of Indigenous community protocols or practices in favour of generic institutional guidelines creates a mismatch between institutional and Indigenous partner expectations. For instance, the continued privileging of the TCPS (CIHR, NSERC, & SSHRC, 2014) over First Nations OCAP™ principles (First Nations Centre, 2005; Walmark, 2010) remains a barrier to creating and implementing MOUs between institutional and Indigenous partners and sets standards for how control over the research process is negotiated.[7]

Using an MOU to bridge challenges and other benefits. Despite the negative history, many Indigenous leaders and community members recognize the value of research (Kovach, 2009). Developing research practices that mediate partner concerns while increasing the role of Indigenous partners from being "researched" to "researchers" is an important goal shared by many collaborative researchers (Ashawasegai, 2009). Recall that access to funding, control over data, the incorporation of cultural values and protocols, and a lack of formal regulating bodies were all challenges restricting the full participation of Indigenous partners in collaborative research. Creating a standardized MOU practice is one method of equalizing the research process between partners by setting parameters for addressing these challenges, increasing Indigenous partner participation and control over the research process (Castleden et al., 2012; Espey, 2002; Restoule et al., 2015; Ten Fingers, 2005), while still appreciating institutional partner concerns.

Many communities are unable to obtain monetary support external to their community funds. Thus, partnering with research institutions and using an MOU presents an opportunity to access funding and other resources (Rowley, 2013; Styres et al., 2010). Some examples of MOU protocols found for addressing spending responsibilities and funding allocation included hiring and training community members as researchers (Castleden et al., 2012; Czaykowska-Higgins, 2009), reciprocity such as gifts and sharing of meals to thank participants (Ball & Janyst, 2008; Castleden et al., 2012), and other protocols related to financial security and responsibility of cost (Parry et al., 2009; Restoule et al., 2015). Although not always possible, contract employment for community members as research assistants is a valuable direct benefit (Ball & Janyst, 2008; Meijer Drees, 2001; Parry et al., 2009; Rowley, 2013). It can lead to increased accountability for the Indigenous partner (Schnarch, 2004), the development of community capacity through direct monetary and skills-based benefits (Cargo & Mercer, 2008; Castleden, et al., 2012; Meijer Drees, 2001), and strengthen community interest and participation (Martin et al., 2006).

Control over data can also be addressed through MOU protocols. Some examples of MOU protocols that increase community control over data include discussion of data analysis, interpretation, and results throughout the research process (KSDPP, 2007), releasing or sharing data only after adequate time has passed for the Indigenous partner to complete and disseminate their interpretation (Walpole Island First Nations & The University of Western Ontario, 2009), and releasing and sharing data for agreed upon purposes only (Czaykowska-Higgins, 2009).

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[7] We are using TCPS and OCAP™ principles as a Canadian example. We propose that MOUs can be used to reconcile institutional and Indigenous research principles internationally.

MOUs can also be used to promote community values and address concerns regarding the lack of formal regulating bodies. Protocols surrounding methodology were found to be critical areas for promoting community values and culturally based practices thereby increasing Indigenous partner control. The KSDDPP *Code of Ethics* (2007) includes several protocols for ensuring the incorporation of Indigenous methodologies and the Haudenosaunee philosophy into the research methodology. Additionally, developing an active MOU is one way of mitigating the lack of Indigenous regulating body concern as it functions as a document of responsibility and accountability negotiated by the Indigenous partner for seeing the project through, step by step.

Other ways the use of MOUs were found to benefit Indigenous partners is through the inclusion of protocols regarding increased community capacity as an outcome of the research process (e.g., through research infrastructure; Ball & Janyst, 2008), protection of community knowledge and culture[8] (Liboiron, 2014; Thom, 2006), control over knowledge including sharing (Ashawasegai, 2009), documentation of a community issue (O'Neil et al., 2005), and enhancing opportunities for communities to practice self-governance (Espey, 2002; Ladner, 2009). Although the benefits for Indigenous partners seem to be more obvious (Styres et al., 2010), institutional researchers should recognize the intrinsic benefit of prioritizing their partnership with Indigenous partners through an MOU. Additionally, we believe that institutional partners benefit from the increased external awareness an MOU brings towards the researcher's role in collaborative research. Notably, the obligatory function of an MOU would standardize practices that are unique to this type of research, such as increased time requirements and relationship building, and therefore would normalize them and minimize researcher impact.

Community-specific aspects of an MOU and key elements. The previous three findings illustrate several existing challenges in collaborative research that impact the adoption and development of MOUs, especially by institutional researchers. They also highlight how MOUs can begin to address these concerns. Our fourth finding considers the question, "where do we go from here?" Indigenous and institutional partnerships are unique and varied; therefore, MOUs must reflect that. However, we found most MOUs include the same or similar key elements, which constitute the "best practice" protocols that contribute to rhetoric on a standardized MOU process.

First, looking at community specific aspects, prioritizing and respecting Indigenous partners as distinct peoples was a common theme throughout the literature. The literature supported a direct relationship between community-driven and community-centered research and the overall worth of the study, predicated on how useful and beneficial the research would be to the Indigenous partner (Ball & Janyst, 2008; Castleden, et al., 2012; O'Neil et al., 2005; Pearce et al., 2009; Schnarch, 2004). Recognizing the particularities of local communities and needs may require that specific protocols be included in the MOU agreement, in addition to or to replace the key elements. See Figure 4 for an example of a community-specific MOU that has local requirements.

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[8] Thom (2006) discussed the protection of intangible property within the MOU created between communities and the University of Victoria. Intangible property refers to "the traditional, Indigenous knowledge held within Aboriginal communities as their intellectual property" (p. 1).

Walpole Island First Nation (WIFN) and the University of Western Ontario(UWO) MOU. This MOU applies to all collaborative endeavours between WIFN and UWO, which is different from other types of MOU that are organization specific or based on the research project. Yet, it is still community specific as it details only research relationships with Walpole Island First Nation. This MOU has several built in protocols that are specific to the needs of the community and can be viewed at https://www.uwo.ca/research/_docs/resources/Walpole_Island_MOU.pdf

Figure 4. **Example of Community-Specific MOU** (Walpole Island First Nation & the University of Western Ontario, 2009).

Our analysis also showed that most MOUs contain similar key elements (protocols). We have included a description of the most consistently used elements in Table 1. We found that most MOUs include all or a variety of these elements depending on their fit with the project. We suggest that the development of any MOU reflect the specificities of the community partners through a process of tailoring these elements. For example, if a research partnership includes an opportunity for employment of Indigenous community members, a protocol should be negotiated and included. See Appendix 3 for our suggestions on steps for negotiating an MOU as an institutional researcher.

Summary of Findings and Discussion

Our review resulted in several significant findings useful for understanding where MOUs currently stand as a research practice with Indigenous partners and the role of MOUs for future research. Recall our four main objectives were:

- To understand if and how MOUs are being used in research and if they are understood as a best practice for collaboration;

- To understand the challenges of collaborative research with Indigenous and institutional partners and how MOUs might mitigate those challenges;

- To understand how or if developing a standardized protocol is desirable and feasible; and

- To offer policy suggestions for MOUs as a standard research practice.

Beginning with our first objective, striving for ethical community-based research that is Indigenous centered is an important goal for Indigenous research. However, our descriptive findings indicate that MOUs are not standard practice nor are they necessarily accessible. First, we had a difficult time finding copies of existing (including expired) MOUs, leading us to believe that MOUs are both underutilized by the research community as well as inaccessible. Second, even though some of the authors from the 40 sources described their experience of using an MOU, they declined our request to share their MOU. Thus, examples of MOUs that researchers can use to shape their own MOU are difficult to find, which in some ways undermines the goal of creating ethics agreement with and for the Indigenous partner as a standard research practice.

Table 1. Key Elements of an MOU

Element	Content and Purpose
Title	• Reflect the content and subject of research and may include signing partners. • Usually titled "Memorandum of Understanding" about health, education, etc.
Preamble	• Provides a general description of the reasoning for the MOU and some background information about the reasoning why an MOU is needed. • Outline "the partners" involved in the MOU. • Include recognition of pre-existing relationships or agreements (e.g., treaties).
Outline the definitions of the partners signing the MOU	• Outline the signing partners and any additional partners (e.g., funders) and include their shared agreement to achieve the specific objectives. • Acknowledge partner roles such as "the parties acknowledge that First Nations shall be responsible for the delivery of the full range of services under *The Child and Family Services Act,* as well as adoption services as under *The Adoption Act* to First Nation members residing on- and off-reserve in Manitoba" (The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and Her Majesty the Queen in Right of the Province of Manitoba, 2012, Objective 1.1).
Statement of purpose	• Succinctly outline the purposes of creating an MOU and set goals and missions of the parties involved in signing. • Most statements of purpose are community or organization specific. • Community or organization specific comments (i.e., mission statements or standards) may be included here. • Examples: "Research should provide clear benefits to First Nations Peoples and communities . . . Research should help develop capacity in meaningful ways" (Schnarch, 2004, p. 91).
Defines roles and responsibilities and/or priorities	• Define how the signing parties of the MOU will achieve the objective outlined in the statement of purpose. • Define what each partner is responsible for in the research and how that responsibility will be carried out.
Framework for discussion	• Outline the general commitment and agreement of the MOU and what the MOU represents as a formal agreement between the signing parties.
Timeframe(s)	• Most MOUs include a timeframe for the duration of the MOU. • They may also include time required to amend or change the MOU and the process for doing so including an end date, dates for review of the project or partnership, potential for extensions, and procedure for terminating agreement. • Examples: Termination period required in advance through written notice (60 days, 90 days). The MOU becomes effective the date that the MOU is signed between the involved parties.
Duty to consult	• Outline requirements to report on progress of research project and procedures for doing so. • May include protocols for scheduling meetings upon finishing different phases, components, etc. via community or board meetings, or other.
Relationship or partnership development	• This section is similar to the duty to consult section and may be used interchangeably. • State the process of continuing relationship development between partners and other community participants and how a relationship of trust and knowledge about the community will be built into the project. • The focus on developing relationships of trust between participants is what differs this section from duty to consult. Relationship development might include more democratic or participatory research methods in an effort to increase participation rates, but in general has fewer formal guidelines for consulting community partners such as meetings.

Table 1. Key Elements of an MOU (continued)

Element	Content and Purpose
Informed consent and confidentiality statement	• Usually outlined in two sections. • Should outline the purpose of the project including individual participant and community risks. Although communities may consent to participate, informed consent must be obtained from individual participants as well. • Both informed consent and confidentiality adhere to similar principles of project transparency. Participants should understand the project, their roles, their responsibilities, and the risks of the project as it applies to themselves and the community. • As it applies, this section should also specify how one partner may gain consent to use data owned by the other partner. • Outline confidentiality protocols for collected material and information during the project and following the expiration of the MOU.

Data ownership and dissemination	• Outline mechanisms of protection and protocols surrounding the ownership of materials, scholarship, and publication rights, including who physically holds the data, how the data can be shared or accessed, and with what permission and in what form data can be shared, who data can be shared with, and for how long a partner has access to data.
	• Having a clear and concise data section is important as it can improve participation and the quality and accuracy of data because the community partners regard the information as valuable.
	• It may include a general statement about the research process such as "Research should increase First Nations control of information and research processes" (Schnarch, 2004, p. 91), as well as specifics surrounding the process of sharing such as:
	   • Releasing or sharing data only after there has been adequate time for the Indigenous group to complete and disseminate its own interpretation.
	   • Releasing or sharing data for specific and agreed upon purposes only.
	   • Releasing only tabular or statistical data for quantifiable information, not record level information.
	   • This section can also outline the "review and approve" process between partners prior to release of publications and presentation (Schnarch, 2004).
	   • Agree to a right to dissent, each party can include their interpretation of the data.

Funding and cost sharing	• In the absence of external funding, this section should outline which partner is responsible for what costs and how responsibility of cost is determined. • It may also outline how non-monetary resources such as community knowledge or social networking (Akwesasne Good Mind Research Protocol; The Research Advisory Committee, 1994) are valued and will be incorporated and exchanged. • SOAHAC (2012) includes an insurance liability section in their MOU in regards to coverage for general, comprehensive, and professional liability because their MOU is focused on health care services for Aboriginal seniors.
Activities	• Once the MOU is signed, some include provisions for a steering committee to provide leadership over the research process and oversee the development. This section should outline the roles and responsibilities of the steering community (e.g., The First Nations Leadership Council Representing the BC Assembly of First Nations, the First Nations Summit, & the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, & the Government of Canada, 2008) • This section may also detail the decision-making process. For instance, if a method of voting or delegation is used. • If a steering committee does not exist, this section may detail the process of creating one in the future.

Table 1. Key Elements of an MOU (continued)

Element	Content and Purpose
General provisions	• Outline that the creation of the MOU between the First Nation community or organization and the academic or government institution does not affect other agreements or relationships. • For example, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, Government of Canada, & Government of Saskatchewan (2008) agreement includes a final section that states the MOU does not affect the jurisdiction of First Nations health in Saskatchewan, does not affect existing treaties, or will not impact existing relationships between regional or national health agencies.
Dispute resolution	• Include parameters for disagreements and how they should be dealt with if they arise during or after the research process. • The Heritage Conservation MOU (2010) outlines their dispute resolution process that begins with an in person meeting. If it cannot be resolved, then written resolutions are provided on behalf of each party and finally representatives for each party will meet if the dispute cannot be resolved.
Definitions	• Provide definitions of the parties signing the MOU. • Define terms used within the MOU such as First Nations groups or organizations, the academic institution, and/or the government agency.
Point of contact	• Provide the main contacts for the institutional and Indigenous partner who have signed the MOU.
Signing parties	• The MOU is signed on behalf of the researcher (academic, organization, governmental) and the First Nation community (e.g., chief) or organization (executive director).

Note. The MOU for First Nations Education in Alberta does not follow the key features of most MOUs and outlines specific objectives and roles in their MOU. The MOU also explicitly states that it is not a treaty and does not affect existing treaties or treaties made in the future (Confederacy of Treaty 6 First Nations, Treaty 7 Management Corporation, Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta, Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, & Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Alberta, 2010).

Therefore, researchers must rely on templates, legal counsel from universities, and community band councils, which presents some concerns. On the one hand, MOUs should be Indigenous partner specific; therefore, having counsel from community organizations is highly valuable. However, band councils may not know all the right questions to ask or the types of protocols to include. Similarly, relying on legal counsel from universities or using government standard formulas can impede the overall goal of local MOU development, which is to create a beneficial project that is community centered.

For instance, in developing their MOU with Brock University, Styres et al. (2010) found that Brock's legal representative was out of her element, with the draft being "very linear and hierarchical" (p. 634). Still, striving for ethical research remains an important goal for community researchers. Increasing community control to develop useful and meaningful research relationships remains an important aspect of this ethical undertaking (Bull, 2010). Yet despite progress, Indigenous partners still lack the same participation and control over the research process that institutional partners have, and institutional researchers still face external expectations from the research community that are unrealistic in an Indigenous context, which can limit the voluntary use of an MOU. Therefore, a disconnect exists between the theoretical acceptance of the ethical principles underlying MOU use in research and the actual adoption of MOUs as a research standard.

This brings us to our next objective, understanding the challenges of collaborative research and the role of MOUs for mitigating them. Interestingly, we believe that many of the challenges impeding MOU use can be addressed by a standardized MOU practice (standardized as an expected part of research, like that of a REB). At the most basic level, many of the challenges researchers face deal with expectations placed on the researcher by the research community and the consequences of sacrificing some of the reins on the research process, while the concerns of Indigenous partners relate to the historical lack of control over research and the desire to gain more control. However, continued pressure to promote MOU development as a research standard may be instrumental for mediating these challenges.

Currently, institutional researchers tend to be heavily penalized in academia for not publishing. However, data control and dissemination protocols included in an MOU may result in fewer publications for the institutional partner as Indigenous partners publish their findings. Therefore, finding a way to systematically bridge institutional and Indigenous partner interests is of utmost importance. Developing a standardized protocol, such as the MOU, may be one effective way of doing so. MOUs can bring external awareness to outside partners, such as REBs and funding agencies, to the responsibilities of institutional partners to Indigenous partners and the different ethics process, expectations, and outcomes this type of research has—in effect normalizing this process. In doing so, the rhetoric would shift from a "sacrifice" to a standard expectation, strengthening the relationship between institutional and Indigenous partners, while still maintaining institutional partner status within the research community or, at the very least, not negatively impacting it. Additionally, MOUs provide a platform for institutional partners to be upfront with the Indigenous partner about their institutional responsibilities. Indigenous partners may need to understand some of these problems, which are inherent in research with institutional partners, and think innovatively to ensure increased involvement and incorporation of Indigenous partner research practices and values. Any researcher interested in doing meaningful collaborative research will do the same. Indigenous partners may insist on being active within the research process, even if this means revising the REB ethics application.

By shifting institutional expectations for the research process, MOUs provide a baseline or foundation for research, making it both desirable and feasible—our fourth objective. It is evident across Canada that MOUs remain underused, given they are under discussed in the literature and their overall lack of use in research. Some Indigenous organizations or communities will not engage in research without protocols such as an MOU in place; others may not know what an MOU is or want one. We believe that Indigenous partners who initiate a formal protocol may have more active governing bodies while communities in lower social and political positions may be less likely to request a formal MOU from researchers. Therefore, the desirability of a standard MOU practice stems from its ability to mediate discussed challenges and provide a baseline for how institutional researchers should expect to engage with potential Indigenous partners. Indigenous partners who are less "research savvy" should be treated the same as communities who are more aware or have more experience. While researchers should be taking the initiative to promote this, a standardized protocol would ensure that the decision to ultimately develop and implement an MOU is with the Indigenous partner.

Initially, MOU development and implementation as a research standard may seem complicated. We do not suggest that this process will be straightforward without any bumps or lessons, nor do we suggest researchers take a "one size fits all" approach to MOU development. Yet, we believe that a functional and standard MOU is the logical direction for future research. In our analysis, we found that most of the

MOUs contained the same or similar elements that were then tailored to reflect project or community specifics, which speaks to the feasibility of a MOU research standard. Despite the limitations of our review, we believe this finding highlights the fact that many Indigenous partners have similar expectations, desires, and/or needs when it comes to research: A project that is beneficial and useful for the Indigenous partner.

Like other protocols (for example, REBs), the MOU would become a part of the research process by providing a foundation for addressing challenges, mediating existing research guidelines, and normalizing the collaborative Indigenous-centered process, including all the researcher expectations that go along with it. In general, MOUs identify new and innovative research practices and strengthen research relationships, which is highly beneficial for researchers interested in working with Indigenous peoples long term. Therefore, an active MOU negotiated between partners should be considered a necessary next step in research policy to continue developing better research practices. Knowing their position of power in the research process, institutional researchers are key players in encouraging MOU development and should support this shift towards more ethical research standards.

Research Implications and Policy Suggestions

The lack of formal ethical protocols surrounding collaborative research that have been negotiated and developed with Indigenous Peoples is a major policy concern. Implementation of a formal MOU on par with other REBs regarding accountability and strict researcher adherence is the logical next step in developing Indigenous community and research relationships.

Challenge: The different partners that are often active within a research project (REBs, funding agencies, researchers, Indigenous partners, etc.,) are considered distinct entities that tend to have disjointed or disconnected and even contradictory protocols, procedures, expectations, and roles for research that makes true collaboration difficult.

Implication: Where existing community protocols or expectations are not reflected in REB protocols and funding application requirements, logistical challenges may be exacerbated due to a lack of institutionalized recognition of an MOU. Although becoming more common, community ethics protocols remain a principle of best practice, lacking in enforceable protocols.

Result: The disconnected relationship between research partners as well as the unofficial nature of MOUs means there is the potential for external partners and researchers to neglect their responsibilities towards the Indigenous partner and forego some of the more complicated aspects of collaboration. For instance, the requirement that researchers submit fully developed proposals for REB ethics approval before conducting any research leaves little opportunity for community consultation let alone meaningful collaboration in the early development stages of the project. At the same time, sanctions do not exist for disciplining researchers who violate existing ethical guidelines except for the community or organization to lodge a complaint to the affiliated university or research institution (Brant Castellano, 2004).

Policy suggestions: To work towards greater institutional partner accountability and collaboration, it is suggested that MOUs become obligatory as a standard practice of gaining REB ethics approval and access to funding and be enforceable by the institutional ethics board that the researcher(s) belongs to

and funding agencies. It is suggested that a standard template for MOUs be developed under active consultation and negotiation with Indigenous leaders and organizations, with Indigenous participants making up no less than 50% of the MOU developers. In translating this template to a specific project, it is suggested that the Indigenous partner make the determination as to whether the MOU is acceptable or in need of further negotiation, with the inclusion of any and all template protocols determined by the Indigenous partner. Further, Indigenous partners must be given all appropriate information, necessary documentation, and additional resources to ensure that they are adequately informed about what MOUs are, their purpose, and how they can be negotiated and enforced. The option to forgo the MOU process should be formal and up to the Indigenous partner. MOUs as an obligatory stage in research would be enacted in a two-part policy change that maintains:

a. MOUs need to be obligatory with the negotiated protocols enforceable to ensure institutional partner accountability to Indigenous partner.[9]

b. Funding institutions and REBs need to change their procedures and protocols to reflect this principle.

As a first step, MOUs should be regarded as just or more important than REB ethics protocols. In practice, REB ethics approval should be contingent upon ethics approval from the Indigenous community or organization in the form of an MOU or a similar community-specific agreement. Although the Indigenous partner may request to not develop an MOU, institutional researchers should make it clear that MOUs can be adjusted and tailored to meet Indigenous partner needs, values, and expectations. Making REB ethics approval contingent upon community approval offers the Indigenous partner a level of protection and increases community control over the research process. To do so, ethics boards and research funding agencies must shift their application processes to accommodate the development of relationships, the opportunity for Indigenous partners and researchers to discuss the proposed research, and to gain community ethics approval prior to institutional approval. As a result, Canadian granting agencies and institutional REBs would be well served to adopt new application and funding structures that budget money and time for joint planning and support the negotiation of research parameters on a project-by-project basis (Meijer Drees, 2001). Integrating this approach into the research framework will allow the research process to truly be collaborative as research partners would work as units within a unified whole rather than distinct governing bodies.

A policy concern that we did not explore in depth is the impact an MOU could have on pre-existing agreements such as treaties or future treaty rights. Recognizing the concern of treaty interference, care must be taken to build the protection of treaty rights into the MOU.

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[9] Given the colonial nature of past research from which MOUs are trying to move away, Indigenous partner responsibility outlined in the various protocols should not be considered "enforceable" in the same way that institutional partner responsibility is. The same is true of accountability. While Indigenous partners should respect institutional partners and the negotiated MOU, MOUs should exist to protect Indigenous partners and their interests. How best to determine consequences of not adhering to the MOU can be outlined in the MOU.

Conclusion

The two row wampum belt, one of the oldest symbols of agreement between Europeans and Haudenosaunee communities, can be used as a modern metaphor for the relations sought after through an MOU. The agreement represented by the wampum belt is one of commitment to living together as two vessels—the European and Haudenosaunee ship—traveling parallel down the river in peaceful coexistence, where neither vessel tries to control the other (Oneida Nation, 2017). By creating an MOU, Indigenous and institutional partners commit to working together as equal partners in a mutually beneficial endeavour. Standard MOUs with local relevance mark a way forward for good research practices that actually benefit the Indigenous partner. Engaging in an MOU signifies mutual respect and active community and researcher involvement. Community-based learning and project development ensure a culturally inclusive and respectful project with valuable outcomes.

Using an MOU indicates two things: It shows permission to do research has been given by the Indigenous partner, and it clarifies and legitimizes the arrangement between partners. Gaining community approval indicates mutual respect, a cornerstone of collaboration. In the community context, "permission" is an active process. Once ethics approval is granted from the research institution, researchers are often left to implement the projects accordingly, without regular follow up or check ins from the granting body. In contrast, Indigenous governing bodies are often more accountable to the project and in turn to the community. Permission may require input from various councils, as well as follow up, check ins, and opportunities for redress throughout the project, as outlined in the MOU. This level of involvement is necessary to uphold community interests throughout the project and maintain equal control as a community partner.

Ultimately, MOUs promote strong working relationships by presenting clear partner expectations and assurance to Indigenous communities that their research goals and participation will be maintained throughout the entire research process. MOUs also indicate that the institutional partner(s) are "willing to be educated on the issues, social phenomena, and traditional values relating to the particular culture" (Styres et al., 2010, p. 635), as well as Indigenous partner interest in gaining research skills and learning about the research process. Through a process of discussion, negotiation, and agreement between research partners, MOUs provide a workable solution to the institutional, Indigenous, and guideline issues discussed above. By using an MOU, researchers and Indigenous community members can come to an agreement about how to deal with issues. Since an MOU is an active document that outlines the entire research process, the collaboration between the researcher and the community is founded on transparency of actions and intentions.

A formal MOU or ethics protocol that can be adjusted based on community needs and specifications is the necessary next step for research with Indigenous Peoples in Canada. At the beginning of this discussion, we noted that this was in no way a conclusive discussion. Further work and community consultation would benefit the practical application of this policy endeavour. Many Indigenous community members and leaders are wary of the implementation of a seemingly Western approach to documenting community ethics—formal documents that are signed by involved parties—which makes community consultation and leadership very important.

The commitment to creating meaningful, relevant, and ultimately collaborative research can be a long process; yet, the extra time and effort is worth it. It should not be the responsibility of the Indigenous partner(s) to demand change in the traditionally colonial research process. Researchers have a responsibility to acknowledge past and current colonial structures by formally and methodologically addressing these concerns. Change needs to happen at the institutional level to foster collaborative research with First Nations communities and Indigenous Peoples across Canada.

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Appendix 1

MOUs by Theme, Location, and Timeframe

	National MOUs	
Type of Research	**Location/Signing Parties**	**Timeframe**
Health	The Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network Inc. and the National Native Addictions Partnership Foundation	Implemented: March 17, 2011 Deadline: No deadline
Environmental	Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, Natural Resources Canada, Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, Transport Canada, the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission and the National Energy Board Commission and the National Energy Board	Implemented: June 14, 2012 Deadline: March 31, 2017

	Provincial MOUs	
Theme	**Location/Signing Parties**	**Timeframe**
	Nova Scotia	
Duty to Consult	Her Majesty The Queen in right of Canada as represented by the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development AND Her Majesty The Queen in right of Nova Scotia as represented by the Minister of the Nova Scotia Office of Aboriginal Affairs	Implemented: October 12, 2012 Deadline: No deadline
	Alberta	
Education	Confederacy of Treaty 6 First Nations as represented by its duly elected Grand Chief Treaty 7 Management Corporation as represented by its duly elected Grand Chief Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta as represented by its duly elected Grand Chief (Assembly of Treaty Chiefs in Alberta) AND Her Majesty The Queen in right of Canada as represented by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Canada) AND Her Majesty The Queen in right of Alberta as represented by the Minister of Education and the Minister of Aboriginal Relations (Alberta)	Implemented: February 24, 2010 Deadline: February, 2020 or earlier with 150 day notice Can be renewed by written agreement
Cultural Recognition	Métis Nation of Alberta (A registered Association pursuant to the Societies Act of Alberta) AND City of Edmonton (A corporation registered pursuant with the Municipal Government Act)	Implemented: September 30, 2013 Deadline: No deadline

MOUs by Theme, Location, and Timeframe (continued)

	Provincial MOUs	
Theme	**Location/Signing Parties**	**Timeframe**
	British Columbia	
Health	The First Nations Leadership Council Representing the BC Assembly of First Nations, the First Nations Summit and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs AND Government of Canada AND Government of British Columbia	Implemented: November 27, 2006 Deadline: No deadline
Heritage Protection and Conservation	Her Majesty the Queen in the right of the Province of British Columbia as represented by the Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts (British Columbia) AND Doig River First Nation, as represented by its Chief, Prophet River First Nation, as represented by its Chief and West Moverly First Nations, as represented by its Chief (collectively "the Treaty 8 First Nations" and individually "a Treaty 8 First Nation")	Implemented: May 20, 2010 Deadline: March 31, 2022, or earlier with 30 days written notice A Treaty 8 First Nation may withdraw from MOU with 30 days written notice
Education	The British Columbia Ministry of Education AND The British Columbia School Trustees Association	Implemented: 2014 Deadline: 2018, reviewed annually or as required
Environmental	The Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs AND The First Nations Summit And The British Columbia Assembly Of First Nations (collectively referred to as the "First Nations Leadership Council") AND Her Majesty The Queen in right of Canada as represented by The Minister Of Fisheries And Oceans (collectively referred to as the "Parties")	Implemented: September 24, 2013 Deadline: September 24, 2016, or earlier with 90 days written notice Can be renewed by written agreement
	Saskatchewan	
Health	The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) AND Government of Canada as represented by the Minister of Health AND Government of Saskatchewan as represented by the Minister of Health	Implemented: 2008 Deadline: No deadline To be reviewed every two years Can be replaced, amended, reviewed with 2 months written notice Any party may withdraw with 30 days written notice
Health	The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) AND Government of Canada as represented by the Minister of Health AND Government of Saskatchewan as represented by the Minister of Health	Implemented: 2010 Deadline: 2020

MOUs by Theme, Location, and Timeframe (continued)

	Provincial MOUs	
Theme	Location/Signing Parties	Timeframe

	Manitoba	
Education	Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre and Brandon University including Chiefs' from the from the Southern Chiefs' Organization (Southern Chiefs' Organization, Waywayseecappo First Nation, Rolling River First Nation, Canupawakpa First Nation, and Dakota Tipi First Nation)	Implemented: June 24, 2010 Deadline: No deadline
Litigation	Her Majesty The Queen, as represented by The Minister Of Indian Affairs And Northern Development, AND The Sayisi Dene First Nation AND The Northlands Dene First Nation	Implemented: 2010 Deadline: No deadline
Reconciliation	The Government of Canada AND the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF)	Implemented: 2016 Deadline: No deadline
Child Welfare	The Assembly of Manitoba Chief ("AMC") representing the Southern First Nations as represented by the Grand Chief, AND Her Majesty the Queen in right of the Province of Manitoba as represented by the Minister of Family Services and Housing and the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs ("Manitoba")	Implemented: 2001 Deadline: 2005, to be reviewed annually

	New Brunswick	
Education	Buctouche Band, Eel Ground Band, Eel River Bar First Nation, Elsipogtog First Nation, Esgenoôpetitj First Nation (Burnt Church Band), Fort Folly Band, Indian Island Band, Kingsclear Band, Madawaska Maliseet First Nation, Metepenagiag Mi'kmaq Nation, Oromocto Band, Pabineau Band, Saint Mary's Band, Tobique Band and Woodstock Band (collectively the "First Nations") AND Her Majesty the Queen in right of New Brunswick, as represented by the Minister of Education and the Minister Responsible for Aboriginal Affairs ("NB Education") AND Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada, as represented by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Implemented: April 22, 2008 Deadline: No deadline provided

	Community-Specific MOUs	
Theme	Location/Signing Parties	Timeframe
Health	London, Ontario Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre (SOAHAC) AND London Health Science Centre (LHSC)	Implemented: January 31, 2012 Deadline: No deadline, pending on legislative and partner allowances
Cultural and Language Preservation	Brentwood Bay, British Columbia The First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Cultural Council prepared for the Language Revitalization In Vancouver Island Salish Communities project	Implemented: 2004 Deadline: No deadline
Research Partnership	London, Ontario Walpole Island First Nation AND the University of Western Ontario (UWO)	Implemented: June 1, 2009 Deadline: January 31, 2014

Appendix 2

Articles in Alphabetical Order by Author

Title	Year	Author	Article Type	Key Focus
The Memorandum of Understanding for First Nations Education in Alberta Newsletter	2011	Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada	MOU newsletter updates	Provides information and updates on the National Panel on First Nation Elementary and Secondary Education, MOU working groups, and treaty organizations.
The Memorandum of Understanding for First Nations Education in Alberta Newsletter	2012	Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada	MOU newsletter updates	Provides information and updates on MOU.
Editorial: Indigenous Knowledges and Education (ECE-12)	2009	Jo-Ann Archibald, Mark Aquash, Vicki Kelly, & Laura Cranmer	Editorial	Provides context on the role of "Indigenous knowledge" in education.
ACUNS Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North	2003	Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies (ACUNS)	Research codes of conduct/guide	Presents 20 principles for conducting meaningful research between researchers and Northerners.
Years of Collaboration Blossom into MOU	2009	Jennifer Ashawasegai	Newspaper article	Provides social and historical context for the MOU between Walpole Island First Nations and the University of Western Ontario.
Enacting Research Ethics in Partnerships with Indigenous Communities in Canada: "Do it in a Good Way"	2008	Jessica Ball and Pauline Janyst	Discussion paper	Examines two Indigenous research projects that demonstrate emerging ethical frameworks for Indigenous research and utilize community–campus MOUs.
Ethics of Aboriginal Research	2004	Marlene Brant Castellano	Discussion paper	"Proposes a set of principles to assist in developing ethical codes for the conduct of research within the Aboriginal community or with external partners" (p. 98) by placing discussion within cultural context.
Exploring the Applicability of the Concept of Cultural Safety to Aboriginal Health and Community Wellness	2009	Simon Brascoupé, and Catherine Waters	Discussion paper	Explores "cultural safety" as an outcome at the institutional and policy levels, and its practical implications for improving the health of Aboriginal people and the wellness of Aboriginal communities.

Articles in Alphabetical Order by Author (continued)

Title	Year	Author	Article Type	Key Focus
Research with Aboriginal Peoples: Authentic Relationships as a Precursor to Ethical Research	2010	Julie R. Bull	Discussion paper	Discusses the importance of "authentic research relationships" and offers ways to achieve "authenticity" in research with Aboriginal Peoples.
CIHR Guidelines for Health Research Involving Aboriginal People	2011	Canadian Institutes of Health Research	Research codes of conduct/guides	Provides guidelines "to assist researchers and institutions in carrying out ethical and culturally competent research involving Aboriginal people" (Purpose and application section, para. 1).
The Value and Challenges of Participatory Research: Strengthening Its Practice	2008	Margaret Cargo & Shawna Merc	Discussion paper	Provides a critical review of literature surrounding participatory research, culminating "in the development of an integrative practice framework . . . to distill the key challenges and added value of PR" (p. 325).
"I Spent the First Year Drinking Tea": Exploring Canadian University Researchers' Perspectives on Community-Based Participatory Research Involving Indigenous Peoples	2012	Heather Castleden, Vanessa Morgan, & Christopher Lamb	Discussion paper	Explores community-based participatory (CBPR) research in the field of geography, particularly the tension between conceptual understanding and applied research practices.
Research Models, Community Engagement, and Linguistic Fieldwork: Reflections on Working within Canadian Indigenous Communities	2009	Eva Czaykowska-Higgins	Discussion paper	"Reflects on different research models in linguistic fieldwork and on different levels of engagement in and with language-speaking communities" (p. 15).
Environmental Racism and First Nations: A Call for Socially Just Public Policy Development	2010	Christina Dhillon & Michael G. Young	Review article	Discusses the relationships between environmental racism and First Nations communities in Canada and uses examples to identify the need for changes in environmental policies.
"Just Do It!": Carving Out a Space for the Métis in Canadian Federalism	2013	Janique Dubois & Kelly Saunders	Case study	Presents the Métis as challenging the current view of federalism by "establishing themselves as legitimate partners in the federation and . . . reviving the pre-Confederation view of federalism in which power is shared by sovereign peoples" (p. 187).

Articles in Alphabetical Order by Author (continued)

Title	Year	Author	Article Type	Key Focus
The Politics of Trust and Participation: A Case Study in Developing First Nations and University Capacity to Build Health Information Systems in a First Nations Context	2004	Brenda Elias, John O'Neil, & Doreen Sanderson	Case study	Explores the recent success of First Nations involvement in health information management, "illustrated through a number of initiatives jointly developed and managed by Manitoba First Nations Centre for Aboriginal Health Research and the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Health Information and Research Committee" (Abstract, para. 1).
OCAP™ and Stewardship: A Discussion Paper For The First Nations Statistical Institute	2002	Jennifer Espey	Discussion paper	Explores "the concepts of stewardship as exemplified by Statistics Canada and OCAP™ as defined by the First Nation" (p. 5).
Municipal-Aboriginal Advisory Committees in Four Canadian Cities: 1999–2014	2016	Joanne Heritz	Discussion paper	Examines municipal Aboriginal relations offices and/or advisory committees in Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, and Toronto.
Kahnawake Schools Diabetes Prevention Project: Code of Research Ethics	2007	Kahnawake Schools Diabetes Prevention Project	Research codes of conduct/guides	Provides guidelines on the Kahnawá:ke Schools Diabetes Prevention Project (KSDPP) Center for Research and Training in Diabetes Prevention community-based participatory research project.
Developments in Canada: Research Ethics Policy Guidelines for Research Involving Aboriginal Peoples	2007	Dr. Joseph Kaufert	Conference presentation	Examines ethical principles for conducting research with First Nations communities and distinguishes key features of research when working with an individual compared to a community.
Understanding the Impact of Self-Determination on Communities in Crisis	2009	Kiera Ladner	Discussion paper	Recognizes the need for structural change to transform from colonial subjects to self-determining peoples. Explores Aboriginal self-government and self-determination for healing.
Policy Silences: Why Canada Needs a National First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Health Policy	2013	Josée Lavoie	Discussion paper	Seeks to answer the question, if what we have in Canada is an Aboriginal health policy patchwork that fails to address inequities, then what would a Healthy Aboriginal Health Policy framework look like?
Best Practice In the Making Memorandum of Understanding: HNHB CCAC & Six Nations	2012	Kathryn Leatherland & Ruby Miller	Conference presentation	Looks at the challenges of collaborative research and creating the health MOU between the Six Nations of the Grand River Band Council and Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Norfolk Community Care Access Centre.
Template of Memorandum of Understanding for Mutual Aid Research in Disasters Superstorm Research Lab & Disaster Collaboratory	2014	Max Liboiron	Generic MOU template	Offers a template starting point for researcher–community or academic–activist partnerships of things to consider when crafting an MOU.

Articles in Alphabetical Order by Author (continued)

Title	Year	Author	Article Type	Key Focus
Knowledge Translation: A Quest for Understanding: Report Prepared by the Atlantic Aboriginal Health Research Program and the Kahnawake Schools Diabetes Prevention Program	2006	Debbie Martin, Ann Macaulay, Alex McComber, Carla Moore, & Fred Wien	Project report	Seeks to enhance understanding surrounding knowledge translation (KT) within an Aboriginal context, recognizing Aboriginal communities and organizations as important partners in the knowledge translation process.
Native Studies and Ethical Guidelines for Research: Dilemmas and Solutions	2001	Laurie Meijer Drees	Discussion paper	Seeks "to illustrate significant research ethics problems, and to stimulate discussion among students, scholars and research participants in Native Studies research about how to deal with such issues" (p. 84).
First Nations Values in Protected Area Governance: Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks and Pacific Rim National Park Reserve	2012	Grant Murray & Leslie King	Discussion paper	"Reports on an in-depth case study of the Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks and the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve, comparing how these areas each attempt to meaningfully engage the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation in PA governance." (p. 385).
Strengthening the Ties That Bind? An Analysis of Aboriginal–Municipal Inter-Governmental Agreements in British Columbia		Jen Nelles & Christopher Alcantara	Discussion paper	Examines 93 inter-governmental agreements "to construct a typology of Aboriginal–municipal inter-governmental partnerships in British Columbia" (p. 315).
Partnering with Community-Based Organizations: An Academic Institution's Evolving Perspective	2007	Keith Norris, Rebecca Brusuelas, Loretta Jones, Jeanne Miranda, O. Kenrik Duru, & Carol M. Mangione	Discussion paper	Reviews "the processes, strategies, and activities around the interface of community–academic partnerships using a CBPR model focused on addressing healthcare issues for minority elders" (p. S1).
Building a Health Research Relationship Between First Nations and the University in Manitoba	2005	John O'Neil, Brenda Elias, & Jennie Wastesicoot	Discussion paper	Describes "the emergence of a formal partnership between Manitoba First Nations and researchers in the Department of Community Health Sciences at the University of Manitoba" (p. S9).
Guide to Researcher and Knowledge-User Collaboration in Health Research	2006	David Parry, Jon Salsberg, & Ann C. Macaulay	Research codes of conduct/guides	Provides guidance on "key issues that should be considered when taking an integrated approach to creating knowledge and translating it to action" (p. 2).

Articles in Alphabetical Order by Author (continued)

Title	Year	Author	Article Type	Key Focus
Improving the Health of Future Generations: The Canadian Institutes of Health Research Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health	2002	Jeff Reading & Earl Nowgesic	Commentary	Explores the Canadian Institutes of Health Research Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health strategic research initiative led by both the Aboriginal and research communities.
First Nations Mental Wellness: Mobilizing Change through Partnership and Collaboration	2015	Brenda Restoule, Carol Hopkins, Jennifer Robinson, & Patricia K. Wiebe	Discussion paper	"Describes developments critical to informing the strategy and helping to create foundations for systems change at all levels with positive impacts being created in First Nations communities across Canada" (p. 89).
The Reciprocal Research Network: The Development Process	2013	Susan Rowley	Discussion paper	Explore "challenges, opportunities, and transformations that occurred during the development of the Reciprocal Research Network (RRN)" (p. 22).
Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession (OCAP™) or Self-Determination Applied to Research A Critical Analysis of Contemporary First Nations Research and Some Options for First Nations Communities	2004	Brian Schnarch	Discussion paper	Relating to principles of OCAP™ and collective ownership of information, "this paper highlights policies and strategies adopted by First Nations organizations" in efforts to "improve ethics in Aboriginal research" (p. 80).
Walking in Two Worlds: Engaging the Space Between Indigenous Community and Academia	2010	Sandra Styres, Dawn Zinga, Sheila Bennett & Michelle Bomberry	Discussion paper	Focuses on a project between Six Nations of the Grand River Territory and Brock University to demonstrate that in collaborative research, collaborators should "walk in two worlds to balance the needs of communities with the systemic realities of academia" (p. 617).
Rejecting, Revitalizing, and Reclaiming: First Nations Work to Set the Direction of Research and Policy Development	2005	Keely Ten Fingers	Discussion paper	Explores discussion "on how First Nations are working to shape the direction of research and policy development" to address the history and legacy of colonial research practices (Abstract, Methods section, para. 1).
Akwesasne Good Mind Research Protocol	1994	The Research Advisory Committee	Discussion paper	Outlines the application process for researchers who want to work in the Akwesasne community.

Articles in Alphabetical Order by Author (continued)

Title	Year	Author	Article Type	Key Focus
Respecting and Protecting Aboriginal Intangible Property: Copyright and Contracts in Research Relationships with Aboriginal Communities	2006	Brian Thom	Discussion paper	"This report is a case study of how a group of Coast Salish First Nations in British Columbia entered into a formal arrangement with a university to document their endangered language and publish resources to encourage the revitalization of language and culture" (p. 2).
Aboriginal Intangible Property in Canada: An Ethnographic Review	2004	Brian Thom & Don Bai	Discussion paper	Describes "examples of customary protocols respecting intangible property in four major Aboriginal cultural regions of Canada" (p. i).
Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Inuit: Reflections on TEK Research and Ethics	1999	George Wenzel	Discussion paper	Reflects on past appropriation of Inuit traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) and frames TEK as a political, scientific, and cultural concern.
Educators' Perspectives about a Public School District's Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement in British Columbia	2012	Kevin White, Jozsef Budai, Daniel Mathew, Mary Rickson Deighan, & Hartej Gill	Discussion paper	Investigates "the experiences of educators as they implement Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements (AEEAs) in the Burnaby school district" in an effort "to forge new partnerships [that] meet the education needs of Aboriginal youth" (p. 42).

Appendix 3

Suggestions for Institutional Researchers for Negotiating an MOU Protocol

Step one: Understand your position. Research groups that are attached to institutions and have access to funding are inherently in a more powerful position then community partners. Institutional researchers must recognize this power in order to avoid dominating the process of research development. As a researcher or community outsider, it is important to know who you really are, recognizing your position as a researcher and as part of a research group. It should be noted that Aboriginal researchers are also outsiders, although their experience of outsider may be different than their non-Indigenous colleagues. This is true in Canada and around the world given the diversity of Indigenous Peoples. Even if a researcher is a member of the community, their position as a researcher may put them in a unique position compared to other non-researcher members. Researchers are people who can construct arguments and give contextual understandings to Indigenous interests and issues that can promote practices or oppose them, legitimate interests or undermine them. Researchers trade in knowledge and literally produce meaning, thereby holding power, making it essential researchers help not hurt the Indigenous interests, knowingly or unknowingly in effort to build strong allied relations.

Step two: Seeking partners. It goes without saying that research projects arise in different ways. Communities or Indigenous organizations can approach researchers seeking partnerships, or researchers can be aware of issues of importance and approach Indigenous partners seeking to work together. Regardless of how things are initiated, take the time to really investigate the understanding each party has of the nature of the research and what is desired. Beforehand, researchers need to do their homework on what the community needs and who to approach. Our team at Western University has worked in several different ways including taking proposals to band councils, tribal councils, community committees, or key individuals such as traditional leaders or Elders. We have also been approached to help with many issues by the same groups or persons. However, things are first initiated, the building of a shared vision is the first responsibility for research partners and starts from the first discussion.

Step three: Build relationships. The process of negotiating a working relationship can be challenging as well as time consuming, requiring self-reflection and constant learning. Through our time as researchers and allies to Indigenous interests, we have learned a simple lesson: The time it takes is the time it takes. Relationship building with Indigenous Peoples or communities is an important "first step" and should not be rushed. Rather, we have found that more time put in at the beginning of a research process yields positive results at the end.

> Where practical, a written agreement (a "protocol," or "memorandum of understanding," or "contract") should be the end result of the consultation and negotiation to protect the community and the researcher and to clarify the understandings that have been reached. Such agreements may have legal implications and consideration should be given to whether independent legal advice is required. (The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies [AIATSIS], 2011, p. 16)

The initial relationship-building meetings (however many it takes) between the community partner and research team should take place prior to project development. As mentioned previously, relationship building should be considered part of the research methodology, with relationships built first.

Step four: Understand community needs. Assuming the community is interested in the project after the initial relationship building meeting(s), "how do you wish to move forward" should be the first issue of discussion. At this point, researchers should have some understanding of community needs, interests, and goals as outlined by the community. Each Indigenous organization or community will have its protocols and practices that they adhere to and expect from outside parties. Determining best practice and the direction of the research may not be exactly clear for everyone as the process begins, making patience and an open mind important throughout the entire research process. If outsiders are bringing a proposal to the community partner, it is also important that, before the meeting, the researcher has done investigations to determine to whom to present the proposal. Doing so is a sign of basic respect and community understanding. Understanding and being intuitive to what Indigenous partners may want as an outcome from this research project is important to "selling" the project. We would also advise that outsiders be sensitive to the information that Indigenous partners may want and/or need. Being sensitive to community needs also means prompting people to ask additional questions by soliciting needs from them. Answering people's "asked questions" is only one part of the process. It also means bringing unasked questions to the table. The MOU is useful in this regard as the many protocols in an MOU prompt questions.