

## Sinte Gleska University

### **Report to the SGU Board of Regents: *Institute for Lakota Teaching and Learning***

Feb 17, 2017



### **Progress Update**

On-going planning for the *Institute* received encouragement during the annual SGU Founder's Week program held January 31<sup>st</sup>-February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

- 1) Students from SFIS and Todd County high schools re-emphasized their desire to grow in their Lakota identity;
- 2) Similar comments and expectations were voiced by tribal and non-profit groups throughout the many presentations.

Comments collected during community visits over the years by SGU president and his team are very clear in stating a concern and a desire to more clearly promote Lakota identity through language use and an understanding of Lakota history and culture.

### **Current Discussions on the Institute**

- 1) Lakota language, history and culture are not primarily subjects in a book.
- 2) SGU has a responsibility to assist Sicangu youth to achieve Lakota identity within a sometimes hostile and difficult environment.

### **The Institute's larger view: *Lakota Ounye He Otehike***

The simple question – “What is Lakota history?” – will be replaced by this larger question:

“Given the Lakota experience of adaptation and conflict and resistance and change from pre-contact through European contact, what deep knowledge and values have the people passed on to this generation?”

The Institute's task: To provide SGU direction to do for this generation what earlier Lakota societies did for theirs. Through research and conversations, collections and scholarship, the Institute will focus the courage and knowledge and values of the Oyate during the many complicated experiences of conflict and change.

## **Wolakota**

The Institute will focus on the deep knowledge that promotes healing and creating within the experience of conflict.

Healing: The knowledge and caring that comes from tradition and spirituality;

Creating: The wisdom and courage and strength to find solutions where others see only problems and conflict: "*Wahwayela opi'iciye un – he Lakotahca!*"

## **Why an Institute for Teaching and Learning**

Schools are key places where drastic acculturation and confusion took place and may still be taking place.

Lakota respect for children and their ability to learn by exploration and discovery points to an education that relates children to learning rather than primarily to a teacher.

1. The *Institute for Lakota Teaching and Learning* will explore types of schooling that are consistent with the Lakota value of respect for children's ability to learn.
  - a. Institute staff will conduct research, seminars, discussions and trainings on the topic of relating students to learning rather than directly to a teacher.
  - b. Key areas for training will include exploratory science, early childhood education, early reading, exploratory mathematics, teacher education and effective Lakota language teaching.
  - c. Certificates and degrees will be developed in several key areas.

Addendum:

**Summary of Comments from Local High School Students  
at the 2017 Founders' Week Program:  
Language and Culture  
January 30, 2017**

The following information represents the comments of local high school students responding to questions about Native cultural education.

***1. What new or different programs would you like to see SGU offering down the road?***

- More Lakota Art four-year degree programs

***2. What do you want to learn about our Native language and culture?***

- Learn the history. Know more about different tribes and languages.
- We want to learn our language more and why it wasn't taught between generations.
- More fluent speakers-storytelling
- More spiritual gatherings/cultural invites
- See cultural meditations, walks food hunts
- More ceremonial cultural events
- Everything and how to speak fluently & understand
- MORE OF IT!!!
- Revise language program, better language program
- Use/learn language & culture applicably rather than technically in an encouraging environment at own pace and time.
- Speak the language to the students
- Incorporate the language in classes other than Lakota classes (math, science, etc.)
- Natural Foods and Medicines
- Implement of Natural Resources
- Sweat Lodge
- Create speaking communities/circles in communities, online, current use of technology (smart boards)
- Revive use of traditional skills and crafts (dress making, quill working, beading)

- Revitalizing and marketing of traditional foods and medicines.
- Be more proactive with youth, show our youth that they are wakan, push and advocate for youth empowerment by utilizing traditional cultural law.
- Tradition/history from someone who is living
- More daily cultural activities, language, etc.

**3. *What kinds of jobs are you looking for after you graduate?***

- Lakota Studies/Cultural Arts Program
- Business Management/Accounting
- Instructor at SGU to give back
- Youth participation/social impacting
- Programs of certain obligations such as scouts, camp, ROTC, band choir, counseling services
- Lakota Art Instructor
- Lakota language teacher-Headstart programs

**4. *What types of technology should the University invest in?***

- A program that would help students learn to pronounce the nasal, guttural, and the diacritics of the language.
- Earpiece that translate languages (pilot) also allows wearers to speak other languages
- Apps for Lakota language

**5. *What are some ways to strengthen our Tribal Nation?***

- No IRA Govt (new government)
- Improved community relations
- No pictures at pow-wows/sundances, etc.
- Honor native students; teach how to respect our culture
- Practice the seven Lakota virtues