

UWOFA Land Acknowledgement Statement Policy

Version	Effective Date	Supersedes
2.0	April 18, 2024	Policy approved January 21, 2020
Policy Approver	Policy Owner	Policy Contact
Board of Directors	Policy & Governance Committee	UWOFA Vice-President
Last Reviewed	Next Review Date	Required Reviewers
April 2024	April 2026	Policy & Governance Committee

I. Purpose

1. UWOFA understands that the ritual of non-Indigenous people giving land acknowledgements arose from the practice of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to recognize each Nation and/or territory they were visiting and that universities have come to adopt the practice to recognize Indigenous self-determination and Indigenous Peoples' relationships with the land which universities occupy. UWOFA acknowledges that "many Indigenous people are critical of land acknowledgements because they are often recited word for word, the same every time, with little to no reflection on the violence and ongoing nature of settler-colonialism." ('More Than Words', Western's Office of Indigenous Initiatives).
2. UWOFA embraces its roles and responsibilities in Truth and Reconciliation and decolonizing the University and seeks to demonstrate this commitment to reflection and action, in part, through meaningful land acknowledgement statements. The purpose of this policy is to promote the same.

II. Definitions

The following definitions shall apply to the Policy:

"UWOFA" means the University of Western Ontario Faculty Association.

"Board" or **"Board of Directors"** mean the Board of Directors of the Association.

"Executive Committee" means the Executive Committee of the Association.

"Speaker" means any person delivering the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

"University" or **"Western"** mean the University of Western Ontario.

III. Policy Statement

1. Rote reading aloud of a generic set-text land acknowledgement at a UWOFA meeting without appropriate reflection to give meaning to the statement is strongly discouraged.
2. UWOFA recommends that speakers write their own statement, according to their positionality, field and/or discipline, and the event at which the acknowledgement is given. It is recommended that land acknowledgements include reflection on the role of UWOFA in the process of Truth and Reconciliation and in decolonizing institutions, bringing meaning to the words spoken, in the environment in which they are delivered.
3. A land acknowledgement statement shall be given, wherever possible, at the start of meetings of Members and at UWOFA's formal public events.

Land Acknowledgement Statement Policy

4. At the discretion of the chair of the meeting, a statement may be given at the start of a meeting of the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee or any other UWOFA committee.
5. A statement shall be given at any meeting when it is formally included in the agenda as approved for that meeting.
6. Speakers can use either of the two following sets of language modelled by the University as a guide or starting point. Speakers must learn to pronounce the names of the Indigenous Peoples included in this model language prior to delivering a land acknowledgement. These statements are not intended as a script.
- 6a. We/I acknowledge that Western University is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek (Ah-nish-in-a-bek), Haudenosaunee (Ho-den-no-show-nee), Lūnaapéewak (Len-ahpay- wuk) and Chonnonton (Chun-ongk-ton) Nations, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum.

With this, we/I respect the longstanding relationships that Indigenous Nations have to this land, as they are the original caretakers. We acknowledge historical and ongoing injustices that Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) endure in Canada, and we accept responsibility as a public institution to contribute toward revealing and correcting miseducation as well as renewing respectful relationships with Indigenous communities through our teaching, research and community service.

- 6b. We/I acknowledge that Western University is located on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabek (Ah-nish-in-a-bek), Haudenosaunee (Ho-den-no-show-nee), Lūnaapéewak (Len-ahpay- wuk) and Chonnonton (Chun-ongk-ton) Nations, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. This land continues to be home to diverse Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) whom we recognize as contemporary stewards of the land and vital contributors of our society.
7. UWOFA recommends that all Members, but particularly those who are preparing land acknowledgement statements for UWOFA events, work through the resources provided by the Western Office of Indigenous Initiatives, particularly the 'More Than Words' guide to aid in reflection, learning and unlearning: <https://indigenous.uwo.ca/archives/initiatives/land-acknowledgement.html>
8. Whenever possible, any request to give a land acknowledgement statement at a UWOFA event will be accompanied by at least two week's notice and a copy of this policy. Members are encouraged to contact UWOFA for any additional assistance.
9. UWOFA shall use for written land acknowledgements the text in either clause 6a or 6b with the inclusion of additional text which brings meaning to the land acknowledgement according to the nature and goals of the document. The pronunciation guides shall be removed from written land acknowledgement statements.