



**TO:** SUNY University Faculty Senate  
**FROM:** Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Committee  
**RE:** To Recognize the Second Monday of October as Indigenous Peoples' Day  
**DATE:** 177<sup>th</sup> Plenary at SUNY Delhi, October 19-21, 2017

**RATIONALE:**

**WHEREAS** in 1977 the International NGO Conference on Discrimination against Indigenous Populations in the Americas began discussing the replacement of Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples' Day; and

**WHEREAS** there is growing recognition and understanding in the United States that the celebration of Columbus' "Discovery of America" is insulting to indigenous peoples and directly contrary to the fact that a way of life for indigenous people was irrevocably impacted with the arrival of the first European immigrants to the Americas; and

**WHEREAS** since 1992 more than 58 municipalities including the states of Minnesota, Vermont, and Alaska have chosen to celebrate Indigenous Peoples' Day instead of Columbus Day (*as of 9 October 2017*); and

**WHEREAS** in New York State there are eight federally recognized Native American tribes; and

**WHEREAS** many of our SUNY campuses reside on land once inhabited by the Haudenosaunee people; and

**WHEREAS** SUNY is committed to creating campus communities that are inclusive, diverse and representative of all people; and

**WHEREAS** SUNY campuses have recognized the importance of this matter and have created resolutions supporting an "Indigenous Peoples' Day," and no longer list Columbus Day on their school calendars; and

**WHEREAS** the Student Assembly of SUNY unanimously passed resolution 1516-115, "Indigenous Peoples' Day" on April 16, 2016.

## RESOLUTION:

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the University Faculty Senate (UFS) endorses the SUNY Student Assembly resolution 1516-115, “Indigenous Peoples’ Day”; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that SUNY University Faculty Senate requests that campuses recognize Indigenous Peoples’ Day instead of Columbus Day on their respective campus calendars.; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that SUNY faculty are encouraged to engage in sustained and meaningful discussions with Indigenous Peoples to further SUNY’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion as stated in the BOT Resolution of September 10th 2015; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the UFS President is charged to bring this matter forward to the Union of University Professions and to the SUNY Board of Trustees requesting that they change the name of the holiday celebrated or listed on SUNY calendars on the second Monday of October to Indigenous Peoples’ Day.

## BACKGROUND

**Definition of Indigenous Peoples:** While there is no universal definition of Indigenous Peoples (Kenrick and Lewis, 2004), there is concurrence that Indigenous Peoples self-identify as indigenous and are recognized as such by their communities. Their cultural, economic, social, and political beliefs and systems are rooted in places and histories that are distinct from the post-colonial societies and cultures in which they are embedded.

<http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/IPeoples/UNDRIPManualForNHRIs.pdf>

[http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/5session\\_factsheet1.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/5session_factsheet1.pdf)

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/indigenous-peoples/>

[http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/indigenous-tribal/WCMS\\_503321/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/indigenous-tribal/WCMS_503321/lang--en/index.htm)

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs326/en/>

<https://www.culturalsurvival.org/issues>

Kenrick, J. and Lewis, J. (2004), Indigenous peoples' rights and the politics of the term ‘indigenous’. *Anthropology Today*, 20: 4–9. doi:10.1111/j.0268-540X.2004.00256.x

Continental Summit of Indigenous Peoples and Nationalities of Abya Yala

[http://cumbrecontinentalindigena.org/about\\_guate.php](http://cumbrecontinentalindigena.org/about_guate.php)

UN Chronicle: The Magazine of the United Nations, September 2007,

<https://unchronicle.un.org/article/discrimination-against-indigenous-peoples-latin-american-context>

Daily News: “Columbus Day Changing to Indigenous Peoples Day”, October 10, 2016,

<http://www.nydailynews.com/life-style/columbus-day-changing-indigenous-people-day-article-1.2825082>

SUNY Student Assembly, Resolution, #1516-115, “Indigenous Peoples’ Day”, April 16, 2016,

<http://sunysa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/1516-115Indigenous-Peoples-Day-1.pdf>

University at Albany, SUNY, Student Association Senate resolution #S.1516-106R, “Indigenous Peoples’ Day”, February 10, 2016, [www.albany.edu/sasenate/docs1516/1516-106.docx](http://www.albany.edu/sasenate/docs1516/1516-106.docx)

SUNY Board of Trustees’ Resolution on Diversity, September 10, 2015.

<https://www.suny.edu/about/leadership/board-of-trustees/meetings/webcastdocs/Reso%20Tab%2005%20-%20Diversity,%20Equity,%20and%20Inclusion%20Policy.pdf>

SA Press release. [http://sunysa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/PressRelease\\_20171008.pdf](http://sunysa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/PressRelease_20171008.pdf)

New York Times article

[https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/09/us/columbus-day-protest.html?emc=edit\\_ne\\_20171009&nl=evening-briefing&nid=72284997&te=1](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/09/us/columbus-day-protest.html?emc=edit_ne_20171009&nl=evening-briefing&nid=72284997&te=1)