

# Curriculum Developers



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## Pulling Together

A Guide for Indigenization  
of Post-Secondary Institutions

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***Professional Learning Series***



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### Artist Statement

Inspired by the annual gathering of ocean-going canoes through Tribal Journeys, ‘Pulling Together’ created by Kwakwaka’wakw artist, Lou-ann Neel, is intended to represent the connections each of us has to our respective Nations and to one another as we Pull Together. Working toward our common visions, we move forward in sync, so we can continue to build and manifest strong, healthy communities with foundations rooted in our ancient ways.

Thank you to all of the writers and contributors to the guides. We asked writers to share a phrase from their Indigenous languages on paddling or pulling together...

‘alhgoth ts’ut’o ~ Wicēhtowin ~  
kən limt p cyʔap ~ si’sixwanuxw ~ ʔihšʔ ~  
Alh ka net tsa doh ~ snuhwulh ~  
Hilzaqz as qíḡuála qúsa mánáḡuala wíwúyalaḡsm ~  
k’idéin át has jeewli.àat ~ Na’tsa’mah̓t ~  
S’yat kii ga goot’deem ~ Yequx deni nanadin ~  
Mamook isick

Thank you to the Indigenization Project Steering Committee, project advisors and BCcampus staff who offered their precious time and energy to guide this project. Your expertise, gifts, and generosity were deeply appreciated.

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## Accessibility Statement

### Accessibility features of the web version of this resource

The [web version of the \*Pulling Together: A Guide for Curriculum Developers\*](#) has been designed with accessibility in mind by incorporating the following features:

- It has been optimized for people who use screen-reader technology.
  - all content can be navigated using a keyboard
  - links, headings, and tables are formatted to work with screen readers
  - images have alt tags
- Information is not conveyed by colour alone.
- The option to increase font size (see tab on top right of screen)

### Other file formats available

In addition to the web version, this book is available in a number of file formats including PDF, EPUB (for eReaders), MOBI (for Kindles), and various editable files. Here is a link to where you can [download this book in another file format](#). Look for the “Download this book” drop-down menu to select the file type you want.

Those using a print copy of this resource can find the URLs for any websites mentioned in this resource in the footnotes.

### Known accessibility issues and areas for improvement

While we strive to ensure that this resource is as accessible and usable as possible, we might not always get it right. Any issues we identify will be listed below. There are currently no known issues.

### Accessibility standards

The web version of this resource has been designed to meet [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0](#), level AA. In addition, it follows all guidelines in [Accessibility Toolkit: Checklist for Accessibility](#). The development of this toolkit involved working with students with various print disabilities who provided their personal perspectives and helped test the content.

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Please include the following information:

- The location of the problem by providing a web address or page description
- A description of the problem
- The computer, software, browser, and any assistive technology you are using that can help us diagnose and solve your issue
  - e.g., Windows 10, Google Chrome (Version 65.0.3325.181), NVDA screen reader

You can contact us through the following web form: [Report an Error](#)

**This statement was last updated on August 1, 2019.**



## Overview

### Purpose of this guide

The *Curriculum Developers Guide* is part of an open professional learning series developed for staff across post-secondary institutions in British Columbia. Guides in the series include: [Foundations](#); [Leaders and Administrators](#); [Curriculum Developers](#); [Teachers and Instructors](#); [Front-line Staff, Student Services, and Advisors](#); and [Researchers](#). These guides are the result of the Indigenization Project, a collaboration between BCcampus and the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training. The project was supported by a steering committee of Indigenous education leaders from BC universities, colleges, and institutes, the First Nations Education Steering Committee, the Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association, and Métis Nation BC.

These guides are intended to support the systemic change occurring across post-secondary institutions through Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation. A guiding principle from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada process states why this change is happening.

Reconciliation requires constructive action on addressing the ongoing legacies of colonialism that have had destructive impacts on Aboriginal peoples' education, cultures and languages, health, child welfare, the administration of justice, and economic opportunities and prosperity. (2015, p. 3)

We all have a role to play. As noted by Universities Canada, “[h]igher education offers great potential for reconciliation and a renewed relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada.” (2015) Similarly, Colleges and Institutions Canada notes that “Indigenous education will strengthen colleges’ and institutes’ contribution to improving the lives of learners and communities.” (2015) These guides provide a way for all faculty and staff to Indigenize their practice in post-secondary education.

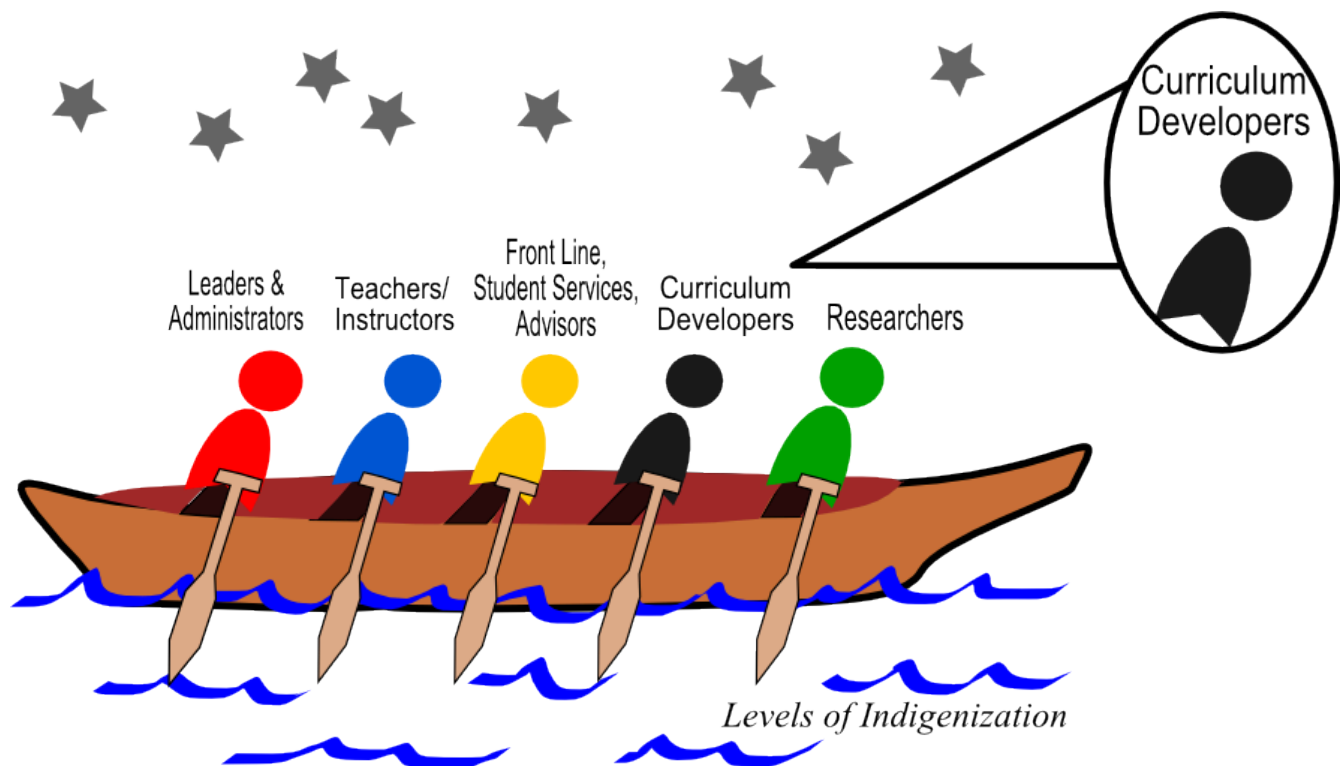


Fig 0.1: Pulling Together: A Canoe Journey

The Indigenization Project can be described as an evolving story of how diverse people can journey forward in a canoe (Fig 0.1). In Indigenous methodology, stories emphasize our relationships with our environment, our communities, and with each other. To stay on course, we are guided by the stars in the sky, with each star a project principle: deliver holistically, learn from one another, work together, share strengths, value collaboration, deepen the learning, engage respectfully, and learn to work in discomfort. As we look ahead, we do not forget our past.

The canoe holds Indigenous Peoples and the key people in post-secondary education whose roles support, lead, and build Indigenization. Our combined strengths give us balance and the ability to steer and paddle in unison as we sit side by side. The paddles are the open resources. As we learn to pull together, we understand that our shared knowledge makes us stronger and makes us one.

The perpetual motion and depth of water reflects the evolving process of Indigenization. Indigenization is relational and collaborative and involves various levels of transformation, from inclusion and integration to infusion of Indigenous perspectives and approaches in education. As we learn together, we ask new questions, so we continue our journey with curiosity and optimism, always looking for new stories to share.

We hope these guides support you in your learning journey. As open education resources they can be adapted to fit local context, in collaboration with Indigenous Peoples who connect with and advise your institution. We expect that as more educators use and revise these guides, they will evolve over time.

## How to use and adapt this guide

The *Curriculum Developers Guide* explores Indigenous-Canadian relationships from contact to the present. This guide looks at the diversity of Indigenous Peoples and the historical and contemporary realities since contact.

You can use the guide to:

- increase your awareness of Indigenous People, our histories, decolonization, and reconciliation
- enhance your knowledge of how Indigenous history and realities in Canada affect relationships and how this may influence how you work with Indigenous people and colleagues in post-secondary education

This guide can be used as part of a learning community or in a group learning experience, adapting and augmenting it to include Indigenization pathways at your institution for Indigenous students and communities.

The *Curriculum Developers Guide* is not a definitive resource, since First Nation, Métis and Inuit perspectives and approaches are diverse across the province. We invite you to augment it with your own stories and examples, and, where possible, include Indigenous voice and perspectives from your area in the materials.

**Note:** For a technical description of how to adapt this guide please see [Appendix H](#).

### Media Attributions

- Fig 0.1: Pulling Together: A Canoe Journey, Curriculum Developer Emphasis © Dianne Biin is licensed under a [CC BY \(Attribution\)](#) license

## Acknowledgements

We acknowledge and respect Lkwungen speaking peoples from Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, on whose lands this guide was created. We also acknowledge the WSÁNEĆ, Scia'new and T'Sou-ke peoples who also have historical relationships with these lands that continue to this day.

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We also acknowledge BCcampus, the project steering committee, and the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training for funding and managing this project.

Finally, we acknowledge the readers of this guide, who are bravely taking steps to learn about themselves and their part in reconciliation, and implementing Indigenous educational approaches.

## Introduction

For too long, Canadian society has been rooted in colonial approaches and Euro-centrism, creating negative impacts on Indigenous Peoples<sup>1</sup> and all Canadians – and the post-secondary education system is by no means an exception. Indigenization aims to address this legacy through the integration of Indigenous perspectives in curriculum and other educational contexts.

Indigenization is a process in which all members of educational institutions, regardless of their personal or professional background or subject-matter area, should be engaged. As a curriculum developer, you have an important role to play in the process of Indigenization. As you design, develop, review, and adapt curriculum, you will have opportunities to weave in Indigenous content, perspectives, and educational approaches. This is a critical responsibility, which this guide is intended to help prepare you for.

The journey to Indigenize curriculum fosters self-development. Whether you are an Indigenous or non-Indigenous person, through this journey you will gain insight into your own culture and background, privileges, or oppressions that have affected your life, and you will identify biases or gaps in your knowledge. You will question the pervasive dominance of Western epistemologies, pedagogies, and resources within curriculum, and make space for including Indigenous ways of being that can benefit all learners. You will engage in the emotional work of confronting the trauma of colonization and building stronger relationships with Indigenous people and communities, and actively participate in the hands-on work of revising your curriculum and pedagogical approaches. And finally, you will reflect upon your own agency in regards to Indigenization, and take action toward systemic change in your institution.

### Notes

1. Throughout this guide, the term “Indigenous” is being used as the preferred collective noun for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. “Indigenous” comes from the Latin word *indigena*, which means “sprung from the land; native.” And “Indigenous Peoples” recognizes that, rather than a single group of people there are many – separate and unique Nations.

## How to Use and Adapt This Guide

This guide was developed as part of a Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training initiative to create open educational resources to support Indigenization at post-secondary institutions in British Columbia. To learn more about Indigenous-Canadian relationships since contact, please see the [Foundations Guide](#).

The *Curriculum Developers Guide* is not a definitive resource, since First Nation and Métis perspectives and approaches are diverse across the province. We invite you to augment it with your own stories and examples, and, where possible, include Indigenous voice and perspectives from your area in the materials.

As the *Curriculum Developers Guide* is an open resource, you may access, share, or adapt the materials as needed. Below are suggested methods, styles, or approaches to use this resource.

### Self-guided activities

Read through the materials and complete many of the activities on your own, according to your own pace. If you are working through the guide alone, we encourage you to take advantage of the many options included for working with colleagues or sharing with your professional community.

### Facilitated or co-learning approach

If possible, the learning will be more powerful if conducted in a group or with a partner. While much of the content can be read individually, the activities can be practiced and shared within groups. It would be easier, although not necessary, for these activities to be facilitated by a group leader or coordinator. No specialized knowledge or skills are required to lead the process. Any interested member of your group could do it. Not only will this deepen your learning and create a sense of accountability, but it can also provide a safe space to talk about the emotions that arise through this process.

### Complementary learning process

There is only so much you can learn by reading a guide. This is even more important in the context of Indigenous pedagogy, which emphasizes learning from experience and relationships. The best approach to learning deeply about this topic is to use this guide in conjunction with hands-on learning activities, especially those that involve engagement with Indigenous communities and culture. Some of these activities may already be occurring at your institution. Check with Indigenous services at your institution to find out. You can also read about other learning opportunities in this [Environmental Scan \[PDF\]](#).

## Non-linear approach

With the exception of Section 1, which should be completed first, the other sections can be completed in any order. You can use this guide in a non-linear fashion, or as a resource to support learning as you need it.

## Sections

This guide is comprised of the following six sections which are intended, when taken all together, to help in the process of integrating, honouring, and respecting Indigenous culture, history, and knowledge in curriculum.

- **Section 1:** Describes the need to Indigenize and decolonize as ways to work toward reconciliation. It presents various activities and reading materials to help us better understand what each of these processes entails and how we can incorporate them into our practice.
- **Section 2:** Introduces Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies, both of which are necessary foundations to approach learning and teaching from an Indigenous perspective. It also invites us to revise our own practice in critical ways by reviewing examples of courses that integrate Indigenous perspectives and by adapting our own curriculum.
- **Section 3:** Is about learning how to build long-lasting relationships and connections with Indigenous people and communities by understanding protocols, intentionality, and purpose.
- **Section 4:** Invites us to consider the diverse sources of Indigenous knowledge available to curriculum developers and explores ways in which we can learn about and include local contexts. This section also addresses cultural appropriation and identification of authentic resources.
- **Section 5:** Provides us with opportunities to reflect on awareness about the role we each play in the above processes and how to understand our role in systems of oppression, which can be conscious and unconscious. Becoming aware of this will also help us identify how we can become allies and lifelong learners.
- **Section 6:** Proposes ways in which we can establish communities of practice in our institutions to contribute to and advocate for Indigenization at a systemic level, including institutional policies, principles, and strategies.

## Activities

There are a variety of activities in each section. These include:

**Individual Activities:** Can be completed alone, or as part of a group. These may include reading or viewing videos, reflective activities such as journaling, or curriculum development work.

**Group Activities:** Require the involvement of at least one other person. These may involve discussion, seeking feedback, or making community connections.

**Self-Reflections:** These are opportunities for you to reflect on your own learning on the subjects covered in the section.

## Timing

It should take between 20 and 25 hours to complete the readings, videos, curriculum work, and reflections included in this guide. We encourage you to allow as much additional time as you need for building relationships and connections within your institution and community. Relationship building is a critical component of the work involved in Indigenizing curriculum and the time required for this work cannot be predetermined.



## Section 1: Understanding Indigenization



Fig 1.1 “Raven and the First Men” by [Bill Reid](#), Museum of Anthropology, UBC, Vancouver, British Columbia

### Media Attributions

- Fig 1.1: “Raven and the First Men” by Bill Reid, Museum of Anthropology, UBC, Vancouver, British Columbia © [D. Gordon E. Robertson](#) is licensed under a [CC BY-SA \(Attribution ShareAlike\)](#) license

## Introduction

In this section, we explore what is meant by Indigenization, how it relates to decolonization and reconciliation, why it's important, and how you, as a curriculum developer, can participate.

### Purpose of this section

This section is intended to help you develop an awareness and understanding of the meaning and importance of Indigenization through the exploration of the following topics and constructs:

- Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation
- The need to Indigenize
- Creating pathways toward reconciliation

Approximate time: 3.5 hours

### Activity 1: Locate Yourself

**Time:** Ongoing

**Type:** Individual

Moving toward action starts by looking at what Willie Ermine (1995) calls the *inner space*, which is the most intimate space within the self, the space where we find the moral compass that helps us dictate the course of our life and find our way forward. As you read this section, think about how the concepts apply to your own self-awareness and realm of influence, and how, in your life, coming to know can be followed by learning to do. We invite you to use the following questions for reflection to guide your thinking:

- How does your personal and academic background and identity impact your knowledge and experience of Indigenous Peoples?
- What is your current relationship to Indigenous Peoples?
- What changes do you want to make in your relationship to Indigenous Peoples?
- As a curriculum developer, how do you view your role in Indigenization?

## Indigenization, Decolonization, and Reconciliation

If we want to contribute to systemic change, we need to understand the concepts **Indigenization**, **decolonization**, and **reconciliation**. These terms are sometimes used interchangeably, but according to Indigenous scholars and activists (see Alfred, 2009; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Pete, 2015), they are separate but interrelated processes.

### Indigenization

Indigenization is a process of naturalizing Indigenous knowledge systems and making them evident to transform spaces, places, and hearts. In the context of post-secondary education, this involves bringing Indigenous knowledge and approaches together with Western knowledge systems. This benefits not only Indigenous students but all students, teachers, and community members involved or impacted by Indigenization.

**Indigenous knowledge systems** are embedded in relationship to specific lands, culture, and community. Because they are diverse and complex, Indigenization will be a unique process for every post-secondary institution.

It is important to note that Indigenization does not mean changing something Western into something Indigenous. The goal is not to replace Western knowledge with Indigenous knowledge, and the goal is not to merge the two into one. Rather, Indigenization can be understood as weaving or braiding together two distinct knowledge systems so that learners can come to understand and appreciate both. Therefore, we recommend that you use the word *Indigenization* cautiously and take care not to use it when Indigenous content is simply added to a course or when something Western is replaced with something Indigenous. Rather, it refers to a deliberate coming together of these two ways of knowing.

### Decolonization

Decolonization refers to the process of deconstructing colonial ideologies of the superiority and privilege of Western thought and approaches. On the one hand, decolonization involves dismantling structures that perpetuate the status quo, problematizing dominant discourses, and addressing unbalanced power dynamics. On the other hand, decolonization involves valuing and revitalizing Indigenous knowledge and approaches and weeding out settler biases or assumptions that have impacted Indigenous ways of being. Decolonization necessitates shifting our frames of reference with regard to the knowledge we hold; examining how we have arrived at such knowledge; and considering what we need to do to change misconceptions, prejudice, and assumptions about Indigenous Peoples. For individuals of settler identity, decolonization is the process of examining your beliefs about Indigenous Peoples and culture by learning about yourself in relationship to the communities where you live and the people with whom you interact.

## Reconciliation

Reconciliation is about addressing past wrongs done to Indigenous Peoples, making amends, and improving relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to create a better future for all. Chief Justice Murray Sinclair, chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, has stated, “Reconciliation is not an Aboriginal problem – it involves all of us”

You can think about reconciliation as work to ameliorate a damaged relationship. Imagine that there was an individual who had been abused, lied to, and exploited for years – that person would have a lot of fear, mistrust, and trauma. The abuser would also have negative feelings: shame, guilt, self-blame, and possibly anger toward the victim. The abuser may even blame the victim. Repairing this relationship would mean apologizing, rebuilding trust, hearing each other’s stories, getting to know each other to appreciate each other’s humanity, and taking concrete action to show that the relationship will be different from now on.

With reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, we are not only talking about a relationship between two individuals, but we are also talking about a relationship between multiple groups of people and between many generations over hundreds of years. Clearly, the onus for this action is on the party that perpetrated the harm, which in this case is settler society. You can see from this example that reconciliation necessarily involves intensive emotional work for all parties. For Indigenous people it means revisiting experiences of trauma and becoming open to forgiveness, and for settlers it involves gaining in-depth understanding of one’s own relation to Indigenous Peoples and the impacts of colonization, including recognizing settler privilege and challenging the dominance of Western views and approaches.

## Interrelationships between Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation

Decolonization is a component of Indigenization, because it means challenging the dominance of Western thought and bringing Indigenous thought to the forefront. Indigenization is part of reconciliation, because it involves creating a new relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. But these processes have important distinctions. Most notably, reconciliation is primarily a settler responsibility, and decolonization must be led by Indigenous people. In addition, the emotional work of reconciliation is different from that of Indigenization and decolonization, which have less of a focus on making amends for past traumas, and a greater focus on mainstreaming Indigenous thought. Willie Ermine (2007) writes about the ways in which these processes are related, explaining that reconciling Indigenous and Western worldviews: “... is the fundamental problem of cultural encounters. Shifting our perspectives to recognize that the Indigenous-West encounter is about thought worlds may also remind us that frameworks or paradigms are required to reconcile these solitudes” (p. 201).

### Activity 1: Decolonizing Our Practice, Indigenizing Our Teaching

**Time:** 60 min

**Type:** Individual

Read Pete, Schneider, & O'Reilly's (2013) article "[Decolonizing Our Practice, Indigenizing Our Teaching \[PDF\]](#)" for a deeper exploration of what these terms entail from the perspective of three female (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) academics.

- Use the subheadings in their article to document your own position and perception of these topics, constructs, and issues as they relate to your institution, your students, and your colleagues.
- If possible, engage one or two colleagues in a conversation similar to the authors' conversation.

## The Need to Indigenize

### Exclusion and misrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples

Academic curricula have primarily been developed in ways that privilege the dominant, Euro-Western culture through the content, approaches to teaching and learning, and values about knowledge. The experiences, worldviews, and histories of Indigenous Peoples have been excluded in education systems, because they were seen as less valuable or relevant. Perceptions of Indigenous Peoples were often misrepresentative and perpetuated stereotypes. This exclusion and misrepresentation was one of the most damaging impacts of colonialism and one of the strongest tools of assimilation. As Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) writes, “Imperialism has been perpetuated through the ways in which knowledge about indigenous peoples was collected, classified and then represented in various ways back to the West, and then, through the eyes of the West, back to those who have been colonized” (p. 1).

### Indigenization is not multiculturalism

When talking about Indigenization, it is important to keep in mind that this process and approach to working in post-secondary institutions is different from approaches that place multiculturalism at the centre. While multiculturalism approaches are also necessary and relevant, they differ from Indigenization at a philosophical, political, and systemic level. A question we often hear when trying to include Indigenous perspectives into the curriculum is: “Why are we not including other ethnic groups if Canada is a culturally diverse country?” In response to this question, it is important to remember the following:

- Indigenization does not require abandoning multiculturalism; both can be practiced side-by-side.
- While multiculturalism as a law and as policy also recognizes Indigenous Peoples, it does not address the social injustices and racist policies to which Indigenous Peoples have been subjected. The history and current situation of Indigenous Peoples in Canada differs in significant ways from immigrants and minority settlers. These differences must be acknowledged to form respectful relationships.
- We all live on Indigenous lands, many of which were never ceded but were stolen by settler governments. Those of us who are settlers are considered to be visitors in the lands of Indigenous Peoples. Out of respect, we must come to know, understand, and value Indigenous culture. This means learning about local cultures, languages, and protocols.

Unfortunately, there is sometimes greater cultural acceptance for multiculturalism than Indigenization, and we still have a long way to go when it comes to respecting and valuing Indigenous worldviews. Jim Silver (2006) illustrates this point: “Canada takes pride for example, in being the destination for many runaway African-American slaves who were fleeing their captors by taking the ‘underground

railway’ in search of freedom. Yet Canada’s police force relentlessly hunted down Aboriginal children who had escaped captivity in a residential school” (p. 24).

While multiculturalism presents a valuable approach to honouring diversity, Indigenization is a distinct process that needs to be practiced in its own right, and the two should not be merged together in policy or practice.

## The benefits of Indigenization

Indigenization is not an “Indigenous issue,” and it is not undertaken solely to benefit Indigenous students. Indigenization benefits everyone; we all gain a richer understanding of the world and of our specific location in the world through awareness of Indigenous knowledge and perspectives. Indigenization also contributes to a more just world, creating a shared understanding that opens the way toward reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. It also counters the impacts of colonization by upending a system of thinking that has typically discounted Indigenous knowledge and history.

Mi’kmaq educator Marie Battiste (2002) emphasizes that we should view Indigenous and Western knowledge systems not as oppositional binaries, but rather as concepts that complement each other, with Indigenous knowledge as a source to fill the gaps within Eurocentric models of teaching, learning, research, and education processes. Similarly, Elder Albert Marshall from the Eskasoni Mi’kmaq First Nation (2012) describes *Etuaptmumk*, the approach of **two-eyed seeing**, as a way to learn to appreciate both Indigenous and Western knowledges and ways of knowing, and he says that using these two perspectives can be to our benefit. He contends that by fostering an active engagement with both ways of seeing, we are providing all students with support systems to move toward a decolonized academy.

### Activity 1: Two-Eyed Seeing

**Time:** 20 min

**Type:** Individual

[Two-Eyed Seeing – Elder Albert Marshall’s guiding principle for inter-cultural collaboration \[PDF\]](#) offers a comprehensive view of the two-eyed seeing approach to understanding Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledges. After you have read it, reflect on the ways in which this approach appreciates Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives and sees them as necessary for personal advancement and development.

### Activity 2: Aboriginal Perspectives in Education

**Time:** 5 min

**Type:** Individual

View the video [\*Aboriginal Worldviews and Perspectives in the Classroom: Moving Forward\*](#). Although it was created for the K–12 system, think about what you can learn from this video about the need for Indigenization for all students.



## Pathways Toward Reconciliation

Reconciliation is an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships. A critical part of this process involves repairing damaged trust by making apologies, providing individual and collective reparations, and following through with concrete actions that demonstrate real societal change.

– Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Summary of the Final Report*, 2015

The work of Indigenization is a growing focus in this era of reconciliation, which has been driven forward by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC), a multi-year investigation of the residential school system. The TRC gathered information in a variety of ways about the historical and contemporary injustices toward Indigenous Peoples from across the nation. The release of the *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling the Future: Summary of Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission* in June of 2015 marked an important moment in the history of Canada. In the context of reconciliation, Indigenization is one way in which we can contribute to working toward a stronger shared future as Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

The report with its 94 Calls to Action emphasizes the need for education to play a key role in service of justice and resurgence of Indigenous Peoples by calling on Canada to provide “the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms” (TRC, 2015, p. 238). If understood and respected, these Calls to Action can serve as a framework toward developing and achieving reconciliation.

### Activity 1: Reconciliation and Indigenization

**Time:** 15 min

**Type:** Self-reflection

Review this excerpt from the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Summary of the Final Report \(2015\)](#). Reflect on the following questions:

- If you are an Indigenous person, what role do you envision for non-Indigenous people who are working toward reconciliation? As you develop curricula, how can you engage with non-Indigenous people in this work?
- If you are a non-Indigenous person, how do you see reconciliation applying to your own life? What is your role and responsibility in contributing to reconciliation?
- How does Indigenizing the curriculum support reconciliation? What are the benefits for Indigenous students? What are the benefits for non-Indigenous students? What are the benefits for society as a whole?

**Note:** If you are not using the online version of the *Curriculum Developers Guide*, you can find this document in Appendix A.

### Activity 2: TRC Calls to Action

**Time:** 30 min

**Type:** Self-reflection

Review the [TRC Calls to Action \[PDF\]](#). Choose three Calls to Action that either relate to your discipline or that you can create links and interdisciplinary connections to:

- develop two practical examples of how you would enact your chosen Calls to Action in your life and profession.
- write a journal entry about why you chose those Calls to Action and what you plan to do; make a list of lifelong actions you can take.

### Activity 3: Reviewing and Affirming Your Learning (R)

**Time:** 30 min

**Type:** Self-reflection

After completing Section 1, write a journal entry in response to the questions below:

- What are you already doing that was validated in what you learned?
- What new strategies can you implement immediately? Which ones need more planning and time?
- What made you uncomfortable? Why?
- What do you still need to learn?

## Summary

Indigenization reflects a commitment to valuing and respecting diverse ways of knowing and being in the world within systems and structures where the processes of knowledge production, legitimization, and dissemination need to be revised. Indigenization is therefore interlinked with decolonization and reconciliation. Through these three powerful processes, we are compelled to re-evaluate the histories and the uncomfortable stories of our country, and once we do this we cannot look back, and we cannot escape them. Through this transformational learning process, we will be in a better position to understand, acknowledge, and appreciate Indigenous worldviews and Indigenous ways of being in the world.

### Key Learning from this Section

- Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation are distinct but interrelated processes that support systemic change.
- Indigenization and multiculturalism are not the same. They can be parallel approaches instead of being viewed as mutually exclusive.
- Moving toward reconciliation requires emotional work, self-awareness, commitment, and action.

## Section 2: Meaningful Integration of Indigenous Epistemologies and Pedagogies



Fig 2.1

### Media Attributions

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## Introduction

Indigenization of curriculum requires much more than adding Indigenous content. In an education system that has, since its inception and into the present day, valued Western ways of thinking almost exclusively, Indigenization of curriculum requires us to bring Indigenous ways of thinking, being, and learning into course design. This section provides a discussion of Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies and how these can be interwoven in curriculum design and development.

### Purpose of this section

This section is intended to help you integrate Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies in curriculum design and development. This section includes the following topics:

- Indigenous epistemologies
- Indigenous pedagogies
- Ways to integrate Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies into curriculum design

Approximate time: 6 hours

## Indigenous Epistemologies and Pedagogies

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Thoughtfully interwoven Indigenous content and approaches must be informed by an understanding of Indigenous epistemologies (how knowledge can be known) and pedagogies, (how knowledge can be taught). While there is much diversity among Indigenous Peoples, and therefore among Indigenous way of knowing, teaching, or learning, many Indigenous education scholars have argued there are also some notable commonalities among Indigenous societies worldwide (Cajete, 1994; Deloria & Wildcat, 2001; Hampton, 1993; Henderson, 2002; Marker, 2004).

### Indigenous epistemologies

Key aspects of **Indigenous epistemologies** are relationality, the interconnection between sacred and secular, and holism.

#### Relationality

**Relationality** is the concept that we are all related to each other, to the natural environment, and to the spiritual world, and these relationships bring about interdependencies. Curriculum developers can apply the concept of relationality by creating learning opportunities that emphasize learning in relationships with fellow students, teachers, families, members of the community, and the local lands.

#### Sacred and secular

According to Hoffman (2013), “Aboriginal ontologies and epistemologies are rooted in worldviews that are inclusive of both the sacred and the secular. [In Indigenous ontologies] the world exists in one reality composed of an inseparable weave of secular and sacred dimensions” (p. 190). In Western educational approaches, spirituality is often seen as taboo in the classroom. In an Indigenous approach, spiritual dimensions cannot be separated from secular dimensions, and spirituality is a necessary component of learning. This does not mean that students need to embrace a specific “religious” approach or practice, but rather that educators should not ignore spiritual development as a component of learning.

#### Holism

The principle of **holism** is linked to that of relationality, as Indigenous thought focuses on the whole picture because everything within the picture is related and cannot be separated. Cindy Blackstock (2007), the executive director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada, identifies four interconnected dimensions of knowledge that are common in Indigenous epistemologies: “emotional, spiritual, cognitive, and physical,” which are “informed by ancestral knowledge which is to be passed to future generations” (p. 4). In Indigenous epistemologies, these four elements are

inseparable, and human development and well-being involves attending to and valuing all of these realms.

Indigenous philosophies are underlain by a worldview of interrelationships among the spiritual, the natural and the self, forming the foundation or beginnings of Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

– Willie Ermine, 1995

## Indigenous pedagogies

A basic assumption of Indigenous education scholars is that there are modes of Indigenous pedagogy that stem from pre-contact Indigenous educational approaches and are still ingrained in Indigenous contemporary culture. The exclusion or devaluation of Indigenous pedagogies can create a barrier to academic success for Indigenous students, limit a genuine understanding of Indigenous culture and history for all students, and prevent people from learning how to exercise highly valuable and useful modes of thought which could potentially address many problems in the modern world. Some key commonalities among Indigenous pedagogical approaches are outlined below.

### Personal and holistic

As a result of the epistemological principle of holism, Indigenous pedagogies focus on the development of a human being as a whole person. Academic or cognitive knowledge is valued, but self-awareness, emotional growth, social growth, and spiritual development are also valued. It is a useful for curriculum developers to keep this in mind when creating learning experiences that interweave both Indigenous and Western ways of knowing. For example, Indigenous approaches can be brought to life by providing opportunities for students to reflect on the four dimensions of knowledge (emotional, spiritual, cognitive, and physical) when they engage in learning activities. This may also include allowing students opportunities to challenge dominant ideologies that neglect emotional and spiritual knowledge domains.

### Experiential

Indigenous pedagogies are experiential because they emphasize learning by doing. In traditional pre-contact societies, young people learned how to participate as adult members of their community by practicing the tasks and skills they would need to perform as adults. In a contemporary setting, an emphasis on experiential learning means a preference for learning through observation, action, reflection, and further action. For curriculum developers, this also means acknowledging that personal experience is a highly valuable type of knowledge and method of learning, and creating opportunities within courses for students to share and learn from direct experience.

### Place-based learning

Indigenous pedagogies connect learning to a specific place, and thus knowledge is situated in

relationship to a location, experience, and group of people. For curriculum developers, this means creating opportunities to learn about the local place and to learn in connection to the local place.

## Intergenerational

In Indigenous communities, the most respected educators have always been Elders. In pre-contact societies, Elders had clear roles to play in passing on wisdom and knowledge to youth, and that relationship is still honoured and practiced today. Some Elders are the knowledge holders of 60 different Indigenous languages in Canada, and language is a key component of Indigenous culture that should be integrated in teaching practices if we are to move toward Indigenization of curriculum. Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students can learn a lot from Elders, and curriculum developers can seek opportunities to engage with Elders as experts in Indigenous pedagogies. Section 3 of this resource provides more information about how to respectfully engage with Elders.

Tribal/Indigenous education is really endogenous education, in that it educates the inner self through enlivenment and illumination from one's own being and the learning of key relationships. Therefore, the foundations for Tribal/Indigenous education naturally rest upon increasing awareness and development of innate human potentials.

– Gregory Cajete, 1994, p. 34

## The learning spirit

Tunison (2007) states that “the **learning spirit** is a conceptual ... entity that emerges from the exploration of the complex interrelationships that exist between the learner and his or her learning journey” (p. 10). Tunison notes that “lack of identity, lack of voice, and low self-esteem” can damage the learning spirit. Integration of Indigenous knowledge in post-secondary curriculum will strengthen the learning spirit of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students because holistic learning engages the four knowledge domains that nourish holistic literacy and interweave all aspects of learning: emotional (heart), spiritual (spirit), cognitive (mind) and physical (body).

### Activity 1: Indigenous Worldviews

**Time:** 10 min

**Type:** Individual

Watch the following video [Learning from Indigenous World-Views](#) from the University of British Columbia's course “Reconciliation through Indigenous Education” in which Dr. Jan Hare, who is an Anishinaabe from M'Chigeeng First Nation, talks about Indigenous worldviews and how they apply to teaching and learning.



## Activity 2: Principles of Indigenous Learning

**Time:** 45 min

**Type:** Individual

As there is a great diversity of Indigenous cultures, there is also a great diversity of approaches to learning. Review the following principles of learning from different cultures:

- [First Nation, Métis and Inuit Principles of Learning \[PDF\]](#) (p. 12–13)
- [First Peoples Principles of Learning \[PDF\]](#)
- [Lil'Wat Principles of Learning](#)

Consider the following questions:

- What commonalities do you see between these approaches?
- How would each one affect your curriculum development?
- How could you learn about the epistemological and pedagogical approaches of the Indigenous people local to your area?

## Activity 3: The Breath of Life versus the Embodiment of Life

**Time:** 45 min

**Type:** Individual

Read Dr. Cindy Blackstock's article "[The Breath of Life versus the Embodiment of Life: Indigenous Knowledge and Western Research](#)" in which she contrasts Western and Indigenous thought systems.

She is focused on the application of these thought systems to child welfare, but her article has many important lessons for curriculum developers.

## Activity 4: Understanding How Indigenous and Western Knowledge Systems Differ

**Time:** 15 min

**Type:** Individual

Reflecting on your experience with Western educational systems, consider the following questions:

- What values or beliefs do you think underlie Western approaches?
- What values or beliefs do you observe in Indigenous educational approaches?
- What are the areas where conflicting views arise?
- What are the areas where commonalities can occur?
- What are the benefits, for *all students*, of integrating Indigenous approaches into curriculum?

Make note of any questions that you may still have about this topic. Reflect on your thinking and how you would answer these questions.

## Integrating Indigenous Epistemologies and Pedagogies into Curriculum Design and Development

Understanding Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies is the first step; the next step is taking action to integrate them into curriculum development. Often educators turn to learning activities as a first step in Indigenization. However, including or adapting learning activities without changing other aspects of the curriculum is not a holistic approach to Indigenization, and in some cases can result in trivializing and misappropriating those activities (this is discussed more in Section 4). Interweaving Indigenous approaches should involve considering all of the following aspects of your course design:

- **Goals:** Does the course goal include holistic development of the learner? If applicable, does the course benefit Indigenous people or communities?
- **Learning outcomes:** Do the learning outcomes emphasize cognitive, emotional, physical, and spiritual development? Is there room for personalization, group and individual learning goals, and self-development?
- **Learning activities:** Have you included learning activities that are land-based, narrative, intergenerational, relational, experiential, and/or multimodal (rely on auditory, visual, physical, or tactile modes of learning)?
- **Assessment:** Is the assessment holistic in nature? Are there opportunities for self-assessment that allow students to reflect on their own development?
- **Relationships:** Are there opportunities for learning in community, intergenerational learning, and learning in relationship to the land?
- **Format:** Does the course include learning beyond the classroom “walls”?

### Activity 1: Examples of Courses that Interweave Indigenous Knowledge

**Time:** 60 – 90 min

**Type:** Individual

Review the following case studies of post-secondary courses that have been developed to interweave Indigenous knowledge. Notice how these courses have considered Indigenous approaches in all of the aspects listed above (goals, learning outcomes, learning activities, assessment, relationships, and format).

Teacher as leader: In this example, a non-Indigenous educator shares her [original](#) and [revised syllabus](#) and [reflects upon](#) her process and learning as she worked to Indigenize her course. In reading Lindsey Herriot’s reflection on her course, “Teacher as Leader,” pay attention to the process she used to Indigenize her course, the collaboration with Indigenous colleagues, and her own learning journey throughout that process. How does her shift in focus from content to values align with an Indigenous pedagogical approach?

**Note:** If you are not using the online version of the *Curriculum Developers Guide*, you can find the original syllabus in Appendix B, the Indigenized syllabus in Appendix C, and the instructor’s reflection on becoming an Indigenous educator in Appendix D.

- [Schalay’nung Sxwey’ga: Emerging Cross-Cultural Pedagogy in the Academy](#). In this description of a course on Indigenous education, led by Indigenous educators and community members, what elements of Indigenous pedagogy do you notice? How does the overall structure of the course reflect Indigenous approaches? How is relationality practiced?

In these audio recordings (See [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#)), Dr. Gloria Snively talks about her experience as a non-Indigenous environmental educator who has worked with Indigenous communities for four decades. She shares her advice about how to braid Indigenous approaches into science education and how non-Indigenous people can overcome fear of mistakes and build positive relationships with Indigenous community members. For more on Dr. Snively’s experience, read her open textbook (co-edited with Dr. Lorna Williams from the St’at’yem’c First Nation) [Knowing Home: Braiding Indigenous Science with Western Science](#).

## Activity 2: A Call to Personal Research: Indigenizing Your Curriculum

**Time:** 30 min

**Type:** Individual

Learn about how to integrate Indigenous ontologies, epistemologies, and pedagogies into your curriculum by reading “[A Call to Personal Research: Indigenizing Your Curriculum](#)” by Adrienne Castellon (2017), assistant professor and stream director for Masters of Educational Leadership at Trinity Western University.

## Activity 3: Critical Review of Your Curriculum

**Time:** 1-3 hrs

**Type:** Individual, Group

This activity will provide an opportunity for you to critically review and adapt a lesson, activity, or assessment that you have used in your teaching and to revise it to incorporate Indigenous approaches. Examine one of your lessons, activities, or assessments to determine if you have included any Indigenous epistemologies or pedagogies. Identify one or two instances where Indigenous epistemologies or pedagogies could be interwoven into your lesson, activity, or assessment. For example, are there any areas where you could include a greater focus on the emotional and spiritual knowledge domains? If possible, work in collaboration with a colleague or get input from a colleague on your work. If there is an opportunity for your course or lesson to be taught, gather student input as well.

After you have finished your adaptation, reflect on the following questions below (adapted from the work of [Halbert and Kaser \[PDF\]](#), 2014):

1. Does every student have genuine opportunities to develop a deeper understanding of and respect for Indigenous ways of knowing?
2. Do all students have the chance to teach someone else and through doing so contribute to the community as a whole?
3. Will Indigenous students see themselves reflected in the curriculum on an ongoing basis and not just as a “one off” or as a special unit?
4. Is deep listening a part of students’ everyday experience?
5. To what extent are students expected to do the best they can on all tasks while keeping an eye on how they can help others?
6. Will every student feel their voice is valued?
7. What are the opportunities for learners to express themselves in a variety of ways?
8. Is oral storytelling valued?
9. Will students have opportunities to connect with and learn from Elders?
10. Do assessment activities value holistic development?

#### Activity 5: Sharing Examples of Work (G)

**Time:** Ongoing

**Type:** Group

How can you share the work you have done in your critical review and lesson adaptation activity with others? How can you learn about efforts that others in your institution (or other institutions) have taken toward Indigenization of curriculum? Consider ways to share, in person or through text, these examples in a way that supports learning from each other.

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## Summary

This section provided a brief discussion of Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies. As Indigenous epistemologies are firmly rooted in relationality and in the interconnectedness of sacred and secular, we must engage the social, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of knowledge when moving toward Indigenization of curriculum. Elders play a key role in the sharing and passing on of ancestral knowledge, and therefore, are integral to efforts to Indigenize curriculum. This section's brief summary of Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies is a good place to start, but in reality these concepts cannot be deeply understood through reading; to be fully known they must be experienced through collaborative work with Indigenous people and communities, which we explore in Section 3.

### Key learnings from this section

- There is great diversity in Indigenous approaches and epistemologies, but they generally share a holistic approach, which recognizes interconnected dimensions of learning: emotional, spiritual, cognitive, and physical.
- The delivery of Indigenous pedagogies is most powerful when it includes collaboration with Elders.
- Indigenous and non-Indigenous students benefit from holistic learning.

## Section 3: Engaging with Indigenous Communities



*Fig 3.1: Indigenous Graduate Reception*

### Media Attributions

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## Introduction

As Indigenization is the process of bringing together Indigenous knowledge systems and approaches with those of the mainstream academy, it is critical that this work be done in partnership with Indigenous people. In Section 2, you learned about the relational nature of Indigenous knowledge and pedagogy. If learning is to occur in relationship, it is essential for curriculum developers to build relationships and work together with Indigenous people. In this section, we will begin to explore how to build relationships with Indigenous people in respectful and meaningful ways.

### Purpose of this section

This section is intended to help you engage with Indigenous people and knowledge systems in respectful, appropriate, and meaningful ways. The following topics are included:

- Respecting protocols
- Building relationships and contributing to Indigenous-led work
- Learning from mistakes

Approximate time: 2 hours, plus additional time for building relationships



## Respecting Protocols

You may have heard the term **protocol** in relation to working with Indigenous people. The term *protocol* includes many things, but overall it refers to ways of interacting with Indigenous people in a manner that respects traditional ways of being. Protocols are not just “manners” or “rules” – they are a representation of a culture’s deeply held ethical system. They also have highly practical applications that may have arisen in a pre-contact context but still apply today. Protocols differ vastly from one Indigenous culture or community to another, and they can be highly complex and multi-layered. Coming to understand and practice protocols appropriately is a lifelong learning process even for Indigenous people growing up within their culture. Following protocols is a significant sign of respect and awareness. It shows that you are taking the time to learn about Indigenous cultures and are challenging the often unconscious bias that everyone should interact in the way that mainstream settler culture dictates. Through following protocols, you can build stronger relationships with Indigenous communities and learn about different ways of interacting.

As a non-Indigenous person who is just learning about protocol, there are a few simple things you can do that are generally common to Indigenous cultures. These include:

- **Acknowledging the traditional lands** on which you are situated. If you do not know the area, ask someone who knows. Acknowledging the traditional lands is generally done at the beginning of a meeting or event by an Indigenous person local to the area, an Elder, or by the event’s host or facilitator. In terms of curriculum development, this practice can also be used in the classroom and taught to students. It is important to note that unless you are Indigenous to that area, you should not “welcome” people to the area – only someone who is originally from the location can do that. Acknowledgement, on the other hand, is a good thing for anyone to do. See [Appendix E](#) for tips on how to acknowledge the traditional lands.

**Note:** If you are not using the online version of the *Curriculum Developers Guide*, you can find this document in Appendix E.

- **Always introduce yourself** at the beginning of a meeting. An introduction should include who you are and where you come from, which means your family’s cultural and geographical background prior to being a settler in North America, (i.e. Where is your family indigenous to?) Do not say you are from Canada or the United States. You may also include who your parents and grandparents are and where they are from. This allows a deeper understanding of your family lineage and situates you in relation to the people you are interacting with.

Beyond these practices, you should be ready to engage in a lifelong learning process. As protocols vary widely between and even within Indigenous cultures, they are not something you can learn about by taking a course or reading a list. They are learned through relationships. Therefore, it is important to find people who you trust to support you as you learn about protocols. There may be people at your university who can support this – for example, staff an office of Indigenous affairs or a colleague who has established strong, positive relationships with Indigenous partners. You will need to ask questions

and be prepared to make mistakes and apologize if needed. It may not always be smooth, but with practice your knowledge will grow.

### Activity 1: Indigenous Protocols

**Time:** 25 min

**Type:** Individual

Watch the following two videos:

- [Indigenous Arts Protocol video](#): This video relates to the topic of cultural appropriation in the arts, but it includes an in-depth discussion of the meaning and application of protocols.
- [Bradley Dick TedX Talk video](#): In this video, pay close attention to how Bradley Dick (Lekwungen First Nation) follows traditional protocols, explains his own learning process, and reflects on the meaning and importance of those protocols.

### Activity 2: Finding Support

**Time:** Ongoing

**Type:** Group

Identify and introduce yourself (in person) to one or two people at your institution who you can go to for questions about protocols (for example, a staff member at the office of Indigenous affairs or Elders in residence).

## Building Relationships

Through relationships with Indigenous people, both within and outside of your university's context, you will be able to work in partnership with Indigenous people to bring local knowledge and Indigenous approaches into course design.

### Principles of interaction

It is important to remember that many Indigenous people and communities have experienced negative interactions with your university or with non-Indigenous institutions in general (for example, the government, the education system, the healthcare system) in the past, and so you may need to work extra hard to build a relationship of trust that overcomes the mistrust that has been planted by colonization. Bob Joseph, a Gwawaenuk Nation member, owner of Indigenous Corporate Training, and former associate professor at Royal Roads University, provides [7 Tips on Building Relationships with Indigenous Peoples](#).

### Establishing initial relationships

The first place to begin is by exploring the relationships that already exist within your institution. You would not want to approach a community about working together without knowing if a previous relationship has been established between that community and your institution. If your university has an office of Indigenous affairs or Indigenous education, begin there. You may also want to search the institution website to see if there are existing agreements with Indigenous communities (such as a memorandum of understanding) or an Indigenous plan. If you cannot find any existing relationships this way, you may also want to look into any research that has been done which involved engaging with Indigenous communities, and get in touch with the people from your institution who were involved in that research. Just keep in mind that the research may or may not have been built on positive relationships with Indigenous communities.

If you have no connections and no one from your institution to guide you, then protocol requires that you begin by working to establish a relationship with the local First Nation(s). You can do this by first visiting the local First Nation's band office in person to introduce yourself and to book a meeting with the Nation's Chief or member of Council. There may be an employee within the Nation who is the education coordinator. If so, then, they would be the person to connect with, but don't hesitate to introduce yourself to others as well.

It is also a good idea to bring a small gift as a token of appreciation for the individual's time and energy. This demonstrates that you've prepared and done some research on protocols for engaging with communities. Examples of gifts are coffee, tea, food, sweets, or small and useful items, such as a mug or pen. Traditional medicines (sage, sweetgrass, traditional tobacco, cedar) can also be gifts, but you will need to do your research in advance to understand cultural protocols around traditional medicines.

Establishing these relationships will take time and effort. It is important to initiate this relationship with face-to-face contact. Elders say that it's always better to first visit in person, then call, and then send an email. If you still haven't received a response, don't give up. Go back to the office and introduce yourself again. Be prepared if you do connect with someone, you may have to wait a while or only be given a short time to meet. If you continue not to get responses, consider how you can make your request more relevant to the priorities of the First Nation. Keep in mind that many First Nations' staff are overworked and have limited capacity for additional tasks.

If you have reached out to the First Nation(s) in your area, you may then also consider connecting with Indigenous community groups, such as social service agencies, cultural groups, or arts collectives. Many communities have a Métis organization, which can provide valuable insight into Métis perspectives. Consider contacting a local chapter of [Métis Nation British Columbia](#) or [Métis Service Providers](#). You can also contact [Friendship Centres](#), which serve Urban Indigenous people of all backgrounds. They exist in 25 communities across B.C. and are another great group to connect with. Many of these groups are involved in education, and they may value working in collaboration with universities.

## Intentionality and purpose

As you develop relationships, it is important to reflect and be clear on your intentionality and purpose. Are you seeking permission to share stories from local Indigenous people? Are you looking for advice on developing learning activities? Are you looking for guest speakers to participate in course delivery? Or are you looking for someone to bring a deeper involvement, such as a co-teacher or curriculum adviser?

Following the principles of respect outlined above, it is important to think about how involvement with your project will benefit the communities and help them to meet their goals. Will there be opportunities for people from the community to gain knowledge and skills? Will there be benefits to Indigenous students? Does the community have goals (such as contributing to a greater understanding of their culture or building relationships with the university) that may align with your request? Don't race out to the community only because you need something. A partnership should never be one-sided, and it is important to recognize that many Indigenous communities are approached with multiple requests to share their time and knowledge, which can strain their operational capacity and their ability to focus on the needs of their own community. Asking someone to contribute to your course development is a big ask that will require considerable time and effort.

For this reason, you will want to consider the issue of compensation. In some cases, honoraria are used as compensation – usually when the interaction is short-lived (limited to several visits). We discuss this approach more in the topic about working with Elders (below). If a longer relationship is required, community members who are not already being paid by their community to do this work (for example as an educational adviser within a First Nation or Friendship Centre) should be compensated on a level that values their work equally to the work of university staff.

In many cases, if you are mindful of the principles and approaches discussed above, you will be able to build strong relationships. But keep in mind that some Indigenous people or communities might not be ready or willing to build relationships with you or your institution. This may be due to negative

experiences in the past, or simply due to different priorities or limited human resources capacity. If that is the case, it is important to respect that choice and move on.

## Working with Elders

An Indigenous Elder is someone who has lived and continues to live in a cultural way and uses a traditional lens to engage with people. The term “Elder” is not an Indigenous word – it comes from interaction with the Christian church. Indigenous languages have other words to connote this role, such as “wisdom-keeper” (In conversation, Leslie McGarry , 2016 ). Elders play a role of keeping traditional wisdom alive and passing it forward. Although an Elder is usually an older person, not all older people carry the title of Elder, and in some cases Elders can be quite young.

Working with Elders can be highly rewarding. Not only do they bring expertise in traditional knowledge, but Elders also often bring a certain energy to an interaction that impacts people’s mindsets. Elders remind us of the larger picture and the moral and communal reasons for the work that we do together. Elders can also bring a sense of spirituality, laughter, and connection. Review Appendix F for [tips on working with Elders](#).

### Activity 1: Working with Elders

**Time:** 10 min

**Type:** Individual

In this [video](#), T’Sou-ke Nation Elder Shirley Alphonse answers questions about how to work with Elders.

What additional questions do you have about working with Elders? To whom could you reach out to answer these questions?

### Activity 2: Exploring Your Institution’s Connections with Local Indigenous Communities

**Time:** 30 min

**Type:** Individual

Do some research to determine what connections exist with local Indigenous communities and organizations. Make a list of existing connections and potential areas to build connections that do not already exist.

### Activity 3: Contributing to Indigenous-Led Work

**Time:** Ongoing

**Type:** Group

Following the ethic of mutually beneficial work, identify areas in your institution where you can meaningfully contribute to Indigenous-led work toward Indigenization. Be clear about what expertise, skills, or support you can offer and work to build trusting relationships with those already engaged in the work. Be willing to commit to the emotionally and intellectually demanding work of Indigenization, rather than expecting Indigenous people to do this work on their own. If your participation is not needed, accept it and move on.

## Learning from Mistakes

Some non-Indigenous people may feel that it is not their role to become involved in integrating Indigenous content. In some cases, this is because they don't want to make a mistake. It is natural to feel nervous about making mistakes when interacting with Indigenous people and communities. Nobody wants to appear disrespectful or racist. However, in a world that has been saturated in Western-dominated values, and in which Indigenous knowledge has been systematically excluded and devalued, doing nothing is a form of perpetuating this exclusion. It is critical that people from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous backgrounds contribute to the work of Indigenization. *This is everyone's responsibility.*

In fact, learning from mistakes is a common aspect of Indigenous pedagogy, as it involves experiential learning and self-development. In this view, mistakes plus correction equals learning. Indigenous communities and families have a cultural process for “fixing” a mistake by creating a safe place to acknowledge your mistake, to fix it, and then learn from it. This process isn't about shaming or belittling the individuals, but rather it is intended to raise them up and raise the people up who may have been affected by a mistake. After the process of acknowledging and fixing a mistake, it's then time to let go, move forward, and continue to work together.

You may feel uncomfortable when you make mistakes, but try to also be grateful for the opportunity to learn and ask questions. This way you can understand and fix your mistakes. Whatever you do, don't let the fear of making mistakes keep you in a state of complacency with the status quo.

### Activity 1: Learning from Mistakes

**Time:** 10 min

**Type:** Individual

In the following videos, Asmanahi Antoine, an Indigenous educator and Rachel Mason, a non-Indigenous educator speak about their experiences learning from mistakes.

- [Asmanahi Antoine video](#)
- [Rachel Mason video](#)

After watching the videos, reflect on any mistakes you may have made in engaging with Indigenous communities, and what you learned from them.

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## Summary

It takes time, but over the years the rewards of building strong networks with Indigenous people and communities will pay off. The knowledge and experience that Indigenous partners can bring to your curriculum will greatly enrich the learning experiences for students. You will gain confidence as you learn about protocols and respectful interactions, and as you develop trusting and mutually beneficial relationships.

### Key learnings from this section

- Protocol refers to ways of interacting with Indigenous people that respect traditional ways of being. Protocols are unique to each Indigenous culture. You should learn as much as you can about local protocols.
- Indigenization of the curriculum should be undertaken in collaboration with Indigenous people and communities.
- As you build relationships, always remember that those relationships should be mutually beneficial and fairly compensated. Be extra conscious of respectful treatment of Elders.
- If you make mistakes, learn from your mistakes and move on. Do not let the fear of making mistakes prevent you from engaging in the work of Indigenization.



## Section 4: Incorporating Diverse Sources of Indigenous Knowledge



*Fig 4.1: Inuit Kayaker*

### Media Attributions

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## Introduction

As you develop curriculum, keep in mind that to decolonize teaching and learning, it is critical that Indigenous voices be brought to the forefront by including Indigenous success stories, Indigenous cultural approaches, and Indigenous-led research. In recent years, there has been much discussion about what counts as an Indigenous perspective and what is and isn't appropriate to be shared and used. In this section, we explore these issues and provide you with some guidelines to consider when navigating choices about Indigenous content. We will also explore the importance of local knowledge and the role that curriculum developers can play in supporting Indigenous language revitalization.

### Purpose of this section

This section is intended to help you recognize and appreciate the diverse sources of Indigenous knowledge. The following topics are included:

- Diversity among Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous sources of knowledge
- Identifying authentic Indigenous resources
- Using Indigenous content appropriately and avoiding cultural appropriation
- Incorporating local land, knowledge, and language into curriculum content

Approximate time: 2 hours, plus additional time for learning languages

## Diverse Sources of Indigenous Knowledge

By now you have learned that Indigenizing curricula is not about adding content related to Indigenous history or culture; it's about shifting to an approach that incorporates Indigenous worldviews, including Indigenous pedagogies and approaches to knowledge. In this section, we explore how the complex sources of Indigenous knowledge can contribute to curricula.

### Diversity among Indigenous Peoples

In the [Foundations Guide](#), you learned about the diversity of Indigenous Peoples. When considering integrating Indigenous knowledge into your courses, it is critical to keep this diversity mind. Some things to consider:

- When you include a resource, identify which Indigenous Peoples it comes from. For example, don't say "This is an Indigenous story," but rather "This is a Tsimshian story."
- If you are including an experience or concept that was common to many Indigenous Peoples (for example, residential schools or the important role of Elders), be sure the curriculum acknowledges that there are important differences as well as commonalities among Indigenous groups.
- Consider how you can integrate Métis, Inuit, and Urban Indigenous peoples' sources of knowledge into your courses, in addition to First Nations content. This [annotated bibliography of Métis resources \[PDF\]](#) includes many pre-vetted sources.
- Consider whether you will incorporate concepts from a diversity of Indigenous Peoples, or focus on the local peoples. Depending on the context of the course, either choice may be appropriate.

### Diversity among forms of knowledge

In academia, we often think of knowledge as coming from experts in the forms of academic papers, presentations, and research results. In Indigenous communities, knowledge comes from many other sources, for example, from the land, from stories, or from relationships between people.

#### Personal knowledge

Mainstream academic knowledge often strives to be universal and impersonal. The most respected forms of knowledge are generally studies that can be replicated in different localities and cultures, by different researchers. In Indigenous knowledge systems, knowledge that exists in relationship to specific lands and people is highly valued. In the context of curriculum development, this means

creating opportunities for educators and students to share their personal experiences, feelings, and identities as a form of knowledge, and to learn from the experiential knowledge of Indigenous people.

Our entire Western education system moves from narrative to exposition, from story to essay. We beat the story out of people; we punish them for it quite literally. And then what happens is, to re-engage with ourselves, with our spirit, with our land, and to re-engage with Indigenous peoples and other cultures, we must find, seven generations back again, we must find our hearts and our spirits and our kin and our land once again, and we must find those stories once again.

– Allan Luke, 2015

## Oral knowledge

Indigenous cultures have long valued oral language to transfer knowledge, and Indigenous Peoples use a variety of complex practices and protocols to pass along oral histories, such as witnessing ceremonies and potlatches. In Indigenous cultures, community members are often trained from a young age in the skills of oral communication. In the context of curriculum, this means considering opportunities for sharing stories, ideas, and experiences orally, rather than through a written assignment or presentation.

## Expressions of knowledge

Stories, dances, songs, and ceremonies are important sources of knowledge in Indigenous cultures. It is important to keep in mind that resources may be non-textual in nature. For example, attending a ceremony or community event could be a learning resource. Exploring the local environment with an Elder could be a resource. Learning in a respectful way about a piece of artwork (such as a mask, textile, or regalia) could be a resource. Consider including opportunities for learners to experience these expressions of knowledge.

## Appropriate Use of Indigenous Content

When selecting resources for your curriculum, it is important to incorporate authentic Indigenous resources. But what does it mean to be authentic? And how can such resources be incorporated in a respectful way? As a curriculum developer, it can sometimes be hard to know if efforts to bring Indigenous content and pedagogy into curriculum are a respectful inclusion or an instance of cultural appropriation.

### Cultural appropriation

**Cultural appropriation** can be understood as using intellectual property, traditional knowledge, cultural expressions, or artifacts from someone’s culture without permission. It is most likely to be harmful when the source culture is a group that has been oppressed or exploited in other ways (as with Indigenous Peoples), or when the object of appropriation is particularly sensitive or sacred (Scafidi, 2005). However, it is not always simple to identify when cultural appropriation is occurring. Let’s explore two examples of learning experiences that use creating poles to understand the nuances of cultural appropriation.

#### Example 1: Cardboard Box “Totem” Poles

In the learning exchange video series “appropriation,” Susan Dion gives the example of elementary school educators having their students make “totem” poles out of cardboard boxes. She explains that this activity trivializes the importance of poles in Haida culture. Dion compares making totem poles to having children make a model of a Catholic chalice and host and pretending to give and take first communion. This would be clearly recognizable as inappropriate and offensive.

#### Example 2: Thunderbird/Whale Protection and Welcoming Pole: Learning and Teaching in an Indigenous World

The University of Victoria’s course, “Thunderbird/Whale Protection and Welcoming Pole: Learning and Teaching in an Indigenous World” for the faculty of education was pedagogically based in an Indigenous teaching and learning experience. The course involved the construction and installation of a thunderbird/whale house pole, and pre-service teachers, education graduate students, and faculty worked alongside an Aboriginal artist-in-residence and an Aboriginal mentor carver/educator. As part of an interactive learning community, the students experienced the principles of traditional Indigenous ways of teaching and learning including, mentorship and apprenticeship learning; learning by doing; learning by deeply observing; learning

through listening, telling stories, and singing songs; learning in a community; and learning by sharing and providing service to the community.

In the first example, cultural appropriation occurred for the following reasons:

- Indigenous communities that created totem poles have been exploited through colonialism in many other ways. They were not involved in the assignment to make poles, and they did not grant permission to the teacher to make poles.
- Poles have a spiritual significance, which was not honoured in the activity.
- The creating of the poles was not interwoven with Indigenous approaches but was a one-off assignment within a predominantly Westernized approach.

In the second example, making poles was a respectful activity for the following reasons:

- Indigenous community experts were actively involved.
- The activity was deeply integrated with Indigenous pedagogical approaches.
- The spiritual significance of the pole was recognized by following proper protocols and values.

Cultural appropriation can feel like an ambiguous topic, and the fear of appropriating may lead educators to shy away from Indigenous content or issues. But this is not an acceptable response. Instead, what is required is that educators think through considerations of cultural appropriation carefully. They need to build connections with Indigenous communities so that they can incorporate Indigenous culture in ways that are not harmful or exploitative. This may be harder work than simply adding an Indigenous text, speaker, or activity into a course, but it is the responsibility of all educators to engage in this work.

This history is a shared history. It's our shared history. If you live on this land, then you're in a relationship with First Nations people whether you know it or not. So teaching the history, teaching the content is your responsibility. And I say that, but with a word of caution, because you can appropriate, and sometimes make a mistake around appropriating ... If you don't feel comfortable, then that's an indicator that what you're planning to do is maybe not a good idea. Sometimes if you think, "If an Aboriginal Elder came into my classroom and saw me doing this, would I feel defensive?" And if you answer yes, then it's probably not a good idea to do that.

– Susan Dion, 2013

### Activity 1: Including Indigenous Stories

**Time:** 5 min

**Type:** Individual

In this video [Including Indigenous Stories](#), Dr. Jo-ann Archibald (Stó:lō Nation) explains how stories reflect a worldview and discusses how we need to be aware of and understand protocol, context, and process when using Indigenous stories whether they are traditional or based on personal experiences.

### Activity 2: Reflection on Cultural Appropriation

**Time** 10 min

**Type:** Reflection

Reflect on the following questions:

1. Have you seen examples of cultural appropriation? Have you seen examples where culture was integrated respectfully? How did they feel different?
2. In your work, who could you turn to for advice on how and when to use Indigenous knowledge in your curriculum?

#### Authentic resources

Another important consideration is how to recognize authentic Indigenous resources. In some cases, resources dealing with Indigenous content may contain inaccurate information or unfairly represent the unique experiences and worldviews of Indigenous Peoples. This can promote stereotypes and misunderstanding. In contrast, authentic resources can deepen understanding by bringing Indigenous voices and perspectives into the curriculum.

It is not always easy to identify authentic Indigenous texts. According to the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC, 2016), authentic First Peoples' texts are historical or contemporary texts that:

- Present authentic First Peoples' voices (are created by First Peoples or through the substantial contributions of First Peoples);
- Depict themes and issues that are important within First Peoples' cultures (e.g., loss of identity and affirmation of identity, tradition, healing, role of family, importance of Elders, connection to the land, the nature and place of spirituality as an aspect of wisdom, the relationships between individual and community, the importance of oral tradition, the experience of colonization and decolonization);
- Incorporate First Peoples' storytelling techniques and features as applicable (e.g., circular structure, repetition, weaving in of spirituality, humour).



In trying to decide whether a resource is authentic, you may consider:

- Using [pre-vetted resource lists](#) such as the ones developed by First Nations Education Steering Committee.
- Consulting with the Indigenous education office at your organization.
- Reaching out to other educators who incorporate Indigenous resources and content in their classrooms. Ask them how they chose their resources. What factors did they consider?
- Ensuring that proper copyright and protocols have been followed to obtain permission, particularly when using resources found online (such as songs or artwork).

It is important to recognize that local cultural protocols exist around the use of Indigenous resources. In the mainstream academic system, copyright is used to ensure permission for written resources. In Indigenous cultures, oral permission is required to use cultural materials or practices such as legends, stories, songs, designs, crests, photographs, audiovisual materials, and dances. These practices and materials are often owned by specific individuals, families, or groups, and permission to use them may be considered in the context of your relationships with the owners, your intent, and the way in which you will be sharing the practices or materials. If you or your institution have not obtained permission, it is important to investigate and secure permission from relevant individuals, artists, families, Elders, hereditary Chiefs, Band Councils, or Tribal Councils prior to using any materials. Permission may be specific to a single use; if you are using the resource for a different context than permission was originally obtained for, you may need to reach out to seek permission again.

For more information on deciding whether a resource is appropriate, review pages 8–16 of the guide [In Our Own Words: Bringing Authentic First Peoples Content to the K–3 Classroom \[PDF\]](#). Although this guide was developed for K–3 educators, it includes many important considerations when choosing authentic Indigenous resources.

### Activity 3: Authentic Indigenous Resources (I)

**Time:** 10 min

**Type:** Individual

Consider the following resources and determine if they are authentic Indigenous resources. Why or why not? You can do this activity with the actual resources selected from your university library. Ask a librarian to help set up a similar exercise, and then invite colleagues to join for a discussion of authentic resources.

You will see that the answers can be quite complex, and many resources require thought and further investigation to ensure authenticity.

**Note:** If you are not using the online version of this resource, you can access the question and answers in [Appendix G](#).





An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://opentextbc.ca/indigenizationcurriculumdevelopers/?p=95#h5p-2>

### Resources

- [\*The Truth about Stories: A Native Narrative\*](#) by Thomas King. CBC Massey Lectures. © 2003 Dead Dog Café Productions and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.
- [\*Dances with Wolves\*](#), an academy award winning film starring, produced and directed by Kevin Costner. © 1990 Majestic Films International.
- [\*Explore the Animals: Northern Coast First Nations and Native Art Colouring and Learning Book\*](#). © 2010 Garfinkel Publications.
- [\*Orca's Song\*](#) by Anne Cameron. Illustrated by Nelle Olsen. © 1987 Harbour Publishing. Includes dedication to a Vancouver Island storyteller.
- [\*Three Day Road\*](#) by Joseph Boyden. Vancouver Public Library

## Activity 4: Integrating Indigenous Resources in Your Curriculum (I)

**Time:** 60 min

**Type:** Individual

Choose a curriculum that you have developed or that you are currently developing. Integrate Indigenous resources into the curriculum and provide a rationale for why you chose those resources. When you are considering which resources to use in developing your curriculum, consider:

- Who could you reach out to for recommendations?
- How can you find local resources?
- How can you find First Nations, Métis, and Inuit resources?
- How might you involve non-textual resources, such as dance, art, oral stories, and ceremony?

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## Incorporating Local Land, Knowledge, and Language

As you select resources, you should look for opportunities to connect to the local land and language in the place where your course will be taught. Incorporating local knowledge is a good way to show respect for the local Indigenous people. It also models to local Indigenous learners that their culture is included in the curriculum, and it teaches students about the local Indigenous people.

### Local knowledge

Incorporating local knowledge is closely linked with building relationships with local communities. If these relationships are strong, you can incorporate local content in collaboration with the local community, working with Elders and community experts. If these relationships are not strong, consider how you might build such relationships and look to sources of support within your network (for example, Indigenous support services at your institution or colleagues that have existing connections).

### Language

British Columbia is one of the most linguistically diverse areas in the world. B.C. is home to 34 unique Indigenous languages, which represents approximately 60 per cent of First Nations languages in Canada. This map shows [the names and locations of Indigenous languages in B.C.](#) Unfortunately, due to policies of forced assimilation, many of these languages are endangered, with less than 10 per cent of the community members speaking the language. The majority of the fluent speakers alive are elderly, and it is critical that they have opportunities to pass on their linguistic knowledge before it is too late.

Language is closely linked to culture, and many cultural concepts cannot be accurately translated into other languages. For example, many Indigenous languages have words to describe concepts that don't exist in English. When languages are lost, culture is also threatened. For that reason, language revitalization is very important to many Indigenous Peoples.

As a curriculum developer, you may want to consider ways you can bring concepts from the local language into your course. For example, are there values, principles, or themes in your course that could be expressed through Indigenous languages? Integrating local Indigenous language into your course would certainly require collaboration from community members.

### Activity 1: Learning Local Languages

**Time:** Ongoing

**Type:** Individual

If you don't already know which Indigenous languages are spoken in your area, find out. Try to learn a few key words in the language(s), for example "Thank you," "Hello," or "My name is."

### Activity 2: Incorporating Language and Knowledge into Curriculum (I,G)

**Type:** Individual, Group

Choose a curriculum that you have developed or that you are working on developing. Identify opportunities to integrate local language or knowledge into the curriculum. If possible, work with a community member or support person at your institution to bring local knowledge and content into the course.

## Summary

Incorporating Indigenous resources appropriately is complex. When including a resource in your curriculum, there are many important factors to consider, and each decision is highly contextualized; it may depend on the relationship you have with the source of the resource, the way in which you are using the resource, and the context of the course. The authenticity of the resource may also be a complex consideration, taking into account both the identity of the creator and their relationship with the subject of their work.

This complexity is not a reason to exclude Indigenous content. Indigenous content has valuable lessons for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners, and it has been excluded for too long. While it may seem daunting, it is important to remember that relationships are the key to navigating these decisions. When you have strong relationships with Indigenous communities and experts, you can turn to this community for support when making decisions about resources.

### Key learnings from the section

- Indigenous knowledge is diverse. Consider including resources from First Nations, Urban Indigenous, Métis, and Inuit peoples.
- Resources can come in many forms, including personal experience, oral communication, and other non-textual or non-verbal forms.
- Cultural appropriation is a complex issue. To avoid cultural appropriation, ensure you have permission to include resources in a respectful way.
- When selecting resources, consider whether they are authentic.
- Look for opportunities to incorporate local knowledge and contribute to language revitalization.

## Section 5: Developing Awareness of One's Own Role in Indigenization and Reconciliation



*Fig 5.1: UFV Indigenous Graduate Reception 2017*

### Media Attributions

- [Fig 5.1: Indigenous Graduate Reception 2017-40](#) © [University of the Fraser Valley](#) is licensed under a [CC BY \(Attribution\)](#) license

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## Introduction

In the previous sections, we learned about the exclusion of Indigenous knowledge from academia. This exclusion and the parallel privileging of Western knowledge above other systems of thought are examples of systemic oppression. In this section, we will explore the concept of systemic oppression and ask you to reflect on your positionality within the system of oppression that exists in the world today. This will help to inform the role you play in Indigenization of the curriculum. Understanding and promoting an anti-oppressive approach is critical to supporting the work of Indigenization.

### Purpose of this section

This section is intended to help you develop awareness of your own role in Indigenization. The following topics are included:

- Anti-oppression theory as it relates to Indigenization
- Becoming an ally and working with allies
- Cultural safety and microaggressions

Approximate time: 3 hours

## Anti-oppression Theory and Your Personal Role, Responsibility, and Agency in Indigenization

In the [Foundations Guide](#), you learned about the many tactics that have been used throughout history and into the present to reinforce the oppression of Indigenous Peoples in Canada by settlers. Some examples include the creation of reserves and the theft of Indigenous lands; the residential school system, and other efforts to promote assimilation; social and economic restrictions created by the *Indian Act* and other federal and provincial laws and policies; personal racism toward Indigenous Peoples that resulted in denied opportunities and exclusion; and the omission of Indigenous history and knowledge in education systems. These acts of colonization are instances of how systemic oppression against Indigenous Peoples has been practiced since Europeans first arrived in the Americas.

In this section, we will seek to understand different forms of oppression as they apply to Indigenous Peoples. **Anti-oppression theory** is important because it provides a framework for understanding the world and your own place in it, questioning and challenging your practices, and creating new approaches that counter oppression and lead toward reconciliation and decolonization.

### What is oppression?

**Oppression** is exploitation based on perceived difference of a group of people who share a social category (such as race, class, cultural background, religion, gender, sexuality, age, language, or ability). Characteristics of oppression include:

- **Systemic:** It is systemic and societal. It is not just individuals with prejudiced beliefs and actions, but rather is embedded within the structure of society.
- **Power imbalance:** It involves a dominant or more powerful group exploiting a less powerful group based on perceived differences between the groups. There is always a power imbalance at play.
- **Denial:** The powerful group often denies that oppression exists or accepts it as being normal or right.

### Forms of oppression

There are multiple ways in which oppression can manifest. Oppression can be categorized into personal, cultural, and structural or systemic. In our society, all three of these forms are operating at all times in an interconnected manner (Thompson 1997).

**Personal oppression** comprises the thoughts, behaviours, and actions that constitute a negative judgment or treatment of an oppressed group. Here are some examples:

- A student raises her hand during a class discussion of a book by an Indigenous author and asks, “Why are Aboriginal people so screwed up?”
- After a faculty meeting about the university’s Indigenous plan, a professor comments that he doesn’t understand why “Indigenous people always get special treatment.”

**Cultural oppression** includes shared societal values and norms that allow people to see oppression as normal or right. Here are some examples:

- It is considered “normal” that an English course would include only white, male authors, but it is considered something special when non-white or female authors are included.
- It is assumed that everyone celebrates Thanksgiving in Canada. (Some Indigenous people do not celebrate the holiday because of its colonial origins.)
- It is expected that all Indigenous people are spiritually wise experts in Indigenous culture and protocol.

**Structural (or systemic) oppression** is manifested in societal institutions (such as governments, religions, education systems, health care, law, and the media). Here are some examples:

- Indigenous people are overrepresented in the criminal justice system and child welfare system. Meanwhile, Indigenous people are underrepresented in positions of power within government.
- First Nations schools receive less per-student funding than provincial public schools (Drummond & Rosenbluth, 2013).
- Indigenous reserves are located in isolated areas with few job prospects, contributing to poverty and dependency.

Oppression can manifest in different ways. It may be conscious or unconscious. Unconscious oppression is especially hard to tackle, because it is less visible and overt. However, both conscious and unconscious oppression can manifest in one’s attitudes and beliefs or in one’s behaviour. For example, an employer may be less likely to hire an Indigenous employee because of preconceived beliefs that the employer may or may not be conscious of. Or a professor may have different expectations for Indigenous students because of an unconscious bias.

#### Activity 1: Examples of Oppression

**Type:** Individual

**Time:** 15 min

Make a list of some instances of oppression that you have witnessed within your workplace or in your life. Try to think of examples of personal, cultural, and structural oppression. Next, take each example and identify whether it manifested through attitudes and beliefs or behaviours (or possibly both). If possible, reflect on whether the oppression was conscious or unconscious, although it may be difficult to tell as an observer.



## Activity 2: Locating Yourself

**Type:** Individual, Group

**Time:** 15 min

Oppression affects each individual in a complex and unique way. Most people are part of a more powerful group in some aspects of their identity and part of a less powerful group in other aspects. [The Wheel of Diversity](#), adapted from Loden and Rosener (1991), helps individuals reflect on aspects of their identity. As you do this exercise, think about how your gender, age, family structure, socio-economic status influence the ways in which you see the world.

- Identify the aspects of your identity that help you situate yourself and relate to components of your worldview. Which of these elements of diversity are the most influential in your life in the way you make decisions, relate to others and the environment, appreciate connections, follow protocol, and so forth?
- Have you experienced, in some aspect of your identity, what it's like to be a part of a dominant group? What does that feel like? Can you think of examples in which you've received privileges or avoided problems based on your membership in that group?
- Have you experienced, in some aspect of your identity, what it's like to be part of an oppressed group? What does that feel like? Can you think of examples from your life in which you've experienced disadvantages or been treated less respectfully based on your membership in that group?
- How does your own experience of privilege and oppression help you to empathize with or be curious about others' experiences?

Be honest with your answers. If possible, share your responses to this exercise with a colleague and discuss what you have learned from this reflection.

## Activity 3: Your Personal Indigenization Journey

**Time:** 30 – 60 minutes

**Type:** Group, Self-Reflection

Write a journal entry, blog post, or editorial explaining why it is important to you personally to Indigenize the courses you develop. Be specific about what kind of action you plan to take and what your role is in this work. If possible, share your writing with others and engage in discussion with them about their own role in Indigenization.

## Being an Ally

If you are a non-Indigenous person engaged in the work of Indigenization, then you can better understand your role in this movement as being an ally to Indigenous people. An ally is someone from a privileged group who is aware of how oppression works and struggles alongside members of an oppressed group to take action to end oppression.

An ally:

- does not put their own needs, interests, and goals ahead of the Indigenous people they are working with.
- has self-awareness of their own identity, privilege, and role in challenging oppression.
- is engaged in continual learning and reflection about Indigenous cultures and history.

In *Becoming an Ally: Breaking the Cycle of Oppression in People*, activist, author, and educator Anne Bishop explains how a central aspect of being an ally is recognizing and being aware of one's own role in a system of oppression.

Remember that everyone in the oppressor group is part of the oppression. It is ridiculous to claim you are not sexist if you are a man or not racist if you are white and so on. No matter how much work you have done on that area of yourself, there is more to be done. All members of this society grow up surrounded by oppressive attitudes; we are marinated in it. I do not believe anyone raised in Western society can ever claim to have finished ridding themselves completely of their oppressive attitudes. It is an ongoing task, like keeping the dishes clean. In fact, the minute I hear someone claim to be free of the attitudes and actions of a certain oppression (as in "I'm not racist") I know they have barely begun the process. Humility is the mark of someone who has gone a ways down the road and has caught a glimpse of just how long the road is.... Having accepted that every member of an oppressor group is an oppressor, try not to feel that this makes you a "bad" person. Self-esteem does not have to mean distancing yourself from the oppressor role, it can come instead from taking a proud part in the struggle to end oppression. This involves learning to separate guilt from responsibility. Guilt means taking on all the weight of history as an individual; responsibility means accepting your share of the challenge of changing the situation. (p. 114-115)

### Activity 1: Becoming an Ally

**Time:** 15 min

**Type:** Self-Reflection

Reflect on the Anne Bishop excerpt in relation to Indigenization:

1. As a non-Indigenous person, to what extent are you responsible for Indigenizing the curriculum? Why do you carry this responsibility? What cautions must you take as you work to support Indigenization?
2. Why is guilt not a useful emotion for an ally? What is needed to move beyond guilt and into action?
3. How would you define your role in the process of Indigenization? How does your identity and life experience impact how you perceive your role? Make a list of areas and ways you can best contribute, given your identity and experience.

## Activity 2: Working with Allies

**Time:** 15 min

**Type:** Self-Reflection

As an Indigenous person, consider how you can work with and involve non-Indigenous people in supporting Indigenization. Why is their contribution important? What would it look like for you to work with allies in a de-colonized way?

In the passage below, Dorothy Christian, a Secwepemc-Syilx woman, talks about her personal experience working with non-Indigenous allies. Consider how her experience is similar or different from your own. She writes:

Throughout the evolution of my multi-dimensional identity—that is, my personal, political, social, spiritual, and academic development—I have looked closely at the intersections of race, identity, and culture, including the multiple histories of the settler peoples in coexistence with Indigenous peoples....In my history with Victoria Freeman, a thirteenth-generation North American settler, we have decolonized ourselves and looked at what institutional decolonization might look like. Decolonization is one of those big conceptual words that encompass many things and no doubt means different things to different people. For me it meant dealing with the deeply embedded racism we felt towards each other and deconstructing the many preconceived notions we had about each other to finally reach a place where we can honour each other's dignity and achieve a true reconciliation as human beings....It is a difficult and sometimes heartbreaking process that requires a level of commitment to a relationship that is rarely found in friendships. (p. 73)

## Activity 3: Allyship and lifelong learning

**Time:** 15 min

**Type:** Self-Reflection

If you are a non-Indigenous person, the most important attitude you can adopt as an ally to Indigenous people is that of a lifelong learner. It is critical that you take the time to learn about Indigenous history, cultures, and communities.

**Optional activity:** Read blogger Cody Charles' writing on [pitfalls to avoid as an ally](#).

Reflection questions:

1. If you are a non-Indigenous person, what steps can you take to engage in lifelong learning?
2. If you are an Indigenous person, would you be willing to support and work with aspiring allies? If so, how might you do that?

## Creating Cultural Safety

The concept of **cultural safety** recognizes that we need to be aware of and challenge unequal power relations at all levels: individual, family, community, and society. The reality is that many Indigenous students, faculty, and employees experience harm on a regular basis because their culture and identity is not respected or accepted within post-secondary institutions.

In a culturally safe learning environment, each learner feels that their unique cultural background is respected and they are free to be themselves without being judged, put on the spot, or asked to speak for all members of their group. Unequal power relations are openly discussed and challenged in a manner that does not make learners feel that they (or groups they belong to) are being put down.

As you Indigenize curriculum, issues of cultural safety may arise. Learning about the negative experiences of colonization and oppression may lead to contentious discussions, the surfacing of racist attitudes and beliefs, and re-traumatization for Indigenous students. Integrating Indigenous content into the classroom could shift the focus to Indigenous students in a way that may feel emotionally unsafe.

As a curriculum developer, it is important to be aware of these potential impacts of Indigenization and to develop a learning approach that lessens opportunities for these impacts to occur. A first step would be to acknowledge that cultural safety is an important issue, and that the instructor will attend to cultural safety throughout the course.

### Activity 1: Understanding Microaggressions

**Time:** 60 min

**Type:** Individual

Review this brief [presentation about microaggressions \[PDF\]](#) by Dr. Derald Wing Sue of Columbia University. In the presentation, Dr. Sue shares examples of **microaggressions**, which he defines as “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative slights, invalidations, and insults to an individual or group because of their marginalized status in society.”

Can you think of examples of microaggressions that you’ve experienced or seen others experience? How do you think microaggressions would impact Indigenous students?

For specific examples of microaggressions against Indigenous students, watch some of this video in which [Indigenous students at the University of British Columbia share ways that they have been made to feel uncomfortable in their classes because of their Indigenous identity](#). Reflect on the following questions:

1. Have you ever witnessed or experienced an incident like the ones described in the video?

2. What are the cumulative impacts of these types of incidents on Indigenous students?

How would you, as a curriculum developer, set up the course in a way that creates cultural safety for Indigenous students?

## Summary

Regardless of your cultural background, Indigenizing the curriculum is your responsibility. In this section, we have provided opportunities to reflect on how you can act on that responsibility given your own identity and experiences. As you move forward in this work, keep in mind that it is important to think critically about your role and how you can contribute in a way that counters oppressive attitudes, practices, and structures.

### Key learnings from this section

- Colonization is a form of systemic oppression that affects everyone in society.
- Most people have experienced both oppression and privilege in their lives, although some people have been impacted more significantly than others.
- If you are a non-Indigenous person, you can support Indigenization by becoming an ally. Be open to learning and always think critically about your role.
- If you are an Indigenous person, you can work together with allies in a way that feels comfortable to you.
- It is important to be mindful of cultural safety as you work to Indigenize the curriculum.



## Section 6: Promoting Systemic Change



*Fig 6.1*



## Introduction

Now that you have worked through the preceding sections, you are probably beginning to get a sense of what Indigenization means to you. Or maybe the perspective you had when you started this guide has been affirmed. We hope you have learned along the way and are more confident about how you will continue your work to introduce Indigenous perspectives into your curriculum, not just to serve Indigenous students, but to serve us all.

As you engage in the work of Indigenizing curriculum, you will find there are limits to what can be done through curriculum alone. Holistic transformation of the university will involve systemic change, including policies, practices, and organizational culture. In this section, we explore how you can contribute to systemic change as a curriculum developer.

### Purpose of this section

This section is intended to provoke your thinking about how you can contribute to raising consciousness about Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation in your institution and in your everyday life. The following topics are included:

- Relationality and post-secondary institutions as social systems
- Building a community within your university
- Exploring ways to advocate and inspire others

Approximate time: 3 hours, plus additional time for building connections within your institution

## Everything is Related: Relationality and Post-secondary Institutions as Social Systems

In Section 2, we explored how the process of relationality applies to curriculum development. How does this concept apply to the university as a whole? In an organization like a post-secondary institution, relationality means a recognition of the myriad connections between aspects such as the ancestral lands where the campus is located, university community members, Elders, Chiefs and Council members, local Nations, organizational units, buildings, signage, artworks, governance groups, print and online collections, coffee shops, and much more. Everything that Indigenous and non-Indigenous university community members do as they interact in these complex environments makes a difference (Restoule, 2011).

Systems theory and systems thinking approaches bear strong resemblance to this perspective. Peter Senge (2006) proposes that systems thinking is the fifth discipline in an organization, along with four others that are necessary for an organization to continue learning. According to Senge, the five disciplines are:

- personal mastery
- awareness of our own biases and assumptions
- common understanding of a desired future or vision
- team learning
- systems thinking

In this guide, you have been challenged to increase your personal mastery and your awareness of your own biases and assumptions about Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation. As you work within your unit and your institution, you can contribute to the development of vision, team learning, and systems thinking that will advance common understanding. The topics that follow offer some ideas for you to consider as you work toward systemic change.

### Activity 1: Systems Theory of Organizations (20 minutes)

**Time:** 20 min

**Type:** Self-reflection, Group

Watch this short video [Systems Theory of Organizations](#) and reflect on how the actions you take as a member of your institution can make a difference beyond the programs and courses you create.

## Building a Community Within Your Institution

Being a part of a community of people who are committed to making change can be extraordinarily powerful – it’s also a great way to build relationships and experience connectedness across your institution.

### Sharing with existing networks

You are likely already part of many communities in your institution and in your professional networks. Speaking up and sharing what you have learned from your own experiences in your existing communities can help to support Indigenization. The same is true, of course, for the opportunities you might have in working groups, committees, or governance bodies.

### Connecting with others working toward Indigenization

You can also find others in your institution who are working toward Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation – building connections between your existing communities and creating new and different relationships. Many post-secondary institutions have Indigenous plans or strategic documents that describe their commitment to Indigenization. These plans vary widely from institution to institution, and some institutions are working on new or revised versions. There may be opportunities to get involved in this work where your perspective as a curriculum developer is important to share.

Your colleagues in your institution’s Indigenous education or student services unit can help you connect to others who are interested in Indigenization. Connecting with your Indigenous colleagues who work in these areas shows respect for their knowledge and they can be very important advisers. A simple online search of the keywords “Indigenous” and “your institution name” should lead you to contacts if you don’t know where to start, or contact your Human Resources office and inquire about the organization structure of your institution.

Just remember that Indigenous education and student services faculty and staff are still rare on most campuses, and their time and resources are in high demand. This doesn’t mean that they aren’t willing and available to help, but rather that you may need to make an appointment or reach out by email to arrange a connection first. Remember, too, that Indigenous faculty and staff who work in other units within the institution do their jobs just like their non-Indigenous colleagues, and they may or may not have additional time available to share their expertise about their knowledge and experiences as Indigenous people.

### Engaging in university programming and events to support Indigenization

Indigenous education and student services offices are often located in or near dedicated gathering

spaces that are the locus of a wide range of activities that are open to Indigenous and non-Indigenous institutional community members, although some may just be for Indigenous community members in respect of cultural protocols. Regular activities, such as Elders' teas or drop-in hours, Indigenous book club meetings, film screenings and discussions, drumming circles, traditional craft workshops, speakers and presentations, Indigenous graduation recognition ceremonies, and community lunches or dinners, are offered at many campuses. There may also be chances to watch Indigenous artists at work or to contribute to community works such as button blankets or carvings. National Indigenous Day is observed on June 21 across Canada with events that often lead up to that date; World Indigenous Day is marked on August 9 each year by some institutions; and Louis Riel Day is on November 16. There are usually opportunities to participate or volunteer in activities around these days.

Many universities engage in relationship-building and community-learning activities with local Indigenous communities. You may want to find out about the opportunities and explore how you can get involved, either as a participant or a supporter to the organizers of these activities. The following is an example shared by Roberta Mason and Asma-na-hi Antoine from Royal Roads University.

Royal Roads University is very grateful for the opportunity to work with a Nuu-chah-nulth Elder who has the right to harvest eagle feathers. Indigenous Education and Student Services works with the Elder to arrange a culturally appropriate learning opportunity for participants, sharing some of the teachings of the eagle from the Elder's community. Participants then help to respectfully remove and clean the eagle feathers. The feathers are used in institutional ceremonies as gifts, and they are sometimes shared with communities or local organizations.

#### Activity 1: Connecting with Your Institutional Indigenous Strategy and Services

**Type:** Individual

Find out what efforts your institution is making toward Indigenization and explore opportunities to support this work.

#### Activity 2: Forming a Discussion Group

**Time:** Ongoing

**Type:** Individual

Building a community of supportive and like-minded individuals can be very valuable as you work toward Indigenization. Some activities you can do are:

- Make at least one professional networking connection to support you in this work.
- Reflect or discuss with a colleague what your role in this work is and how you can best contribute.
- Identify at least two other colleagues who are interested in this issue. Meet at least twice to share your ideas. Here are discussion points that might help get you started:
  - Tell me about your experience with Indigenization.
  - What has worked well for you?
  - What barriers have you experienced and how did you overcome them?
  - How could we work together to advance Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation in our institution?
  - How can we do our best to be respectful of our Indigenous colleagues and community members and follow appropriate protocols?

### Activity 3: Sharing What You've Learned

**Time:** 30 – 60 min

**Type:** Individual, Self-reflection

Write an abstract for a conference presentation you might do based on what you have learned about Indigenization. Reflect on what you know that you would be confident in sharing with your professional colleagues or what questions you might pose in a panel session.

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## Becoming an Advocate

Now that you have completed this guide, you have a responsibility to share your knowledge and experience with others. As you go about your work, consider ways in which you can bring Indigenous ways of being into your organizational culture, such as acknowledging the lands during in-person meetings or conference calls or creating opportunities to collaborate on Indigenous-led work. How might you advocate for Indigenization in your policies and procedures (for example, in regards to payment of honoraria or hiring policies)? How might you support Indigenization of your physical workspace (for example, through inclusion of Indigenous art or recognition of lands)?

### Activity 1: 101 Ways to Indigenize and Decolonize Academic Programs and Courses

**Time:** 60 min

**Type:** Individual

Review the resource [100 Ways to Indigenize and Decolonize Academic Programs and Courses \[PDF\]](#) by Dr. Shauneen Pete, University of Regina. Choose three actions outside of curriculum development that you could take in your own setting. Write a journal entry on how and when you plan to go about taking those actions.

## Summary

After completing this section, we hope that you will be more confident to speak up about Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation in your institution, your professional networks, and in your everyday life. While there may continue to be debate about the right words to use, the objective is to raise consciousness, or “conscientization” as Paulo Freire (1970) called it, so that actions for change will follow. As you continue to deepen your learning about Indigenization, we invite you to consider how you might be a leader and advocate for systemic change.

### Key Learnings from This Section

- A university is a system. Any approach to change, including Indigenization, needs to consider a systematic approach.
- Many universities are engaged in multiple efforts to support Indigenization through a variety of forms.
- Building a community of like-minded individuals within your institution will create opportunities for you to get involved in existing efforts toward Indigenization and to take a leadership role in bringing about transformational change.

## Conclusion

This guide has presented you with opportunities to appreciate, understand, and embrace the process of Indigenization, what it entails, and how you can begin to develop curriculum that demonstrates respectful relationships and collaborations. We hope that this learning journey has been meaningful, and it has inspired you to take action in your life. We also hope that you continue learning about Indigenization throughout your life and share what you learn with others as you move toward the creation of a shared future. Sharing what you learn contributes to the larger story of Indigenization. In the words of late Ojibway writer Richard Wagamese:

All that we are is story. From the moment we are born to the time we continue on our spirit journey, we are involved in the creation of the story of our time here. It is what we arrive with. It is all we leave behind. We are not the things we accumulate. We are not the things we deem important. We are story. All of us. What comes to matter then is the creation of the best possible story we can while we're here; you, me, us, together. When we can do that and we take the time to share those stories with each other, we get bigger inside, we see each other, we recognize our kinship – we change the world, one story at a time



## Additional Resources

### Articles

- Anuik, J. & Gillies, C. (2012). Indigenous knowledge in post-secondary educators' practices: Nourishing the learning spirit. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, 42(1), 63-79. <https://doi.org/10.47678/cjhe.v42i1.1902>
- Battiste, M. (2011). Decolonizing education: Nourishing the learning spirit. *Education Canada*, 50(1), 13-17.
- Clark, A., Kleinman, S., Spanierman, L., Isaac, P., & Poolokasingham, G. (2014). Do you live in a Teepee? Aboriginal students' experiences of micro-aggressions in Canada. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 7(2). 112-125. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0036573>
- Mihesuah, D.A., & Wilson, A.C. (2004). *Indigenizing the academy: Transforming scholarship and empowering communities*. University of Nebraska Press. <https://muse.jhu.edu/book/11697>.
- Olsen, A., & Thompson, S. (2017). Structural oppressions facing Indigenous students in Canadian education. *Fourth World Journal*, 15(2). 41-66.
- Pete, Dr. Shauneen. (2016). [100 way to Indigenize and decolonize academic programs and courses](https://www.uregina.ca/president/assets/docs/president-docs/indigenization/indigenize-decolonize-university-courses.pdf). University of Regina. <https://www.uregina.ca/president/assets/docs/president-docs/indigenization/indigenize-decolonize-university-courses.pdf>
- Sensoy, Ö. & DiAngelo, R. (2014). Respect differences? Challenging the common guidelines in social justice education. *Democracy and Education Journal*, 22(2). 1-10.

### Videos

- Luke, A. (2015). *Indigenous education*. [Video transcript \[PDF\]](http://thelearningexchange.ca/projects/allan-luke-indigenous-education/). Retrieved January 2018, from <http://thelearningexchange.ca/projects/allan-luke-indigenous-education/>

Watch the series in the Learning Exchange (an educational resource that hosts professional learning materials developed by the Ministry of Education in Ontario, Canada) by Researcher Allan Luke on the importance of continuity, storytelling, and the wisdom of elders in the First Nations communities.

- Armstrong, J. (2011). [TEDx Okanagan College: Indigenization](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jLOfXsFlb18). Retrieved January, 2018, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jLOfXsFlb18>

On this video, Dr. Jeannette Armstrong, Professor of Indigenous Education at Okanagan College, describes Indigenization in Higher Education

Carleton University, Centre for Aboriginal Culture and Education. (2013). [Kinàmàgawin: Aboriginal issues in the classroom: A resource guide](https://portal.usask.ca/record/38737). Retrieved January, 2018, from https://portal.usask.ca/record/38737

*Kinàmàgawin: Aboriginal issues in the classroom: A resource guide* is an excellent resource which includes a guide for use with a film, accessible through their site or via Youtube.

Morris, S. (2011) [The Complexity of Identity: Who am I?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i-h_fJFQcds) Retrieved January, 2018 from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i-h\_fJFQcds

Based on the work of Beverly Tatum, this video entitled “The complexity of Who I am” summarizes some aspects relevant to identity, privilege, and the need of paying attention to our surroundings and our sources of knowledge as elements that inform our worldview.

King, T. (2014, April 09). [I’m Not the Indian You Had in Mind](http://www.nsi-canada.ca/2012/03/im-not-the-indian-you-had-in-mind/). Retrieved January 24, 2018, from http://www.nsi-canada.ca/2012/03/im-not-the-indian-you-had-in-mind/

This brief video recounts the story originally written by Thomas King, who is also featured in the video, to discuss and dismiss preconceived notions about Aboriginal people. Excellent resource to initiate conversation!

Grass, S. (2011) [Reconciliation and Education](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fu0aIw1vdiE), TedEx West Vancouver Ed. Retrieved January, 2018 from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fu0aIw1vdiE

Through a TEDx Talk, Indigenous educator offers a perspective on how schools can facilitate reconciliation with Aboriginal students and their families.

## Online Resources

The Freire Institute. (n.d.). [Concepts used by Paulo Freire](https://freire.org/concepts-used-by-paulo-freire). Retrieved September 2020, from https://freire.org/concepts-used-by-paulo-freire

This website is about the work of Brazilian educator and philosopher Paulo Freire. Aspects of the website include articles, concepts, and collected works by diverse authors.

[Legacy of Hope Foundation](http://legacyofhope.ca/), Retrieved on January, 2018, from http://legacyofhope.ca/

This website, administered by this charitable Indigenous-led organization, offers a variety of resources related to Residential Schools.

[David Bouchard – Métis author and speaker](http://davidbouchard.com/). Retrieved on January 2018 from http://davidbouchard.com/

[Michael Kusugak– Inuit author and speaker](http://www.michaelkusugak.com). Retrieved on January 2018 from http://www.michaelkusugak.com

[8th Fire: Aboriginal Peoples, Canada & the way forward](https://www.cbc.ca/firsthand/blog/8th-fire-wabs-walk-through-history) Retrieved on January 2018 from https://www.cbc.ca/firsthand/blog/8th-fire-wabs-walk-through-history

[Legacy of Hope Foundation: 100 years of loss](https://legacyofhope.ca/portfolio-items/generationslost/). Retrieved on October 2020 from <https://legacyofhope.ca/portfolio-items/generationslost/>

[BC Métis Education Elders and Knowledge Keepers](http://mngv.ca). Retrieved on January 2018 from <http://mngv.ca>

[Indigenous Education in British Columbia](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/program-management/indigenous-education). Retrieved on September 2024 from <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/program-management/indigenous-education>

[Indigenous Education Department](https://aned.sd61.bc.ca/). Retrieved on October 2020 from <https://aned.sd61.bc.ca/>

SD#61 resource centre with fabulous resources available to the community

[Working effectively with Aboriginal Peoples for non-Aboriginal Peoples](http://www.ictinc.ca/courses/working-effectively-with-aboriginal-peoples). Retrieved on January 2018 from <http://www.ictinc.ca/courses/working-effectively-with-aboriginal-peoples> online newsletter with archived topics

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## Glossary of Terms

### **ally**

someone from a privileged group who is aware of how oppression works and struggles alongside members of an oppressed group to take action to end oppression

### **anti-oppression theory**

the framework for understanding the world and one's own place in it, questioning and challenging one's practices, and creating new approaches that counter oppression and lead toward reconciliation and decolonization

### **cultural appropriation**

using intellectual property, traditional knowledge, cultural expressions, or artifacts from someone's culture without permission. It is most likely to be harmful when the source culture is a group that has been oppressed or exploited in other ways (as with Indigenous Peoples), or when the object of appropriation is particularly sensitive or sacred.

### **cultural oppression**

shared societal values and norms that allow people to see oppression as normal or right.

### **cultural safety**

the recognition that one needs to be aware of and challenge unequal power relations at the level of individual, family, community, and society. In a culturally safe environment, each person feels that their unique cultural background is respected, and they are free to be themselves without being judged, put on the spot, or asked to speak for all members of their group.

### **decolonization**

the process of deconstructing colonial ideologies of the superiority and privilege of Western thought and approaches. Decolonization involves valuing and revitalizing Indigenous knowledge and approaches, and rethinking Western biases or assumptions that have impacted Indigenous ways of being.

### **holism/holistic learning**

engaging the four knowledge domains that interweave all aspects of learning: emotional (heart), spiritual (spirit), cognitive (mind) and physical (body).

## **Indigenization**

the process of naturalizing Indigenous knowledge systems and making them evident to transform spaces, places, and hearts. In the context of post-secondary education, this involves bringing Indigenous knowledge and approaches together with Western knowledge systems. It is a deliberate coming together of these two ways of being.

## **Indigenous epistemologies**

theory of knowledge that is based on Indigenous perspectives, such as relationality, the interconnection of sacred and secular, and holism. The emotional, spiritual, cognitive, and physical dimensions of knowledge are common in Indigenous epistemologies.

## **Indigenous knowledge**

knowledge systems embedded in relationship to specific lands, culture, and community.

## **Indigenous pedagogies**

the method and practice of teaching that focus on the development of a human being as a whole person, learning through experience, and recognizing the important role that Elders have an important role in passing on wisdom and knowledge.

## **learning spirit**

the entity that guides learning (beyond family, community, and Elders). It is an Indigenous concept that spirits travel with individuals and guide them, offering, guidance, inspiration, and the unrealized potential to be who we are.

## **microaggressions**

brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioural, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative slights, invalidations, and insults to an individual or group because of their marginalized status in society.

## **oppression**

exploitation based on perceived difference of a group of people who share a social category (such as race, class, cultural background, religion, gender, sexuality, age, language or ability).

## **personal oppression**

the thoughts, behaviours, and actions that constitute a negative judgment or treatment of an oppressed group. For example, a person making the assumption that Indigenous people always get special treatment.

## **protocols**

ways of interacting with Indigenous people in a manner that respects traditional ways of being.



Protocols are unique to each Indigenous culture and are a representation of a culture's deeply held ethical system.

**reconciliation**

addressing past wrongs done to Indigenous Peoples, making amends, and improving relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to create a better future for all.

**relationality**

the concept that we are all related to each other, to the natural environment, and to the spiritual world, and these relationships bring about interdependencies.

**structural (or systemic) oppression**

the manifestation of oppression in societal institutions, such as governments, religions, education systems, health care, law, and the media. For example, the fact that Indigenous people are overrepresented in the criminal justice system and child welfare systems is a form of structural oppression.

**two-eyed seeing**

the guiding principle of seeing the strengths of multiple perspectives in an interconnected and respectful way rather than as binaries or opposites. Shared by Mi'kmaq Elder, Albert Marshall, the word *Etuaptmumk* is a way to see the strengths of Indigenous knowledge and perspectives with one eye and to see the strengths of Western knowledge and perspectives with the other eye; then you learn how to see with both eyes together to benefit all peoples.

## Appendix A: Excerpts from Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

The Commission defines *reconciliation* as an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships. A critical part of this process involves repairing damaged trust by making apologies, providing individual and collective reparations, and following through with concrete actions that demonstrate real societal change. Establishing respectful relationships also requires the revitalization of Indigenous law and legal traditions. It is important that all Canadians understand how traditional First Nations, Inuit, and Métis approaches to resolving conflict, repairing harm, and restoring relationships can inform the reconciliation process. (16-17)

Reconciliation must support Aboriginal peoples as they heal from the destructive legacies of colonization that have wreaked such havoc in their lives. But it must do even more. Reconciliation must inspire Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples to transform Canadian society so that our children and grandchildren can live together in dignity, peace, and prosperity on these lands we now share. (8)

At the Victoria Regional Event in 2012, Survivor Archie Little said,

[For] me reconciliation is righting a wrong. And how do we do that? All these people in this room, a lot of non-Aboriginals, a lot of Aboriginals that probably didn't go to residential school; we need to work together.... My mother had a high standing in our cultural ways. We lost that. It was taken away.... And I think it's time for you non-Aboriginals ... to go to your politicians and tell them that we have to take responsibility for what happened. We have to work together. (9)

The Reverend Stan McKay of the United Church, who is also a Survivor, believes that reconciliation can happen only when everyone accepts responsibility for healing in ways that foster respect. He said,

[There must be] a change in perspective about the way in which Aboriginal peoples would be engaged with Canadian society in the quest for reconciliation.... [We cannot] perpetuate the paternalistic concept that only Aboriginal peoples are in need of healing.... The perpetrators are wounded and marked by history in ways that are different from the victims, but both groups require healing.... How can a conversation about reconciliation take place if all involved do not adopt an attitude of humility and respect? ... We all have stories to tell and in order to grow in tolerance and understanding we must listen to the stories of others. (9)

Together, Canadians must do more than just *talk* about reconciliation; we must learn how to *practise* reconciliation in our everyday lives—within ourselves and our families, and in our communities, governments, places of worship, schools, and workplaces. To do so constructively, Canadians must remain committed to the ongoing work of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships.

For many Survivors and their families, this commitment is foremost about healing themselves, their communities, and nations, in ways that revitalize individuals as well as Indigenous cultures, languages, spirituality, laws, and governance systems.... Schools must teach history in ways that foster mutual respect, empathy, and engagement. All Canadian children and youth deserve to know Canada's honest history, including what happened in the residential schools, and to appreciate the rich history and knowledge of Indigenous nations who continue to make such a strong contribution to Canada, including our very name and collective identity as a country. For Canadians from all walks of life, reconciliation offers a new way of living together (21-22).

Retrieved from [\*Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada\*](#) [\[PDF\]](#).

## Appendix B: "Teacher as Leader" Original Syllabus (Non-Indigenized)

### Education ED –D410 Section A06

#### 1: Thurs Sept 7, Introductions: Course Outline and Expectations

- Decisions, Values & Beliefs; Values Audit
- Codes of Ethics, Principles of Learning, Charter of Education
- **Assignment #A: Statement of Teaching Beliefs: Expectations, Exemplars and Evaluation Grids**
- Hot Topic: Sleep
- Issues of Interest

#### 2: Fri Sept 8, Teachers and the Teaching Profession; Ethical Decision-Making (part1)

- Teacher Professionalism:
- BCTRB Standards/BCTF Code of Ethics, BCPVPA Code of Ethics
- Educational System Performance:
- **Assignment #B: Expectations, Exemplars and Evaluation Grids**
- Ethical Decision-Making in Schools (part 1)
- Group work: Critical Analysis of Ethical Dilemmas

#### 3: Mon Sept 11, Parental Roles in Education

- **8:30 Presenter: Audrey Smith, president VDPAC, -Parents in Education**
- Parental roles and responsibilities/ the School Act
- Parental Choice/Independent Schools
- Connecting Points and Partnerships at every level of schooling
- Parent scenarios – developing a vocabulary/ approach to working with parents
- **10:45 Assignment #A: Peer editing session of Draft 1 Statement of Teaching Beliefs**

#### 4: Tues Sept 12, Governance and Leadership

- Governance: Ministry of Ed., School Board, Politicians and Administrative Roles
- Provincial & School District Governance in B.C.

- Leadership in Schools  
Issue of Interest: Mom accuses School District of .....

### **5: Wed Sept 13, Directions in BC Education**

- **8:30 Presenter: Jennifer McRea, Ministry of Education – Current Ministry Directions**
- Update on current directions in BC Education
- Alternate education paths for students, boundaries and partnerships
- Review of TRB Standards

### **6: Thurs Sept 14 Teachers and the Law/Ethical Decision-Making**

- **8:30 Presenter: Mark Walsh – Legislation applying to the classroom teacher**
- The Law and Teachers; Statute/Common Law
- Ethical decision-making (part 2). Review process/New Scenarios/Using Framework  
Group Work  
Issues of Interest

### **7: Fri Sept 15 Teacher Contracts/Challenging Situations in Schools and Classrooms**

- Teacher ‘Contract of Employment’: examination of sample (SD #63 Saanich)
- provisions and opportunities for teachers in BC school districts
- Bullying, Cell phones, Texting, Social Networking Issues in Schools  
Classroom Management: School Codes of Conduct
- Marzano, Bennett, Gossen: language and frameworks
- Secondary scenarios; Admin & District Roles in Discipline
- **Assignment A: Statement of Teaching Beliefs Draft 2 DUE to Course TA today**

### **8: Mon Sept 18, Developing a Professional Identity /Certification**

- **8:30 TRB Representative, Peta Brookstone Professional Identity/Standards and Certification**  
(This presentation will take the entire class)

### **9: Tues Sept 19 Resume Writing/Seeking Employment/International Schools**

- Interviewing for positions
- **10:00 Presenter: Michelle Floyd, UVIC Career Services**
- Preparing a resume for applications to teaching positions and TTOC

International School Positions

**10: Wed Sept 20, Hiring Practices in School Districts/Positions in Remote Locations and Overseas**

- **8:30 Breanne Stoudt, Human Resources Dept., SD #63: processes to obtain TOC and contract appointments**
- Options in seeking employment. Positions in remote locations, overseas schools, International schools

**11: Thurs Sept 21, Teachers and the Union/ Interviewing for a Position**

- **10:00 Glen Hansman, President BCTF**
- BCTF – The Union of Professionals supporting teachers
- Interview questions, preparation and strategies
- **Assignment A: Statement of Teaching Beliefs: FINAL SUBMITTED to Instructor**

**12: Fri Sept 22, Interviewing continued/Course wrap-up**

- Mock Interview with professional interview panel and Course wrap-up
- **Assignment B: COMPLETE and SUBMITTED to Instructor**

Attributions

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## Appendix C: “Teacher as Leader” Indigenized Syllabus Excerpts

University of Victoria  
Faculty of Education  
Department of Educational Psychology & Leadership Studies

### **Teacher as Leader: The Professional Role ED-D 410 A01, Unit Value 1.5**

Instructor: Dr. Lindsay Herriot

Web Site: <http://www.uvic.ca/epls/>

Note: courses may be cancelled within first two weeks of classes if enrolment drops below required minimums

#### **Calendar Description**

A seminar in contemporary professional issues, including structures and governance within the BC School system, school law, and legal requirements for the teaching professional. The role of the professional as an ethical, reflective and critically engaged practitioner is emphasized. Themes include teacher leadership, professional growth and collaboration, and maintaining professional relationships in schools and communities. Authentic assessment tools, including rubrics, portfolios, and professional benchmarks will be used for assessing professional growth.

#### **Goals of the Course**

to have prospective teachers understand the organization and administration of schools in British Columbia with particular reference to provincial governance in education and its relationship to and effect upon the roles of students, parents, teachers, administrators, school and district support staff, and the community.

- to familiarize students with school and classroom organizations and administrative structures.
- to acquaint students with the influence of legislation, policies, and practices on professional decision- making.
- to encourage students to explore educational, cultural and social issues in education; learn how these issues are addressed in district and school policies; and consider how such issues affect their professional lives.
- to foster professional attitudes such as critical inquiry, reflection and self-assessment



- to help students articulate the goals and values of their professional practice.

All course readings will be available on CourseSpaces. The following are helpful websites that you will want to refer to throughout the course, and keep in your professional library:

Teacher Education Committee (2004) *Handbook for New Teachers*.: <http://bctf.ca/uploadedfiles/public/NewTeachers/handbook.pdf>

NOTE: Also, locate the website for your practicum school and for the School District in which the school resides – these will be invaluable resources for you!

BC Ministry of Education (MoE) [www.bced.gov.bc.ca](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca)

Aboriginal Education (MoE) <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/>

BC Teachers' Federation [www.bctf.ca](http://www.bctf.ca)

BC Teacher Regulation Branch <https://teacherregulation.gov.bc.ca/>

BC Confederation of PACs [www.bccpac.bc.ca](http://www.bccpac.bc.ca)

Charter for Public Education <https://bctf.ca/history/rooms/BuildingOurProfession2003.aspx>

Transforming BC Curriculum & Assessment <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/>

B.C. School Trustees Association [www.bcsta.org](http://www.bcsta.org)

B.C. Principals' & Vice Principals' Assoc. [www.bcpvpa.bc.ca](http://www.bcpvpa.bc.ca)

B.C. School Superintendents' Association [www.bcssa.org](http://www.bcssa.org)

University of Vancouver Island <http://records.viu.ca/homeroom>

Network of Performance Based Schools <http://www.npbs.ca>

EdCAN Network (Canadian Education Association) <https://www.edcan.ca/>

Canadian Council of Education Ministers <http://www.cmec.ca/en/>

## Assignments

This course has two assignments, the Statement of Teaching Beliefs (submitted twice), and the Values Assignment (submitted three times). Assignments are submitted on CourseSpaces.

### ASSIGNMENT A: Statement of Teaching Beliefs

Please prepare a two or three-page, double-spaced, statement of teaching beliefs that describes what being a teaching professional means to you. This document will be submitted twice, once for formative feedback on Friday, 20 October, and then the final version on Tuesday, 28 November. Your statement will become a “signature piece” in your professional teaching portfolio and will be helpful as you apply for teaching positions and respond to questioning in interviews, so you will want to:

- Write in the first person, with your intended audience in mind (use appropriate language and terms).
- Identify your values and beliefs about teaching, and use examples and details that indicate how these values and beliefs are embodied in practice.
- Highlight your goals for practice and key aspects (e.g., specific teaching strategies, ways to organize for learning, assessment and evaluation approaches, role of parents/community etc.) that will facilitate students' success.

- Be authentic, reflective, and concise. Ensure that your writing is persuasive, coherent, and error-free.

### ASSIGNMENT B: Values Assignment

Our own values around teaching and professionalism influence our thinking, and in turn, our professional practice. Yet these values are seldom explicitly examined, challenged, and/or reflected on. The purpose of this assignment is to get you thinking about your own values regarding the teaching profession, where they come from, and how they evolve or change over time.

You will submit this assignment three times (Tuesday, 12 September, Tuesday, 7 November, Friday, 1 December). The first submission, made in the first week of class, will obviously incorporate few, if any, of the course materials. That's okay, that's by design. The rationale sections are for you to specifically name what influences your thinking for each value. Your family? Your faith heritage? Your ethnic background? Your schooling? Your professional practice? Etc. etc. Be specific!

Your second submission, on the same document as the first, but in a different colour, should show how you've grown or changed as a result of this course. Mark the line using a different colour, and fill in the second rationale box. It's 100% okay if you don't move on the line, if you stay in exactly the same place. But what should change is your rationale. You should have new or more complex ideas about the topics than you did before taking this course. And your rationale on this second submission should reflect the materials you've engaged with in the course.

Much like the second submission, the third submission should reflect deeper and more nuanced understandings of the issues.

You will respond to ten (or more!) of the fourteen statements by:

- Dragging a color coded triangle to the place on the scale that represents your opinion.
- Providing a written rationale for the why you chose that place on the scale.

## Course Outline/Reading List

Guest speakers are **highlighted in yellow**

Assignments and other writing tasks are **highlighted in turquoise**

### Week 1: Introductions and Expectations, Friday, September 8

- No preparatory materials required!

### Week 2: Teachers Values/Teachers Bodies

#### Before Tuesday's Class

- Parker Palmer “The Courage to Teach”
- Complete 1st submission of the values assignment

### Before Friday’s Class

- Oppression in a 3 piece suit  
<http://everydayfeminism.com/2015/02/professionalism-and-oppression/>
- Gender nonconforming and getting dressed for work:<https://mic.com/articles/137315/what-it-s-really-like-to-get-dressed-for-work-when-you-re-gender-nonconforming#.jfvEXNk2P>
- Should teachers be able to have tattoos?[https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/jul/04/should-teachers-have-tattoos-school?CMP=fb\\_gu](https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/jul/04/should-teachers-have-tattoos-school?CMP=fb_gu)
- The Invisible Tax on teachers of color: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-invisible-tax-on-black-teachers/2016/05/15/6b7bea06-16f7-11e6-aa55-670cabef46e0\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.4d032e59dff9](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-invisible-tax-on-black-teachers/2016/05/15/6b7bea06-16f7-11e6-aa55-670cabef46e0_story.html?utm_term=.4d032e59dff9)

## Week 3: Teacher Regulation Branch

### Before Tuesday’s Class

- Review “Professional Standards in Education” (will be posted on CourseSpaces)
- Guest Speaker- Shawn McMullin, Teacher Regulation Branch
  - Skim/Have in Your Professional Library:
  - BC Handbook of Child Abuse (pp. 23-45).
  - BCTF Handbook for New Teachers
  - TRB Discipline Outcomes <https://teacherregulation.gov.bc.ca/ProfessionalConduct/DisciplineOutcomes.aspx>

### Before Friday’s Class

- Cases to Consider:
  - <http://wapo.st/2E3OIDw>
  - <http://people.com/bodies/principal-students-cant-wear-leggings/>
  - <https://tgam.ca/2lP6fsl>
- Read these 3 cases (found on CourseSpaces)
  - Haddrell
  - Dunderdale
  - Skene

## Week 4: Teachers and Schools: What's the Point?

### Before Tuesday's Class

- Noddings, N. Schooling for Democracy. In Philosophy of Education (chapter 13).
- Ruitenberg, C. W. "That's just your opinion" (chapter 7)
- There is No Apolitical Classroom (skim/familiarize yourself with any three resources listed): <http://blogs.ncte.org/index.php/2017/08/there-is-no-apolitical-classroom-resources-for-teaching-in-these-times/>

### Before Friday's Class

- Sears & Hirshkorn (in press). "The Controlling Hand: Canadian Teacher Education in a Global Context"
- Steeves, (2015). Teach for Canada
- Go Home Quallnaat: <https://leapintothevoidwithme.wordpress.com/2016/04/11/go-home-qallunaat/>

## Week 5: Parents, Caregivers, and Families

### Before Tuesday's Class

- NYTimes: [https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/22/opinion/poor-neighborhoods-black-parents-child-services.html?ref=opinion&\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/22/opinion/poor-neighborhoods-black-parents-child-services.html?ref=opinion&_r=0)
- 60s Scoop: <https://indiancountrytoday.com/archive/stealing-children-a-look-at-indigenous-child-removal-policies-zUpd8OH-EEupgA1HBaFOvA>
- Pushor and Murphy (2004) Parent marginalization, marginalized parents: Creating a place for parents on the school landscape
- Herriot, Burns, and Yeung (in press). Contested Spaces: Trans-inclusive policies and parental sovereignty in Canada. *Gender & Education*

### Before Friday's Class

- Parents: Backgrounder
- Flom (2010) A Teacher's Field Guide to Parents
- *Write reflection on your experience with parents in schools*
- *Guest Speaker: Audrey Smith, Victoria School District PAC Leader*

## Week 6: Governance and Leadership

### Before Tuesday's Class

- Excerpts from Priscilla Alderson's Institutional Rites and Rights
- Herriot, L. (2014). The presence of an absence: Youth participation in macro level education reform. *Citizenship Teaching and Learning* <http://www.chicagotribune.com/lifestyles/stevens/ct-life-stevens-friday-evanston-dress-code-0825-story.html>

### **Before Friday's Class**

- John A. MacDonald's name on schools: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/john-a-macdonald-etfo-schools-analysis-aaron-wherry-1.4260366>
- Phillips, R. (2011). The absentee Minister of Education of Canada: The Canadian federal government's constitutional role in First Nations
- Mendelson, M. (2008). Improving education on reserves: A First Nations Education Authority Act. Caledon Institute of Social Policy. Ottawa, Canada

## **Week 7: Developing a Professional Identity Part I**

### **Before Tuesday's Class**

- Beauchamp & Thomas (2009). Understanding Teacher Identity: Lit Review
- Rules for women teachers: <http://www.openculture.com/2013/09/rules-for-teachers-in-1872-1915-no-drinking-smoking-or-trips-to-barber-shops-and-ice-cream-parlors.html>
- Watch Argentine Teacher with Down's Syndrome: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FN52MkpOJ4w>

### **Before Friday's Class**

- Choose one (or more!) of the scanned chapters from the International handbook of research on teacher's beliefs.
- **Submit 1st draft of Statement of Teaching Beliefs**

## **Week 8: Developing a Professional Identity Part II**

### **Before Tuesday's Class**

- Thomas and Beauchamp (2011) New Teachers Identity through Metaphor
- Oskineegish and Berger (2013). Non-Native Teachers in Native Communities

### **Before Friday's Class**

- **Guest Speakers from Ministry of Education**

## Week 9: Teacher's Unions and Associations

### Before Tuesday's Class

- *Guest Speaker: Glen Hansmen, BCTF*
  - <http://vancouver.sun.com/opinion/op-ed/opinion-teachers-committed-to-antiracism-education>
  - <https://thetyee.ca/News/2016/11/10/BC-Teachers-Win-SCC-Battle/>
  - <http://behindthenumbers.ca/2017/08/31/public-school-fundraising/>
- Skim/Have In Your Professional Library:
  - BCTF Code of Ethics: <https://bctf.ca/ProfessionalResponsibility.aspx?id=4292>
  - Provincial Collective Agreement- 2013-2019

### Before Friday's Class

- Canadian Teacher's Federation (2013). The changing context facing teacher unions in Canada.
- Education Next: A Different Role for Teachers Unions. <http://educationnext.org/a-different-role-for-teachers-unions/>
- Apple and Junck (1990).

## Week 10: Working with Colleagues/Indigenous Education Part I

### Before Tuesday's Class

- BCTF – Teachers and Educational Assistants
- Radford et al. 2015.
- *Second Submission of Values Assignment*

### Before Friday's Class

- *Prep materials TBA*
- *Guest Speakers: Students from Life School*

NO CLASS – READING BREAK

## Week 11: Indigenous Education Part II

### Before Friday's Class

- McGregor (2012) Decolonizing Pedagogies Booklet

- Conflicts and Lessons in First Nations Secondary Education: An Analysis of BC First Nations Studies, Rachel Mason
- *Other prep TBA*
- *Guest Speaker: Chaw-win-is, Indigenous Resurgence Coordinator*

## Week 12: Getting a Job

### Before Tuesday's Class

- *Bring draft CV and cover letter to class*
- *Guest Speaker: Michelle Floyd, UVic Career Services*

### Before Friday's Class

- Sample questions and Preferred Responses.
- Review makeafuture.com
- Check district websites for careers info
- *Guest Speaker: Breanne Stoudt, Human Resources Manager, School District 63 AND Mark Walsh, Secretary-Treasurer, School District 6*

## Week 13: Controversial Issues

### Before Tuesday's Class

- Forrest, M. Sensitive controversy in teaching to be critical (chapter 8)
- Scott, E. C. What's wrong with the "Teach the Controversy" slogan? (chapter 9)
- *Submit Final Teaching Statement of Beliefs Assignment*

### Before Friday's Class

- *Submit final Values Assignment*

Attributions

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## Appendix D: “Teacher as Leader” Becoming an Indigenizing Educator

Originally from Mi’kmaq territories in the Wabanaki Confederacy (Moncton, New Brunswick), I now live on the unceded lands of Lekwungen-speaking peoples (Victoria, BC). Like many professors in education, I am a white settler; my specific ethnicities are Acadian and Scottish. Unlike most professors, I come from a solidly working class background, and am a first generation university graduate. I am also a bisexual, cisgender woman, hold a PhD in Educational Policy Studies, and research LGBTQ issues in education and childhood theory. It is from this standpoint that I am writing about my own experiences of Indigenizing my courses and pedagogies.

While ashamed to admit so now, I was initially hostile to Indigenous ways of knowing. My family and community life were steeped in the casual racism that—while glaringly obvious to me now—were invisible matters of course to me then. Even as a young adult, my attitudes fluctuated between variations on “why can’t they just get over it?” and “colonization wasn’t all bad, at least it brought improved technology and better standards of living.”

Upon reflection, I recognize now that I felt threatened by knowledge of colonization, and more specifically, how my presence on this land contributed to its ongoing effects. I felt like I was being blamed for something (i.e. existing on this land where I had no business being) that I hadn’t actually chosen. Considering the ways in which I benefit from white supremacy, it seems odd to think of it in this way, but at that time, I felt powerless. I hadn’t chosen to be born on this land, and now that I was here, I didn’t know what to do about it other than to leave. I passively resented Indigenous people, and actively avoided learning about colonization because of these feelings of guilt and powerlessness.

This began to change in my B Ed program at the University of New Brunswick in 2009. A few of my fellow social justice-minded friends were outraged that there were no Indigenous-focused courses in our program, and lobbied to be allowed to take one at UNB’s Mi’kmaq-Wolastoqey Centre. Taught by Maliseet leader David Perley, this is when I began the journey of decolonizing myself both personally and professionally. Taking cues from my white classmates (the politics of which I will analyze later), I saw how white people, rather than being resistant to knowledge of colonialism, could be active treaty partners. I was able to lower my defensiveness enough to listen, really *listen* to the wisdom that David shared each Monday evening. Throughout our work together, I started recognizing how much I didn’t know, and how as an aspiring public school teacher who would be employed by the state, it was my responsibility to fill in those gaps.

There was no turning back. Prior to David’s class, I had, at best, an “add-and-stir” approach to Indigenous content; an approach that as a feminist, infuriated me when applied to women. Drawing on an extensive background in feminist organizing, I already had many of the conceptual frameworks with which to scaffold new learning about colonialism and racism. I began practicing self talk, asking myself “replace ‘Indigenous’ with woman—would I feel the same way?” when reading news articles, or talking with colleagues. I saw my role as akin to male allies in feminist circles, or straight folks in gay rights.

It is from this conceptual base that I approach Indigenous resurgence as a university instructor. Rather

than tacking Indigenous content in an isolated week, there are Indigenous perspectives and materials braided throughout my syllabi, and present in each week's topics. I often aim to have more than one Indigenous resource included in each week, so that students can see the diversity and heterogeneity within Indigenous scholarship. I am also mindful to provide a spectrum of types of materials, so that there aren't just scholarly or professional articles, but also lesson plans, picture books, websites, and other resources that my students in the B Ed program can take directly in to the classroom. A Cree graduate student recently commented on this feature of the syllabus, writing:

*"The course you have designed here is by far the most safe and inclusive I've ever experienced. Thank you."*

The student is referring to the course on childhood theory that I teach at the University of Alberta, I have attached the syllabus to these materials as an example of an Indigenized syllabus.

In light of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's findings, I have the TRC's recommendations for education framed in my office as a daily and public reminder that I am professionally accountable as a treaty partner. Since the TRC, I am mindful of balance. I am working on avoiding the "single story" narrative wherein "Indigenous" becomes automatically associated with the trauma of residential schools. One way that I am working with this is counting how many materials I have that are specific to residential schools, and then making sure that I have an equal number, or more, that are Indigenous-focused but not about residential schools.

Many of my students speak in class, or write in their assignments, about how Indigenous knowledges need to be incorporated so as to better support Indigenous students. While validating that this is important, I have begun to challenge them on this, asking if Indigenous knowledges and pedagogies should be included even when there are no Indigenous students in the room. These questions have led to deep and fruitful class discussions around whose knowledge is deemed valuable and for whom.

One of the features of my courses is a "Values Assignment," wherein students rate how they feel (agree/neutral/disagree), and provide rationales about provocative statements such as "our society values all children equally," or "childhood is a time of innocence." They submit this assignment three times, at the beginning, middle, and end of the semester. Without fail, students literally shift their thinking on many questions, and write that this is due to learning about colonialism in our course. I have attached an appendix with an example of how a student changed her views on childhood across cultures as a direct example of how Indigenizing a syllabus can contribute to changing views.

I was recently hired to teach a course on professional identity with a pre-designed syllabus at the University of Victoria. Noticing that it had precisely no Indigenous materials, I contacted the Indigenous Resurgence Coordinator in our faculty, and asked if we could meet to indigenize my course. Not feeling right about having her perform all of the academic and emotional labour of such a monumental task, I took a crack at the syllabus myself, filling in the gaps where I could. When Chaw-win-is and I did meet, at least she wasn't starting from scratch. I have attached three copies of my syllabus to this document. The first is the syllabus I was given from the course's other instructors ("410 Version 1"), the second is the one that I had prepared prior to meeting with Chaw-win-is ("410 Version 2"), and the third is the product of Chaw-win-is and my work together ("410 Final Version").

Working with Chaw-win-is has been an essential part of decolonizing myself, both personally and professionally. It is within this relationship that I have been able to get more comfortable with my role

as a treaty partner. I have been able to ask questions, hear where I'm going wrong, and problem-solve to make things go right. She has been generous with her time, her friendship, and her extensive professional knowledge, and I am certain that through and because of this relationship, I will become a better treaty partner.

## Lessons Learned and Moving Forward

In reflecting on this journey, there are a few lynchpins that enabled my growth. The first, shamefully, was the modeling that my white peers did in my B Ed program. Seeing other white people demand Indigenized education prompted me to reconceptualize my own whiteness. While I wish that this had not had such influence, there it is.

The second were the conceptual frameworks that being a feminist and LGBTQ rights activist afforded me. When I was eventually able to open myself to the legacies of historical and ongoing colonialism, these knowledges “fit” with what I knew already about power, oppression, and violence. Rather than starting from scratch, there was a cognitive system already in place that was able to analyze and make sense of difficult and uncomfortable truths.

Without those two things- the modeling from white peers, and the conceptual frameworks amenable to new social justice knowledge, I fear that I would not have been able to hear, and really listen to, the teachings of Indigenous scholars and Elders. I would have been exposed to them, but not internalized them. I am therefore mindful of these two change lynchpins in my Indigenizing work. As a white person, I aim to model how white folks can be active partners in decolonization. I simultaneously point out the privilege I have, as a white settler, when talking about colonialism; that my Indigenous colleagues speak about many of the same things, but how my whiteness often allows the same truths to be heard.

Dr. Lindsay Herriot  
(reproduced and shared with permission)

## Appendix E: Acknowledging Traditional Lands

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July 2015

Written by Tasha Chamberlin, RSW, BSW, MSW candidate  
(reproduced and shared with permission)

Indigenous protocol is a very important thing to consider before beginning a gathering, workshop, or meeting; one of these protocols is the acknowledgment of the traditional First Nations lands at the outset. Joseph (2012) asserts, “It can be customary between one First Nation and another to acknowledge the host First Nation Peoples and their traditional territory at the outset of any meeting. The long struggle by First Nations for respect has been tough, but through it all this basic protocol has survived and thrived”. As a visitor to First Nations lands the best way to show respect is through following this protocol, and beginning any gathering or meeting with acknowledgment of the traditional lands (please see below for examples). Joseph (2013) reinforces the importance of acknowledging the traditional lands, “because you are acknowledging that that Nation has had a relationship since time immemorial with the land you are standing on. It is a sign of respect and recognition.”

It is important to recognize that “A ‘welcome’ to the territory is only offered by the First Nations people who are traditionally from the territory. Visitors, including everyone who is not a member of the traditional First Nation, would ‘acknowledge’ the territory” (SD73, n.d.).

Antoine (2015) shares the words of the last remaining fluent Lkwungen language holder who stated, “there was no traditional word for territories, but there was one used for land” therefore with respect for the Lkwungen families, Antoine prefers to use the word land rather than territory.

If you are unaware of the traditional lands on which the gathering or meeting will be held, reach out to the venue, or if available a local Friendship Centre, or research the local Indigenous communities, and call and ask the community. Some areas have more than one First Nation in the area and some lands are shared territory. In regard to the Coast Salish peoples Antoine (2015) imparts the teachings from the Royal Roads University Elders Circle and Chief and Council members, who prefer acknowledgments are specific to the families. When Antoine acknowledges traditional lands she does not acknowledge the Coast Salish (larger nation) rather she thanks the Esquimalt and Songhees families on who’s traditional lands the university sits.

The person who will be facilitating the gathering or meeting is the person who should acknowledge the lands, and this should be done first and foremost. If you forget to acknowledge the lands immediately then do it as soon as possible. After the acknowledgement you carry on with the agenda. Joseph (2013) asserts, “For larger conferences, it is good protocol to invite an Elder to provide a prayer or blessing. Again, in order to find an Elder who provides prayers or blessings, call the Friendship Centre [or local Indigenous community] nearest to the location of your event and ask them. Be sure to ask what is the expected honorarium for the blessing”.

Stromquist (2014) reinforces, "Observing these practices connects participants with the traditional territory, and provides a welcoming atmosphere and spiritual presence to the land upon which people are meeting. It also reinforces the place of Aboriginal perspectives within policies and procedures."

Below are some examples of possible acknowledgments. Keep in mind that these are not the only ways to do an acknowledgment. These are only suggestions and can be used as a guide to create your own acknowledgement. It is important that whatever words you choose to acknowledge Indigenous lands, that you use language that is authentic and reflects you, so that it will feel comfortable and natural.

### Suggestions for Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the \_\_\_\_\_ for agreeing to meet with us today, and for welcoming us to your traditional territory.

I would like to begin our day by acknowledging the \_\_\_\_\_ families and their traditional lands on where we begin our work today. I come from a place of respect and gratitude to know I work, live, and learn in their traditional lands.

I would like to acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of the \_\_\_\_\_ First Nation.

I would like to acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of the \_\_\_\_\_ people.

I would like to acknowledge the \_\_\_\_\_ people, whose land we are on.

I want to thank the \_\_\_\_\_ people for allowing us to live, learn, and play on their beautiful territory.

We would like to first acknowledge the traditional territory of the \_\_\_\_\_ people and extend our appreciation for the opportunity to live and learn on their territory.

As a visitor, I want to acknowledge the traditional territory of the \_\_\_\_\_ people, whose land we are meeting on today.

Before going further, I wish to acknowledge the ancestral, traditional and unceded Aboriginal territories of the \_\_\_\_\_ (ie. Coast Salish) peoples, and in particular, the \_\_\_\_\_ (ie. Cowichan) on whose territory we stand.

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## Appendix F: Working with Elders

### Prior communication

Be clear on the Elder's role and prepare them by providing background information.

Communicate how long you will need the Elder's service, and the compensation that will be provided.

### During the event

- Create a comforting and friendly environment. Avoid places that may trigger traumatic memories, such as churches.
- Do not expect Elders to stand for long period of time. Ensure that comfortable chairs are available.
- Provide nourishing food. Be aware of any dietary needs in advance.
- When sharing food, always make sure that Elders are served first. Unless they prefer to serve themselves, it is customary that someone else brings an Elder their requested food and drink. You should check-in with Elders regularly and offer to bring them snacks or drinks.
- Create opportunities for them to take breaks or excuse themselves as needed.
- Be prepared to adjust your volume of speech.
- Do not expect Elders to read a lot of textual material. If reading is required, supply large print versions.
- Be sure to address them as Elder (name) rather than just by name.
- Ask for consent before photographing or video recording a ceremonial event.
- Make every effort to ensure the Elder's physical and emotional comfort.

### Gifting

- Small physical gifts are often given in addition to honoraria. These could include food, cards, small items such as a mug or piece of artwork, or traditional medicines. If you don't know what to give, you can always ask the Elder in advance what they like.

### Compensation

- Elders should *always* be compensated for their work. This is a way of recognising the value

of the wisdom that Elders share, and accords with traditional protocols around honouring the role of Elders in the community. This should be budgeted for.

- If the Elder is going to be providing ongoing services, consider developing an agreement about fees-for-service if the Elder chooses. Ensure Elders are compensated equally to other participants. If it is a one-time event, an honourarium is usually more appropriate.
- Travel time and expenses are usually compensated as well.
- If your university already has a relationship with Indigenous communities, ask how much honoraria is generally given. Check in with Elder to make sure this is appropriate in advance.
- Most Elders receive retirement benefits and are only allowed to earn a small amount of money, after which point their pensions may be reduced or they may have to pay unexpected taxes. Make sure Elders are aware of this, and develop a compensation approach that will not cause financial harm. In some cases, gift cards are preferred to cash honoraria. Another option is to increase the honoraria to include taxes. As always, the best thing to do is ask the Elder. If you encounter institutional limitations around honoraria, try your best to advocate for the Elder's preference.
- If there is any instance where Elders are required to give their social insurance numbers this should be communicated and agreed upon prior to the event.

Written with input from and permission by Yuxwelupton (Butch Dick), Songhees First Nation, Bob Joseph's Indigenous Corporate Training (Retrieved from: <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/aboriginal-elder-definition>)



## Appendix G: Incorporating Diverse Sources of Indigenous Knowledge

### Activity: Authentic Indigenous Resources

**Type:** Individual Activity

Look at the following resources and determine if they are authentic Indigenous resources. Why or why not? You will see that the answers can be quite complex, and many resources require thought and further investigation to ensure authenticity. You can do this activity with the actual resources selected from your university library. Ask a librarian to help set up a similar exercise, and then invite colleagues to join for a discussion of authentic resources.

#### Answers

*The Truth about Stories: A Native Narrative* by Thomas King. CBC Massey Lectures. © 2003 Dead Dog Café Productions and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

Yes, this is an authentic resource, because it has an Indigenous author, discusses themes that are important to Indigenous Peoples, and uses Indigenous storytelling features.

No, this is an authentic resource, because it has an Indigenous author, discusses themes that are important to Indigenous Peoples, and uses Indigenous storytelling features.

*Dances with Wolves*, an academy award winning film starring, produced and directed by Kevin Costner. © 1990 Majestic Films International.

No, this would not be considered an authentic resource, because it was not created by Indigenous filmmakers and reinforces stereotypes of Indigenous Peoples.

Yes, this is not considered an authentic resource, because it was not created by Indigenous filmmakers and reinforces stereotypes of Indigenous Peoples.

*Explore the Animals: Northern Coast First Nations and Native Art Colouring and Learning Book*. © 2010 Garfinkel Publications.

Perhaps. It is tricky to authenticate because no information about the author or illustrator(s) is provided, and these could be appropriated images. Further investigation is required to determine if the publishers had permission to use the images in this book.

Perhaps. It is impossible to tell, because no information about the author or illustrator(s) is provided, and these could be appropriated images. Further investigation is required to know whether the publishers had permission to use the images in this book.

*Orca's Song* by Anne Cameron. Illustrated by Nelle Olsen. © 1987 Harbour Publishing. Includes

dedication “When I was growing up on Vancouver Island I met a woman who was a storyteller. She shared many stories with me, and later, gave me permission to share with others.”

No. This is not an authentic resource as the author does not state that the original storyteller was involved in creating or editing the book in any way or if the original storyteller received any profits from the book. While partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous authors are acceptable, this does not appear as a true partnership or a relationship based on equality.

Yes. This is not an authentic Indigenous resource. The inner flap explains that permission was given to reproduce these stories, but there are too many questions to be sure that such permission was fully granted. For example, what Nation was the woman Klopinum from? Did she have the authority to give permission for the stories to be rewritten and shared in text form? The author does not state that the original storyteller was involved in creating or editing the book in any way or if the original storyteller received any profits from the book. While partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous authors are acceptable, this does not appear as a true partnership or a relationship based on equality.

*Three Day Road* by Joseph Boyden

Perhaps. This is a tricky resource without a clear answer. Until recently, this book was widely considered to be an authentic resource. Then the author’s Indigenous ancestry was called into doubt, and now many people see it as an example of cultural appropriation in which the author pretended to be Indigenous to be seen as authentic. One’s view on whether this resource is authentic is connected to what it means to be an Indigenous person and who defines an individual’s Indigeneity.

## Appendix H: Adapting this Guide

### What is Pressbooks?

Pressbooks is a web-based authoring tool based on the WordPress authoring platform. If you've created a website using WordPress, you'll find some similarities working with Pressbooks. Pressbooks allows you to create content once and publish it in many different formats. These export formats enable the resource to be easily imported and edited in different platforms such as WordPress, Wikis and even learning management systems. The formats appear at the bottom of the web version of the resource to allow other users to easily export and adapt the resource. These features will allow the resources we are developing to be used, adapted, contextualized and localized by different institutions and communities. Pressbooks will make the resource more available to different users by giving them the option of accessing it on the web, on their mobile devices or print it out as a PDF document. By designing each part of the resource as a standalone guide institutions will be able to select and adapt the sections to use, edit and adapt for their context. These features will allow the resources we are developing to be used, adapted, contextualized and localized by different institutions and communities.

#### Export Formats

<b>Print PDF</b>	Allows documents to be easily shared while retaining the same visual formatting. It is page-oriented and has a static layout. Print PDF optimized for printing
<b>Digital PDF</b>	For digital PDF distribution
<b>xHTML</b>	This format allows the resource to be used and edited in different systems
<b>WordPress XML</b>	These files can be imported into WordPress and the resources can be easily adapted into an interactive website.
<b>EPUB</b>	EPUB files are designed for portability. These files are used for most eBooks and other eReaders. The point of these files is not to provide editing capability, but to deliver a comprehensive package that contains all elements of a book including text and images — like a zipped package — to a device for reading.

### Ways that I can adapt this guide

[Pressbooks](#)<sup>1</sup> is available to staff and faculty at all post-secondary institutions in B.C. This allows each institution program or course to copy this guide into your own instance of Pressbooks and adapt it to include local content, context, and resources. You can then export the guide you have created into any of the different formats above. You can also import this guide into your local instance and revise it, localize and adapt it there. This will also enable you to add multimedia or even interactive components.

## Notes

1. <https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/>

## Versioning History

This page provides a record of changes made to this guide since publication. Each set of edits is acknowledged with a 0.01 increase in the version number. The exported files for this guide reflect the most recent version.

If you find an error in this guide, please fill out the [Report an Error](#) form.

Version	Date	Type of change	Description
1.00	September 5, 2018	Book added to the B.C. Open Textbook Collection.	
1.01	July 31, 2019	Broken link updated.	A link to an article by Adrienne Castellon in Integrating Indigenous Epistemologies was updated.
1.02	August 2, 2019	Update the book's theme.	The styles of this book have been updated, which may affect the page numbers of the PDF and print copy.
1.03	October 2, 2019	ISBNs and Metadata	eBook and Print ISBNs, licence and publisher information added.
1.04	November 25, 2021	Broken link updated.	Updated link to the TRC's Calls to Action in Pathways Toward Reconciliation.
1.05	January 12, 2023	Broken link updated.	Updated link to article by Pete, Schneider, & O'Reilly in Indigenization, Decolonization, and Reconciliation.
1.06	January 20, 2023	Broken link replaced and improved glossary.	Updated link to Dr. Susan Dion's video series in Integrating Indigenous Epistemologies and Pedagogies into Curriculum Design and Development.  Set up glossary terms in glossary tool.
1.07	August 1, 2023	Broken link replaced.	Updated link to "First Nation, Métis and Inuit Principles of Learning" in Indigenous Epistemologies and Pedagogies.

Version	Date	Type of change	Description
1.08	August 27, 2024	Updated formatting and broken links.	<p>Revised heading level for accessibility.</p> <p>Reformatted references in APA 7th edition.</p> <p>Removed Susan Dion videos that are no longer available.</p> <p>Updated broken links throughout the book.</p>