# Indigenous Digital Literacies Toolkit



Educator Professional Development

Created by Connie Strayer and Robyn Grebliunas

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## Welcome to our circle of learning

### Positionality

These modules have been developed through an Indigenous lens that is holistic: a way of being and knowing that acknowledges Indigenous Peoples’ relationships with all our relations. Our identities are deeply rooted in the wisdom and traditions of our ancestors. Our positionality is shaped by the recognition that the land on which we stand carries the stories of countless generations. It is not merely a physical space but a living entity with its own spirit. We honour the land, its ecosystems, and the Indigenous Traditional Knowledges that sustain it. We cannot separate our identities from the impacts of colonization. Our positionality extends beyond the individual. We are part of a collective, and we carry the responsibility to honour the past and create a better future. Let us walk together, of good heart and mind guided by our ancestors, and with the hope for a more just and equitable world where all ways of knowing are valued equally.

### Intention setting

Our intention is to create a safe space for exchanging knowledge. We come with an open heart and open mind and hope to be received in the same way.

These modules have been developed with an Indigenous lens that is holistic in nature: a way of being and knowing that acknowledges our relationships with all our relations, including plants and animals, other human beings, the water, land, wind, sun, moon, stars, and more—everything seen and unseen.

All our relations,

Connie Strayer, M.Ed., and Robyn Grebliunas, M.A.

Curriculum developers

### Welcome



This image is of *Welcome Figures with Arms* from the Nuu-Chah-Nulth First Nations in Port Alberni, B.C. The outstretched arms of the welcome figures are often grouped within the category of totem poles but are distinct in form and function from the freestanding multiple-figure poles commonly associated with Northwest Coast People. The Coast Salish use welcome figures as markers to welcome people to their territories. They are often carved in a gesturing motion and facing the direction of arriving guests. These are located on the Victoria Quay. It is common practice in many Indigenous cultures to also have outstretched arms in gratitude. We are using these figures as a gesture to welcome you and to express our gratitude to you for being here.

Source and recommended reading: [Coast Salish Welcome Figure - The Bill Reid Centre - Simon Fraser University (sfu.ca)](https://www.sfu.ca/brc/our-work/imesh-mobile-app/indigenous-art-walk/coast-salish-welcome-figure.html)

### **Why** is this work important?

Indigenous digital literacy work is important because:

* It provides a learning space that supports the revitalization and transformation of cultural awareness and Indigenous Traditional Knowledges for learners and educators.
* It will help preserve and promote Indigenous culture, tradition, history, language, and human rights advocacy.
* It is an important element of the reconciliation work to be done.
* It can have an effect on the social inclusion and exclusion of Indigenous Peoples in Canada.

### **Who** is this work important to?

We do not exaggerate when we say that this work is important to everyone. This work is designed to assist Indigenous learners and guide educators in a purposeful way. Indigenous digital literacy work can be beneficial to all adult learners and anyone on their reconciliation journey in Canada.

### **How** did we arrive at this work?

In one word: Reconciliation.

To be more specific, eight Indigenous digital literacy competencies were gleaned from the B.C. Post-Secondary Digital Literacy Framework. Then an Indigenized course of eight modules covering the Indigenous Digital Literacies were developed.

This BCcampus course focuses on decolonizing and indigenizing the post-secondary institution online space. We have provided instructor-focused professional development that addresses the Indigenous-specific digital literacies. These resources can now be used by post-secondary institutions to develop institutional training opportunities for educators so they can understand and effectively incorporate Indigenous-specific issues when using digital technologies for teaching and learning.

### Taking your Indigenous digital literacies journey

Module One is the core module of the Indigenous Digital Literacies course. While you can take the modules in any order once you have completed Module One, we highly recommend taking Modules One through Eight in order for the best learning experience.

## Module 1

*This is where you will record your answers and responses to the assessment and reflection questions.*

### Self-assessment #1

What is your understanding of the terms “First Nations,” “Urban Indigenous,” “Métis,” and “Inuit”?

Are you aware of data sovereignty principles in relation to Indigenous Peoples? If so briefly describe your understanding.

What is your understanding of the Calls to Action listed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) and the articles in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)?

### Self-assessment #2

Are you familiar with the TRC and UNDRIP? If yes, what is your experience with these guiding documents?

### Self-assessment #3

How can we place Indigenous data sovereignty governance at the centre of projects?

State your commitment to upholding the TRC and UNDRIP, including your approach going forward.

## Module 2

*This is where you will record your answers and responses to the assessment and reflection questions.*

### Self-assessment #1

Take a few minutes to think about what comes to mind when you hear the words “communication” and “community collaboration in digital literacy.” What does communication and community collaboration in Indigenous digital literacy mean to you? What is the first answer that comes to mind? Be sure to write down that answer. Feel free to brainstorm words, images, and emotions that come to mind when you think of communication and community collaboration.

### Self-assessment #2

As you do this self-check, reflect on your communication and collaboration with Indigenous students and respond honestly. This is only for your eyes. We do not expect you to be an expert at the beginning of this journey. You will have a chance to do a post-assessment at the end of the module to see how you have expanded your knowledge and beliefs.

Consider each of the following statements and reflect on whether they are true for you and your experience as an instructor:

* I understand that the impact of Residential Schools is ongoing.
* I recognize that all Indigenous Peoples do not share a common culture.
* I create a culturally inclusive environment for Indigenous students in my classroom.
* I understand and implement the concept of strength-based language.
* I recognize trauma responses in my students and understand a trauma-informed approach. I understand and carry out Indigenous communication protocols.
* I avoid triggering language.

Source: [Indigenous Cultural Competency Self-assessment Checklist (ictinc.ca)](https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/indigenous-cultural-competency-self-assessment-checklist) and [15 Strategies for Teachers of Indigenous Students (ictinc.ca)](https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/15-strategies-for-teachers-of-aboriginal-students)

### Self-assessment #3

What structures could you put in place in a school library to support participatory culture?

### Self-assessment #4

Combining your knowledge from Module 1 and Module 2, how will you approach communication and community collaboration in your Indigenous digital literacy work?

Once you have answered this question, complete the following checklist as a post-assessment:

* I understand that the impact of Residential Schools is ongoing.
* I recognize that all Indigenous Peoples do not share a common culture.
* I create a culturally inclusive environment for Indigenous students in my classroom.
* I understand and implement the concept of strength-based language.
* I recognize trauma responses in my students and understand a trauma-informed approach. I understand and carry out Indigenous communication protocols.
* I avoid triggering language.

## Module 3

*This is where you will record your answers and responses to the assessment and reflection questions.*

### Self-assessment #1

What is Indigenous cultural appropriation?

What do you feel are the risks of misappropriation?

How can you contribute to the ethical treatment of Indigenous Traditional Knowledges?

### Self-assessment #2

How, then, can we honour Indigenous cultures without misappropriation?

Brainstorm examples of misappropriation.

### Self-assessment #3

How can Indigenous Peoples protect their cultural expressions from exploitation and ensure that their Traditional Indigenous Knowledges are created and curated to avoid misappropriation?

### Self-assessment #4

To avoid misappropriation, it is important to critically reflect on why you are turning to Indigenous cultural heritage for your inspiration. Examining your process for creating and curating content allows you to look at how we can be mindful of other ways of knowing and being in the world.

How can you contribute to the ethical treatment of Indigenous Traditional Knowledges so as not to misappropriate?

How can you support Indigenous Traditional Knowledges on your reconciliation journey and prevent further misappropriation?

## Module 4

*This is where you will record your answers and responses to the assessment and reflection questions.*

### Self-assessment #1

How do you use critical-thinking skills to understand and navigate how online information is produced, prioritized, and presented?

### Self-assessment #2

We have discussed the possibility of cultural appropriation being an outcome of the lack of legal protection for Indigenous Traditional Knowledges. What other potential concerns are there regarding the lack of legal protection for Indigenous Traditional Knowledges?

### Self-assessment #3

Indigenous Traditional Knowledges have been copied, claimed, misused, and misappropriated countless times. Provide examples of how you may have seen Indigenous Traditional Knowledges be misappropriated.

### Self-assessment #4

What is a possible outcome from the lack of protection for Indigenous Traditional Knowledges?

## Module 5

*This is where you will record your answers and responses to the assessment and reflection questions.*

### Self-assessment #1

Are you currently aware of any websites or applications that can assist with learning the many Indigenous languages used by the 204 Nations in B.C.? If you are, record them for future reference. If you’re not, then we will discover them together.

### Self-assessment #2

How can technology offer access to learning Indigenous languages?

Record the websites and applications that you are now aware of to assist with learning the many Indigenous languages of the 204 Nations in B.C.

Write down an innovative idea for helping your students learn more about Indigenous languages through technology.

## Module 6

### Self-assessment #1

Why do we need to actively seek out technologies that are relevant and responsive to Indigenous Peoples? What is the significance of sharing these resources with others?

### Self-assessment #2

How can you become an advocate for Indigenous digital literacy by informing others of technologies that are relevant and responsive to Indigenous Peoples?

What have you learned so far in this course that you are excited to research further and share with others?

### Self-assessment #3

Examining your digital scholarship practices allows you to look at how technology can impact your classroom and research. Write a reflection on your digital scholarship practices and include how you will implement positive change to honour reconciliation.

## Module 7

*This is where you will record your answers and responses to the assessment and reflection questions.*

### Self-assessment #1

Take a few minutes to think about what comes to mind when you hear the words “digital well-being.” What does digital well-being mean to you? What is the first answer that comes to mind? Be sure to write down that answer. Here are some questions to consider, but do not limit yourself with your answers. This is just the starting point.

* Do you have your cell phone on you at all times?
* How often do you check your phone? How often do you check social media?
* Does it make you anxious if you are off your phone or devices for a few hours?
* Do you have multiple digital devices or screens going at the same time?
* Do you limit your time in front of digital devices?
* Are you aware of digital burnout? Have you experienced digital burnout?
* Do you use “do not disturb” on your devices to block out work or offline time?
* Do you schedule offline time?

Feel free to brainstorm words, images, and emotions that come to mind when you think of digital well-being.

### Self-assessment #2

Does this picture look like digital well-being or digital burnout to you?



Go with your first reaction. There is no right or wrong answer.

### Self-assessment #3

Complete your own Medicine Wheel for digital well-being. Ideas or actions can be in different quadrants for different people. There is no one correct way. You can use any colours or no colours. Be sure to use the four quadrants we just discussed: spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental.



## Module 8

*This is where you will record your answers and responses to the assessment and reflection questions.*

### Self-assessment #1

What does community-based learning mean to you? Feel free to brainstorm words, images, and emotions that come to mind when you think of describing community-based learning.

### Self-assessment #2

You have now learned about the Seven Sacred Teachings. Now choose which of the Seven Sacred Teachings you want to learn more about and watch one of the videos available here: [The Seven Sacred Laws Animated Web Series](https://www.turtlelodge.org/the-seven-sacred-laws/). If you have time, you can watch all of them.

When you are done watching, record how your knowledge of the Seven Sacred Teachings will help you with community-based learning.

### Self-assessment #3

Now that you have completed Module 8, how will you set the stage in the development of your own thinking about how to approach your work in Indigenous digital literacy?

### Self-assessment #4

How will you place Indigenous Traditional Knowledges at the centre of projects?

Describe your commitment to community-based learning, including your approach going forward.