Communiqué
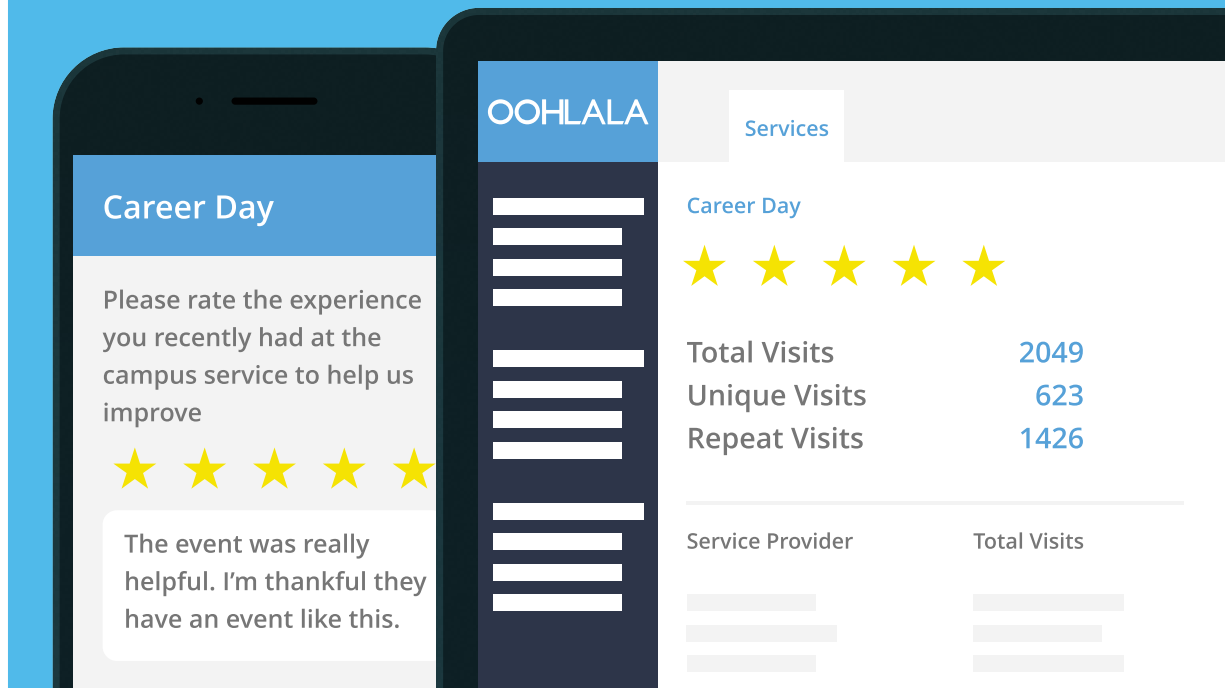
CACUSS / ASEUCC

Indigenizing
CACUSS... page 9

Indigenization and Decolonization in Canadian Student Affairs

Photo Credit - Hossein Taheri (McGill University)

OOHLALA

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

OOHLALA

Services

Career Day

⭐ ⭐ ⭐ ⭐

Total Visits	2049
Unique Visits	623
Repeat Visits	1426

Service Provider | Total Visits

Career Day

Please rate the experience you recently had at the campus service to help us improve

⭐ ⭐ ⭐ ⭐ ⭐

The event was really helpful. I'm thankful they have an event like this.

REAL-TIME FEEDBACK ON STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND ENGAGEMENT

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OOHLALA Assessment is designed to fit seamlessly into the student experience, provide students with a voice on campus, and create an official channel to deliver feedback.

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Easily assess events and services, gather quantitative and qualitative student feedback, and report on campus engagement.

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Contents

CACUSS Annual General Meeting Notice

Wednesday, June 20, 2018
12:00-1:30 p.m.

Prince Edward Island Convention Centre
Charlottetown, PE

Agenda and meeting materials will be mailed to members and available online one month in advance.

CACUSS / ASEUCC

www.cacuss.ca

Communiqué

President's Report

Birthdays and anniversaries (Canada's 150th and CACUSS's own 44th anniversary as a professional association) are a time for reflection upon the past and a time to think about the future. Canada's sesquicentennial celebrations sparked conflicting feelings in me: pride in the accomplishments of our country and remorse in knowing that what has been accomplished has been at the expense of Indigenous peoples.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015) identified 94 calls to action, including the indigenization of universities and colleges. Indigenizing the academy is not a single strategy, and conscious efforts are underway to bring Indigenous people, philosophies, knowledge, and cultures into strategic plans, governance roles, curriculum development, and review, research, and professional development. Though this can be done in diverse ways, indigenization must be more than a checklist; it must be a meaningful and substantive change in the fabric of the institution (Pidegon, 2016).

The term "indigenizing" may be criticized because it implies adding something to the status quo. The term "decolonizing" may be preferred to reflect the unseating of Eurocentric paradigms of individual attitudes, cultural messages, and institutional practices that systematically advantage white persons while disadvantaging others. Indigenous scholars view these terms as intertwined; the indigenization process must also be decolonizing. The existence of this colonization is often unrecognized by those who hold the advantages of it. It is a daunting educational challenge to create that recognition and consciousness in people who have long taken for granted that their own culture, values, and standards are superior and/or universally applicable, or that a universal culture is not only possible but desirable. Change will take time and effort, and there is a continuum of beliefs about how best to achieve this change: ranging from the revolutionary that attempts to change the total structure of society, to the liberal that seeks to change people and their attitudes.

The liberal approach to change prompts me to ask myself:

1. How do I decolonize my professional practice?
2. As President of CACUSS, I ask:
   a. How do we position ourselves as allies with our student affairs and academic colleagues, and our Indigenous students and communities?
   b. How can we advance the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge into our theoretical foundation?

Positioning ourselves as allies (Bishop, 2002) begins with an internal transformation (mentally and emotionally) and learning how to recognize and "unlearn" the personal attitudes and beliefs that are the result of systematic oppression. My journey as a woman who is Mexican-Canadian and partially sighted, who is a change agent, a mother, and an educational leader working in higher education for over 30 years has exemplified the feminist statement that "the personal is political". I have the lived experience of being a member of social groups that are marginalized and subject to discrimination, and I also have the experience of being a member of privileged social groups (educational, socio-economic, and marital status). I have internalized some oppressive attitudes and stereotypes, and no matter how much work I have done, I know that I will always have more work to do. We all have more work to do – as a professional organization and as individual professionals.

On many campuses, we have left the work to our Indigenous Student Services colleagues. Many of us have shied away from doing this work out of fear of being perceived as ignorant or racist and the perceived invisibility of our Indigenous students on campus. We don't want to do it wrong.

In 2016, CACUSS created the Student Affairs and Services Competency model. Key to the mastery of the Indigenous Cultural Awareness competency is that we ALL must consider the impact of colonization on students' educational journeys and engage in ongoing reflection on how privilege and stereotypes impact our work and relationships. In addition, a framework that I have been reflecting on is Pidgeon's (2016) holistic Indigenous framework. She proposes a model for postsecondary institutions to move forward in their support of Aboriginal students. Her paradigm builds on Kirkness and Barnhardt's (1991) Four R's of Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, and Responsibility, and adds consideration of the relationships among individuals, family, community, and nation or institution to reflect the interrelationships between structural, individual, social, and cultural factors. Pidgeon further adds to Kirkness and Branhardt to offer a Holistic Indigenous framework, with the inter-connectedness of intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and physical realms, and values the interrelationship of the individual, family (immediate and extended), and community.

This holistic framework provides guiding principles to ensure post-secondary institutions become accessible, inclusive, safe, and successful places for Indigenous peoples. Pidgeon encourages us each to reflect on the framework and carefully consider how our campuses stand in addressing the needs of indigenous students, colleagues, and students. I would invite all of us to do the work to transform the postsecondary sector in Canada. Muchas gracias to my colleagues who have had a hand in crafting this message. As with all the work we do in student services, our strength is in our diverse collaboration.

Pat Pardo

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CACUSS / ASEUCC

Rapport de la présidente

Les anniversaires (comme le 150e anniversaire du Canada et le 44e anniversaire de l'ASEUCC en tant qu'association professionnelle) sont des occasions de réfléchir sur le passé et de penser à l'avenir. Les célébrations du cent cinquantenaire du Canada ont éveillé en moi des sentiments contradictoires : fierté pour les réalisations de notre pays et remords de savoir que ce qui a été accompli l'a été aux dépends des peuples autochtones.

La Commission de vérité et réconciliation (2015) a lancé 94 appels à l'action, dont un appel à l'autochtonisation des universités et des collèges. Autochtoniser le milieu universitaire n'est pas une stratégie isolée; des efforts conscients sont mis en œuvre pour intégrer les peuples autochtones, leurs philosophies, leurs connaissances et leurs cultures dans les plans stratégiques, les rôles de gouvernance, l'élaboration et l'examen des programmes d'études, la recherche et le perfectionnement professionnel. Même si elle peut être réalisée de différentes façons, l'autochtonisation doit être plus qu'une simple liste de vérification; ce doit être un changement significatif et substantiel dans le tissu institutionnel (Pidgeon, 2016).

Le terme « autochtonisation » peut être critiqué parce qu'il implique que malgré l'ajout de quelque chose, le statu quo demeure. On pourrait lui préférer le terme « décolonisation » afin de refléter la fin de l'hégémonie des paradigmes eurocentriques qui sous-tendent les attitudes individuelles, messages culturels et pratiques institutionnelles et avantagent systématiquement les personnes blanches aux dépens des autres. Les universitaires autochtones estiment que les deux mots sont indissociables; le processus d'autochtonisation doit également en être un de décolonisation. Souvent, ceux qui profitent de la colonisation ne reconnaissent pas qu'elle existe. Sur le plan éducatif, il est très difficile d'amener vers cette reconnaissance et vers une prise de conscience des gens qui, depuis longtemps, tiennent pour acquis que leurs propres culture, valeurs et normes sont supérieures et/ou universellement applicables, ou qu'une culture universelle est non seulement possible mais souhaitable. Le changement nécessitera du temps et des efforts, et le spectre des idées sur la meilleure façon de réaliser ce changement va de celles du révolutionnaire, qui essaie de changer l'ensemble des structures de la société, à celles du libéral, qui cherche à changer les gens et leurs attitudes.

L'approche libérale à l'égard du changement m'incite à me demander :
1. Comment puis-je décoloniser ma pratique professionnelle?
2. À titre de présidente de l'ASEUCC, je demande :
   a. Comment nous positionner de manière à ce que nos collègues des affaires étudiantes et du secteur académique ainsi que nos étudiants et collectivités autochtones voient en nous des alliés?
   b. Comment faire progresser l'inclusion du savoir autochtone dans nos fondements théoriques?

Afin de nous positionner comme alliés (Bishop, 2002), nous devons tout d'abord procéder à une transformation interne (mentale et émotionnelle) et apprendre à reconnaître et à « désapprendre » les attitudes et croyances personnelles qui résultent d'une oppression systématique. Mon parcours en tant que femme mexicano-canadienne et malvoyante, qui est à la fois agent de changement, mère et leader pédagogique travaillant en éducation supérieure depuis plus de 30 ans, illustre la déclaration féministe selon laquelle « le personnel est politique ». J'ai vécu l'expérience de faire partie de groupes sociaux marginalisés et faisant l'objet de discrimination, et j'ai aussi fait l'expérience d'être membre de groupes sociaux privilégiés (par mon statut éducatif, socio-économique et marital). J'ai intériorisé des attitudes et stéréotypes oppressants et peu importe tout le travail que j'ai accompli, je sais qu'il m'en restera toujours davantage à accomplir. Nous avons tous et toutes encore beaucoup de travail à accomplir — collectivement en tant qu'organisation professionnelle et individuellement en tant que professionnels.

Sur bien des campus, nous avons laissé ce travail à nos collègues des services aux étudiants autochtones. Bon nombre d'entre nous se sont soustraits à cette responsabilité par peur d'être perçus comme ignorants ou racistes et en raison de l'invisibilité perçue des étudiants autochtones sur nos campus. Nous ne voulons pas mal faire ce travail.

En 2016, l'ASEUCC a créé le modèle de compétences pour les affaires et services étudiants. Pour bien maîtriser la compétence « sensibilisation aux cultures autochtones », nous devons TOUS et TOUTES tenir compte des répercussions de la colonisation sur le cheminement scolaire des étudiants et nous engager dans une réflexion sur l'impact des privilèges et des stéréotypes sur notre travail et nos relations. J'ai également réfléchi au cadre autochtone holistique de Michelle Pidgeon (2016). Elle propose aux établissements postsecondaires un modèle pour progresser dans le soutien qu'ils offrent aux étudiants autochtones. Elle base son paradigme sur les quatre principes de la recherche avec les peuples autochtones (respect, pertinence, réciprocité et responsabilité) définis par Kirkness et Barnhardt (1991) et y ajoute la prise en compte des relations entre l'individu, la famille, la collectivité et la nation ou l'institution afin de refléter les interrelations entre les facteurs structurels, individuels, sociaux et culturels. Pidgeon élargit le modèle de Kirkness et Barnhardt afin d'offrir un cadre autochtone holistique, qui inclut l'interdépendance entre les domaines intellectuel, spirituel, émotionnel et physique et accorde une grande valeur aux interrelations entre l'individu, la famille (immédiate et élargie) et la collectivité.

Ce cadre holistique fournit des principes directeurs afin de garantir que les établissements postsecondaires deviennent des lieux accessibles, inclusifs et sécuritaires qui favorisent la réussite des Autochtones. Pidgeon encourage chacun d'entre nous à réfléchir à ce cadre et à examiner attentivement où se situent nos campus pour ce qui est de répondre aux besoins des étudiants autochtones, des collègues et des étudiants. J'invite donc chacun et chacune d'entre nous à faire le travail nécessaire pour transformer le secteur postsecondaire au Canada. Muchas gracias à mes collègues qui ont contribué à la création du présent message. Comme pour tout le travail que nous accomplissons dans les services aux étudiants, c'est dans notre collaboration diversifiée entre collègues de différents horizons que réside notre force.

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CACUSS / ASEUCC

CACUSS Commitments

According to the *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary*, the definition of the word "commitment" includes:

- an agreement or pledge to do something in the future,
- an engagement to assume a financial obligation at a future date,
- something pledged,
- the state or an instance of being obligated or emotionally impelled,
- a commitment to a cause.

The CACUSS Board of Directors finalized our 2017-2021 Strategic Plan (https://www.cacuss.ca/strategic-plan.html) last winter and took a unique opportunity to include something beyond just Vision, Purpose, Goals, and Strategies. We made two very important commitments, which are meant to not only engage the Board and staff of the Association but also connect to the work of our members and our Communities of Practice in a meaningful way.

Our Commitments

Our commitments, like our values, should be embedded in all aspects of our activities, objectives, and strategies. The Board of Directors agrees that attention and resources should be committed to the following:

- *Indigenization:* The Board of Directors commits to ensuring that our association activities appropriately include, reflect, and represent Indigenous perspectives with participation and input from Indigenous members. CACUSS is

Jennifer Hamilton

committed to understanding how our practices both as an association and on our member campuses can contribute to reconciliation and decolonization.

- *Health and Well-being:* The Board of Directors commits to supporting initiatives that build on the health and well-being of our campus communities, our members, our students, and our environment. This commitment reflects our intention that our activities, actions, and projects should consider how they build and support healthy living and working environments.

More than just operationalizing a goal or strategy, these commitments are not a "tick box" on our operational plan. They are value-laden, and push us to rethink decisions we make and the impact of our association's work for our members and your campus communities.

Ways in which we have tried to live these commitments include this edition of the magazine. We are also rethinking our Board and committee structure, and ensuring that there are ways in which we have Indigenous voices and participation in CACUSS. The Board of Directors and staff are engaging in Indigenous Cultural Competency training, and we will be looking at our practices and policies and how we can learn more about how to decolonize our practices as an Association.

In the area of Health and Well-being, our recent endorsement of the Okanagan

Charter signals a broad recognition of the importance of this work to ALL of our members and our campus communities.

We see these commitments as not just the purview of our Board or our staff, but of all of us, all CACUSS members, and we ask that you think about them as your commitments too.

In other more operational news, I hope members have noticed the increased resources we have dedicated to ensuring that you can learn and connect with one another beyond just our annual conference. Some of these exciting developments include

- *The launch of our Community Engagement Platform this fall.* We hope you login regularly, share your comments and resources, and connect with one another. It is meant to be a resource for YOU, and we encourage you to meet others and support your colleagues.

- *The inaugural New Professionals Institute.* We welcomed a diverse group of 26 professionals from across the country to learn and grow in this new initiative! It was a very well-received program, and we think that the participants have developed life-long collegial relationships and friendships with the instructors and fellow participants.

- *The first CACUSS SSAO Summit held in November.* This new program engaged a small group of senior leaders in discussions focused on strategic planning, sexual violence prevention, supporting racialized students, and more.

- *An Assessment Webinar Series launched this fall.* The series included six webinars focusing on different topics in Assessment, to help build competency in this area. Thanks to our webinar series partner Campus Labs for their support.

New webinar series and institutes are coming! We have a new pricing structure to deliver as much value as possible to CACUSS members and encourage your colleagues to participate. More details will be available in forthcoming member updates.

I want to take a moment to thank Mark Solomon (Seneca College) and Shelly Moore-Frappier (Laurentian University) for their time and thoughtfulness in reviewing the articles submitted on Indigenization. We had some thoughtful conversations and worked to ensure that the content submitted was authentic and respectful.

I do always appreciate a tweet, email, or phone call from you, sharing your ideas or giving your feedback. Best wishes for a productive spring.

cacuss-ed@cacuss.ca | @cacusstweets

Les engagements de l'ASEUCC

Selon les dictionnaires, la définition du mot *engagement* inclut :

- l'action de se lier par une promesse ou une convention à faire quelque chose ultérieurement;
- la promesse d'assumer une obligation financière à une date ultérieure;
- quelque chose qui est promis;
- l'état ou sentiment d'être obligé ou émotionnellement interpellé;
- le fait de se mettre au service d'une cause.

L'hiver dernier, le conseil d'administration de l'ASEUCC a finalisé son Plan stratégique 2017-2021 (https://www.cacuss.ca/strategic-plan.html). Il a profité de l'occasion pour inclure des éléments qui dépassent les habituels énoncés de vision, de raison d'être, d'objectifs et de stratégies. Nous avons pris deux très importants engagements qui visent non seulement à mobiliser les membres du conseil d'administration et du personnel de l'Association, mais aussi à établir des liens plus significatifs avec le travail qu'accomplissent nos membres et nos Communautés de pratique.

Nos engagements

Nos engagements, comme nos valeurs, doivent imprégner tous les aspects de nos activités, de nos objectifs et de nos stratégies. Le conseil d'administration reconnaît que de l'attention et des ressources doivent être accordées aux éléments suivants :

- *L'indigénisation :* Le conseil d'administration s'engage à veiller à ce que les activités de l'organisation incluent, reflètent et représentent de façon appropriée les perspectives autochtones, avec la collaboration et la contribution des membres autochtones. L'ASEUCC est déterminée à comprendre comment ses pratiques, à titre d'association, et celles qui ont cours sur les campus de ses membres peuvent contribuer à la réconciliation et à la décolonisation.

- *Santé et bien-être :* Le conseil d'administration s'engage à soutenir les initiatives qui contribuent à la santé et au bien-être des communautés de nos campus, de nos membres, de nos étudiants et de notre environnement. Cet engagement témoigne de notre intention d'envisager des façons de nous assurer que nos activités, nos actions et nos projets créent et soutiennent des environnements de vie et de travail sains.

Ces engagements, qui ne se résument pas à des « cases à cocher » dans notre plan opérationnel, ne visent pas simplement à opérationnaliser un objectif ou une stratégie. Ils sont chargés de valeurs et nous incitent à repenser les décisions que nous prenons ainsi que leur incidence sur le travail qu'accomplit notre association pour ses membres et les communautés de vos campus.

La présente édition de notre magazine est un exemple des moyens que nous prenons pour honorer ces engagements. Nous repensons également la structure de notre conseil d'administration et de nos comités et nous nous assurons que des moyens sont en place pour que les Autochtones puissent se faire entendre et participer au sein de l'ASEUCC. Les membres du conseil d'administration et du personnel participent à une formation sur les compétences culturelles autochtones. Nous allons également examiner nos politiques et pratiques et nous demander comment en apprendre davantage sur la façon de décoloniser nos pratiques en tant qu'association.

Et dans le domaine de la santé et du bien-être, le récent appui que nous avons donné à la Charte de l'Okanagan indique une reconnaissance générale de l'importance de ce travail pour TOUS nos membres et TOUTES les communautés de nos campus.

Nous ne considérons pas ces engagements comme étant de la responsabilité exclusive de notre conseil d'administration et de notre personnel, mais bien comme étant de la responsabilité de chacun d'entre nous, de tous les membres de l'ASEUCC, et nous vous demandons, à vous aussi, de les considérer comme des engagements personnels.

Sur un plan plus opérationnel, j'espère que les membres ont remarqué les nouvelles ressources que nous avons mises en œuvre pour nous assurer que vous pouvez apprendre et établir des liens les uns avec les autres à d'autres occasions qu'au moment du congrès annuel. Ces ressources incluent :

- *Le lancement de notre plateforme d'engagement des Communautés cet automne.* Nous espérons que vous vous y connectez régulièrement, que vous partagez vos commentaires et ressources et que vous créez des liens et des réseaux entre vous. Cette plateforme est une ressource conçue pour VOUS et nous vous encourageons à en profiter pour faire des rencontres et soutenir vos collègues.

- *Le premier Institut des nouveaux professionnels.* Cette nouvelle initiative a accueilli un groupe diversifié de 26 professionnels provenant de toutes les régions du pays et désireux d'apprendre et de se perfectionner! Ce programme a été très bien reçu et nous pensons que les participants ont établi des relations et des amitiés collégiales à long terme avec les instructeurs et entre eux.

- *Le premier sommet des directeurs des affaires étudiantes de l'ASEUCC tenu en novembre.* Dans le cadre de ce nouveau programme, un petit groupe de directeurs des affaires étudiantes ont discuté de planification stratégique, de prévention de la violence sexuelle, de soutien aux étudiants racialisés et de bien d'autres sujets.

- *Une série de webinaires sur l'évaluation lancée cet automne.* Comptant six webinaires axés sur différents thèmes liés à l'évaluation, la série vise à contribuer au renforcement des compétences dans ce domaine. Merci au partenaire de la série, Campus Labs, pour son soutien.

De nouvelles séries de webinaires et de nouveaux instituts seront offerts prochainement! Nous avons instauré une nouvelle structure tarifaire afin d'offrir la plus grande valeur possible à nos membres et d'encourager vos collègues à participer. De plus amples renseignements vous seront communiqués lors des prochaines mises à jour.

Je veux prendre un moment pour remercier Mark Solomon (Collège Seneca) et Shelly Moore-Frappier (Université Laurentienne) pour leur temps et leur attention dans l'examen des articles sur l'indigénisation. Nous avons eu des conversations réfléchies et nous nous sommes efforcés pour nous assurer que le contenu soumis était authentique et respectueux.

Je suis toujours heureuse des messages Twitter, courriels ou appels téléphoniques que vous me faites parvenir pour me soumettre vos idées ou vos commentaires. Je vous souhaite à tous un printemps productif.

cacuss-ed@cacuss.ca | @cacusstweets

Notes from the Reviewers

by Shelly Moore-Frappier and Mark Solomon

**Shelly Moore-Frappier** **Mark Solomon**

It was suggested for this issue regarding "Indigenization" of Student Services that Indigenous reviewers review the articles. Seems logical. The response to the call for submissions was not resounding. This can be attributed to many things, some of which are explained in the articles.

At the 2017 CACUSS Conference in Winnipeg, the two of us reconnected over a couple of beverages, reflecting on Niigaan Sinclair's panel. One of us reflected, "Isn't it wonderful to be Indigenous in postsecondary these days?" Then we each took a sip, and the other said, "Isn't it a pain in the ass to be Indigenous in postsecondary these days?"

More than ever, Indigenous staff and faculty are being called upon to push their institutions' "Indigenization" plans forward. For some institutions, this work has been happening since the late 60s, but only a handful were paying attention to that work. Every institution has a story about a relationship they have with Indigenous peoples and communities. Some are better than others. Indigenous people are being called upon to do so much within their institutions — and with fewer resources — that writing an article is very much a side-of-the-desk exercise. Indigenous employees who were hired five years ago to coordinate events are now responsible for institution-wide responses to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, developing and writing curriculum, guest speaking, and the list goes on and on. All of this is usually done on top of serving Indigenous students and communities.
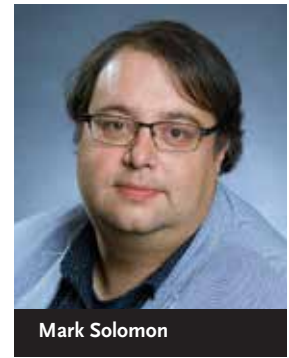
Indigenous employees within institutions are stretched beyond capacity. So we call upon our fellow non-Indigenous members to assist. We ask that you partner with the Indigenous employees and assist them with calls like these. You will see in these pages processes on collaboration and celebration of allyship. We call upon you to listen, assist, not take over, not suppose, but be respectful and understanding.

We celebrated those who discuss system change for our association and the personal reflections on being guided through the work of decolonization and indigenization. These works are important as systemic change is hard and needs many voices. But who are those voices, and what does it mean if they are not present?

We are both Anishinaabe, and one of our foundational teachings is about humility and waiting for things to come in good time. So let this be a start. We know there are many, many more stories to be told in postsecondary. We want you to celebrate and honour the work of the Indigenous community in your institution. We want you to build strong relationships and create space for the whole story of the institution to be told — one which includes the Indigenous lens.

Miigwech for allowing us to be your reviewers.

Indigenizing CACUSS: A Conversation about Moving Forward

by Maria Shallard and Seán Carson Kinsella

With the increased focus on Indigenous issues that the release of the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) has sparked on our campuses, the concept of "Indigenization" has become somewhat of a buzzword across post-secondary institutions on this part of Turtle Island (a term which some of our Nations use to refer to North America).

In their article "Reconciliation within the Academy: Why is Indigenization so Difficult", Bopp, Brown & Robb (2017) define Indigenization as:

> the process of creating a supportive and comfortable space inside our institutions within which Indigenous people can succeed. But "success" is a very big word here. It's not just success in students completing coursework or programs. It is also "success" in reframing knowledge production and transmission within the academy from an Indigenous perspective." (p. 2).

In this paper, they go on to argue that the difficulty of implementing Indigenization is largely due to misunderstandings around the scope of what is required for Indigenization to occur and specifically:

> It means that most of us as Canadians are woefully ignorant of the history of interaction between Indigenous people and European immigrants who came as settlers to this land. It means that not only were the French and English "founding peoples" of our country, so also, in a much more profound way, were Indigenous people. It means that European institutional frameworks, philosophy, historical assumptions, paradigms of scholarship and ways of knowing have not only dominated our institutions, but completely boxed out Indigenous knowledge, wisdom teachings, science and worldviews. It means that except in certain pockets of the academy, the impact of colonization on Indigenous people is completely invisible. It means that as a result of those historical processes, many Indigenous people come to the academy with trauma-based barriers to participation in the learning process. It means that the learning and support processes within the academy need to be reframed in order to accommodate contributions from Indigenous experience. It means that, for Indigenous students, specialized support systems are fundamental to success (p.2).

A way that this is further discussed by Indigenous scholars is the phenomenon of feeling like as Indigenous staff members we are required to walk in two worlds (Halverston, 2017; Bennet, Bomberry, Styres & Zinga, 2010) and act as guides for our non-Indigenous colleagues.

The discussions around the TRC as well as this increased focus on Indigenization has also led to increased demand on the limited Indigenous staff and faculty that reside within our institutions. While many institutions are working to implement the recommendations, this does not always translate into creating staff positions for this purpose (although this is beginning to change), and to provide education to our non-Indigenous colleagues (Bopp, Brown & Robb 2017, p. 4-5) without necessarily receiving compensation for doing this additional labour is often emotional and personal.

As Bopp, Brown & Robb (2017) articulate further in talking about institutions and the dominant culture that exists within them:

> There are certainly people of colour who may be bicultural enough to fit it into the system. But, the system is white. Those running the system are in what is often an unconscious, but nevertheless privileged power position.

> When Indigenous people encounter this unconscious culture of superiority, it can be extremely frustrating and demeaning. Many report experiencing continuous assumptions of inferiority, ignorance, deviance or incompetence on the part of those in authority within the system. Some declare this as "racism". It's not surprising that these encounters can lead to anger, misunderstanding and conflict. Nor is it surprising that when Indigenous people share their perspectives on how to move forward with processes that could more effectively serve Indigenous learners and communities, their contributions are quite often not heard, dismissed as impracticable, or ignored (p. 4).

In many ways, the calling out of these systems is an act of bravery and is often met by defensiveness and change that comes slowly. It is also important to note that professional associations such as CACUSS also replicate these systems and the work to Indigenize them in this case falls to the members of equity-seeking groups such as NASSA, whose members are volunteers and have their own roles at institutions that they also fulfill. This additional workload often leads to burn out (as is most cases in Student Affairs) or compassion fatigue as we are working within a discipline that is an extension of our own identity. Additionally, as Indigenous people, we are often working on our own healing, revitalization of our culture, etc., within institutions that do not always empower our voices, often have insufficient funding, and have a general lack of Indigenous representation. We need time and energy to uplift ourselves, as well as perform our jobs in the way that best suits our students' needs and meet them where they are at.

When this additional workload is identified as an issue, the question that we often get (and this continued a lot as the Co-Chairs of NASSA) was "How do we fix it, then?" – something that Bopp, Brown & Robb (2017) deal with when they talk about these issues as being "a complex adaptive systems transformation problem" (p. 5). It is something that has been talked about at a number of Pre-Conferences that NASSA has led the last few years, and it difficult because change both requires the full consultation of the various Indigenous stakeholders in and outside the institution or organization, and because of colonization and its impact on our communities, identifying appropriate stakeholders can also be complex.

What it does mean, though, is that the narrative around whose responsibility Indigenization is needs to shift, as Bopp, Brown & Robb (2017) state:

> Fundamentally, reconciliation is about healing our relationships, and that means all of us. We are all treaty people. In order to achieve the goals of a full-blown indigenization process within a post-secondary institution (or any other institution), Indigenous and non- Indigenous people will have to learn to work together. During this process, both will have things to learn from each other, and both will probably have to change. One profound implication of this insight is that those collaborating to lead the process of reconciliation need to be sufficiently deft at facilitating intercultural processes of mutual exploration, healing and learning, while at the same time being capable of retaining a strategic orientation aimed at continuous improvement of the process (p. 5).

Increasing Indigenous cultural competency through training opportunities (e.g. online courses, local teach-ins, and friendship centres) is a way that people can come together and work towards building stronger relations. To quote Murray Sinclair, "Education is the key to reconciliation" (Watters, CBC News, 2015) and if educators can better understand the colonial practices that have profoundly impacted our people, we can better work to understand how these have continued in our post-secondary educational systems.

There are a number of additional measures to move forward recommended in Bopp, Brown & Robb (2017). We have included some additional reading sources below for those interested. As we all continue on our journey in strengthening relationships between one another and our institutions, we want to ask, What are you, as a professional in Student Services and an individual, doing to address your role in Treaty (whatever Treaty land or unceded territory you may reside on) and to Indigenize your family, workplace, and Nation? Further, how are you working to decolonize your everyday self? If we are all treaty people, then we all need to ask ourselves these questions as it takes all of us as part of the larger whole system to create change for the better.

Further Reading

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First-year students gather for a Tipi Talk session in the Ernest and Florence Benedict Gathering Space at Trent University.

Talking in Tipis: 1,200 New Trent Students Participate in Indigenization and Decolonization

by Lindy Garneau and Sako Khederlarian

Background

Trent University is located on the traditional territory of the Mississauga Anishinaabeg. This September, new students who attended orientation week programming at the Peterborough campus participated in Tipi Talks, sessions designed to support learning about Indigenous traditions, territory, and resources. Seventy-two sessions were offered over three days.

One of our buildings on campus, which houses Peter Gzowski College, the First Peoples House of Learning, the Office of Research and Innovation, the Chanie Wenjack School for Indigenous Studies, the School of Business, and the Departments of Mathematics and Economics is called Enweying. Enweying is an Anishnaabemowin word meaning "the way we speak together." Enweying reminds us of the necessity to speak with each other, and to be mindful of the importance of building relationships and community with each other. This also extends to how we educate our students.

In 2014, the Colleges at Trent University created a new initiative in partnership with the First Peoples House of Learning and the Housing Department to bring new students together in our Enweying Tipi with an opportunity to learn about the traditional territory upon which Trent's Symons Campus in Nogojiwanong (Peterborough) is situated. This initiative was named Tipi Talks and included twelve facilitator-led, one hour-long student conversations in the tipi. Residence Life Dons would sign up for a session and bring their students with them. Students who lived off campus were encouraged to sign up and had the option of meeting a student staff member in the College who would accompany them to the Tipi. Graduate students were also given the opportunity to attend.

Previous Model (2014-2016)

This was the model we followed from 2014-2016 and saw approximately 300 students attend each September. Each session had a maximum of 25 students who could attend due to limited space in the tipi. The hour consisted of the following:

1. *Introductions*
   Moving in a circle, facilitators and students take turns introducing themselves to the group. Facilitators specifically ask students to share where they are from. (5 minutes)

2. *Introduction to Smudge Ceremony*
   Students are provided with an opportunity to experience a group Smudge Ceremony. They are introduced to the medicines used, as well as to the meaning of the ceremony. (10 minutes)

3. *Territory Acknowledgement*
   The facilitators, following an explanation of why we do a territory acknowledgement and the meaning behind it, give a territory acknowledgement. Facilitators then ask students if they know the traditional territory where they grew up. Space/time is allowed for a discussion related to territory names. (15 minutes)

4. *Protocol*
   Facilitators share information related to cultural protocol, respectful behaviour, and best practices when in the tipi. Students are provided an opportunity to ask questions about the tipi. (10 minutes)

5. *Resources*
   Information is given about how to access/book the tipi following the workshop, as well as how to connect with the First Peoples House of Learning and other related resources on campus. (5 minutes)

6. *Closing Song*
   Students are taught a traditional song and offered the use of hand drums or a shaker. Students practice the song and perform it together as a way of closing the session in the tipi and encouraging the students to continue the conversation with friends on campus. (15 minutes)

New Model (2017)

By 2017, we were looking for a new way to offer this program, in order to reach as many of our new students as possible. In addition, we wanted to follow the recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and we wanted to find additional ways to collaborate with our campus partners. Collaboration between student affairs, the colleges, and the First Peoples House of Learning gave Tipi Talks a new platform. For the first time, it was listed as a required activity on the Orientation Week schedule. It was also promoted across campus, and, for the first time, Tipi Talks was offered alongside Academic Advising and Academic Skills workshops, highlighting the importance of cultural programming and demonstrating a commitment to Indigenous traditions and cultural literacy on campus. As a result, approximately 1,200 students participated in Tipi Talks in September 2017, a 400% increase in student participation.

To grow the program and to be able to accommodate larger numbers of student participants, the following changes were made:

1. Each session was adapted to offer 20 minutes of content.

2. Two additional spaces beyond the Enweying Tipi were added: The Ernie and Florence Benedict Gathering Space, and Nozhem Theatre. The extra spaces allowed us to offer 72 20-minute sessions from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm over three days.

3. Eight professional staff members, three student staff members, and twelve student volunteers were recruited to facilitate each session. Each session had two co-facilitators and, where possible, a professional staff member was matched with either a student staff member or volunteer. Indigenous facilitators were matched with non-Indigenous facilitators as a way to model powerful ways of working together. Volunteer students were recruited by connecting with various student groups on campus, including the Trent Central Student Association (TCSA) and the Trent University Native Association (TUNA).

4. Each 20-minute session consisted of the following:
   a. Introductions & Welcome to the Space (3 minutes)
   b. Territory Acknowledgement (5 minutes)
   c. Resources (3 minutes)
   d. Introduction to Smudge Ceremony & Closing (9 minutes)

Lessons Learned

There are four main lessons we learned this year with the adaptation of Tipi Talks for a larger audience. These revisions will be made for next year's Tipi Talk program. They include:

1. *Summer Communication*
   The Orientation Summer Connect Program highlights academic deadlines, campus resources, and Orientation Week events for students before they arrive in September. By integrating Indigenous education into the program's curriculum, we intend to better prepare students for the Tipi Talks sessions.

2. *Invite Indigenous Faculty*
   Faculty will be invited to co-facilitate Tipi Talk sessions. This can enhance the relationship between new students and Trent faculty members. It could also be an avenue to promote courses within the Chanie Wenjack School for Indigenous Studies.

3. *Make the Sessions Longer*
   While moving to a program model of 20-minute sessions made sense in terms of being able to offer a maximum number of Tipi Talks, organizers and facilitators found that 20 minutes was not enough time to focus on relationship-building with the students. Allowing more time for interactive activities may encourage students to participate in future workshops and events hosted by the First Peoples House of Learning. It may also support students who are taking their first course with an Indigenous studies focus.

4. *Promote Future Events and Additional Ways to Get Connected*
   We will have materials prepared to promote future workshops and activities so students are knowledgeable about other events happening throughout the year. Our intention is to highlight pathways for students to continue to build relationships with Indigenous students, faculty, departments, and events happening on campus and in the community.

Trent University is a growing institution with a deep commitment to offering and promoting Indigenous education. Beginning September 2018, all new undergraduate students will be required to complete successfully at least half a credit from the Chanie Wenjack School for Indigenous Studies as part of their academic degree.

Going forward, it is our intention to use Tipi Talks as an experiential learning opportunity for all new students, which will support their academic success by providing early opportunities to connect with the First Peoples House of Learning, learn about the Indigenous spaces on campus, and begin to feel comfortable with these spaces, resources, and connections.

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First-year students sit in a circle for a Tipi Talk session in Nozhem Theatre: The First Peoples Performance Space at Trent University.

Moving Forward with Eyes Wide Open

by Rachel Barreca

"In order for reconciliation to truly work, we must first reconcile the truth within us. This is necessary in order to acknowledge the veil of denial, intolerance, anger, and hurt. Our world is moving quickly to reveal all hidden wrongs, and forcing us to look and to see. May we all have courage to move forward with a good heart – with eyes wide open."

- Joanne Dallaire, Shadow Hawk Woman of the Wolf Clan

2017 Curve Lake First Nation Pow Wow   Photo Credit: R. Barreca

Canada and Canadian higher education are poised at a crucial moment as we talk and think and learn about Indigenous issues at an ever-quickening pace. The Idle No More movement, the calls for a Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women inquiry, and the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada have planted seeds that are sprouting into an abundant and fertile discourse across the country. My journey as a privileged Student Affairs practitioner, scholar, settler Canadian, and human being continues to transform and blossom as those seeds flourish and fight to survive. With humility, I share my thoughts and suggestions with the intention to plant and nurture more seeds.

My transformation includes stages of guilt and fear. I have felt these things after learning about the devastating effects of colonization on Indigenous peoples on Turtle Island. Guilt that white folks like me perpetrated violence. Fear that I might make a mistake in word or deed, and hurt someone or be called a racist. My understanding of these issues has since evolved and will continue to do so. I no longer feel guilty nor view these challenges as something easily fixed through a charity or detached from my life. I have an active role to play in (re)conciliation, though I am not at the centre of this process. My paradigms are shifting as I gain a deeper understanding about relationships, sovereignty, and treaties, and how colonization is embedded into the very systems and communities from which I gain power and a sense of identity. As my frames of reference shift and I integrate new ways of knowing, I can almost physically feel the expansion of my heart and mind, and the cyclical nature of this ongoing change.

Here are some of the ways I cultivate my growth:

- Practicing humility. I make mistakes and I will make more. I try to be humble enough to accept responsibility for learning and changing my actions in the future.

- Enrolling in the Certificate in Aboriginal Knowledges and Experiences at Ryerson. I am only two courses in and have already learned more in the past year about Indigenous issues and ways of knowing than I did throughout my first 45 years.

- Taking the University of Alberta's MOOC on Indigenous Canada through the Coursera platform. This "101" course is free, easy to understand, and flexible.

- Learning how to facilitate the KAIROS Blanket Exercise. This allows me to take on some of the hard work associated with educating settler Canadians so that my Indigenous colleagues don't have to.

- Reading literature, listening to music, and appreciating art created by Indigenous people. I support the careers of these creators and connect my heart and soul to their stories.

- Attending a pow wow. I stepped out of my comfort zone, was welcomed to a community event, and enjoyed the experience of being on the land, listening to music, dancing, and eating good food.

- Following a lot of Indigenous folks on Twitter. This has taught me to talk less and listen more. When I "listen" on social media, I hear about lived experiences in real time, and this is invaluable.

- Building relationships with my Indigenous friends and colleagues so that there is mutual trust and respect. I practice listening a lot in these relationships, too.

Canadian Student Affairs is rooted in Eurocentric colonial structures and continues to serve as a model of colonization in manifest and latent ways. Our profession cannot be decolonized based on an attitude of mere tolerance nor done in a checklist style but rather through transformative, holistic, and respectful relationships and methodologies. And so, I ask you: What are you going to do to nurture the seed of reconciliation within yourself so you can move forward with a good heart and eyes wide open?

References and Resources

Opening quotation taken from a speech by Elder Joanne Dallaire on January 26, 2018 at the official presentation of Ryerson University's community consultation report in response to the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Final Report.

Ryerson University's Certificate in Aboriginal Knowledges and Experiences: ce-online.ryerson.ca/ce/default.aspx?id=3498

University of Alberta's MOOC on Indigenous Canada: www.ualberta.ca/admissions-programs/online-courses/indigenous-canada

KAIROS Blanket Exercise: kairosblanketexercise.org

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What's Important to (for) Our Students

by Vanessa McCourt

I was recently asked to sit on an Indigenous panel at the Royal Military College in Kingston answering the question, "How can we begin to Indigenize the institution?" My talk focused on Indigenous students supports. While there is no one right way to do this, and I am not going to answer that question here, I realized that much of the support we provide for our Indigenous students at the Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre theoretically can be broadened to the wider Student Affairs community.

We Shift Our Attitude

Our Indigenous students know we are here to support them. When they walk through our door and ask for help, we do not judge them or question their integrity. We get to know them in a personal way. We learn their names. We make them feel like we are here for them and that they are not a burden on us. We view student issues from an equity lens. We realize some students are ok and do not need our, or any, assistance, whereas others might need extra support and assistance from us – and that is ok. We recognize that we are not giving those students a free pass, or a leg up; we are just recognizing they do not get it as easily as another student might. When I started university in 1998, my father had recently received his GED and my mother worked as an educational assistant. I came to university competing with students whose parents were lawyers and doctors. I could not send my paper home for my parents to edit because they would probably not understand what I was writing about.

We Assist in Creating Community

Oftentimes when students are not enjoying their time at university I will ask them what they do for fun. Those students are the ones who eat, sleep, study, repeat. So I encourage them to get involved somehow, somewhere. It sounds simple, but for some students it is not. They need to find their community, their people. Some are not outgoing or athletic, but assisting them in finding a club/group/community of likeminded students on campus is so important. It can be as easy as introducing two students at an event you are at, or encouraging them to come to an event you are hosting. Any event with food is always a great way to socialize, so we host a Three Sisters Feast twice a month and a Frybread Fryday on the last Friday of every month.

We Accept Them as They Are

We recognize that our students are on many different cultural learning paths, and we accept each one for who they are in terms of their Indigeneity. We know that many of our students do not self-identify when they come to university, so we do not force them to answer questions specific to their Nation or question their ancestry. We accept that they are here, and if they want to learn more about who they are, then we explore that together. Too often, our students, when they do self-identify, are the spokesperson for all Indigenous people, and that is unnerving. By asking them what percentage of Aboriginal they are, we subject them to histories of colonial policies meant to wipe us out. When we ask (or assume) whether their tuition is paid for, we are forcing the student to answer to our ignorance, rather than learning what a Treaty is and that our Indigenous ancestors made agreements with the government – giving up land so that generations for years to come will receive an education.

A student of colour recently commented, "We want to sit in a space where we don't have to use our emotional and intellectual labour." I feel this summed up how our Centre engages with our Indigenous students. Students enter our space and are free to be who they are – without teaching, answering, debating, dialoguing 500 years of colonization. More physical (and mental) spaces need to be like this.

They Can See Themselves in What Is at the Centre

Indigenous art is hanging on the walls. Our staff are Indigenous. We use a holistic approach to advising. We use the Medicine Wheel as a teaching tool. We smudge. In short, our students see us and see a part of who they are as Indigenous peoples. We make rez jokes, and no one is offended. We can talk openly about current Indigenous issues with a common understanding of the history of colonization that has happened to our people.

However, this does not need to operate behind the four walls of the Indigenous student centre. Decolonizing our institutions means beginning to utilize these ideas within the broader university. Our common spaces and understanding can also be like this. We just need to be open to learning and listening, and maybe that begins a path to Indigenizing the institution.

Vanessa McCourt is Mohawk from Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory. She works as an Aboriginal Advisor at the Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre at Queen's University. She can be reached at mccourtv@queensu.ca.
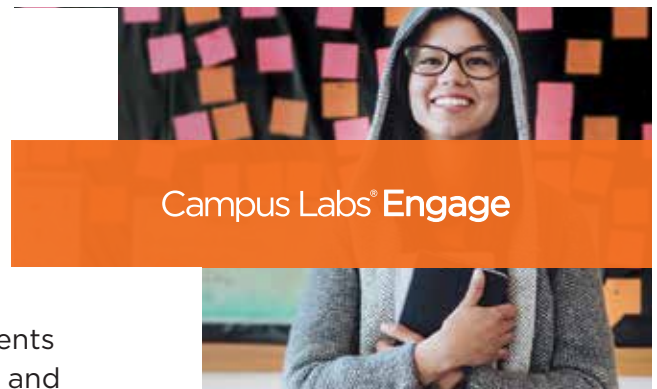
Supporting Indigenous Student Success

by John Fischer

A few weeks ago, I was part of a group that was discussing the ways of knowing and being in Nursing. The general topic was Indigenization. According to one of the participants, the reason for change is not in response to the consequences of the Indian residential school experience. I have been dwelling on the statement. I realize that even though it was not the theme of our discussions that day, it may have been a comment that I could have interpreted differently. I needed to explore the statement and its genesis because I so strongly disagree.

Indigenization is a term that we use as we describe the aims and strategies of colleges and universities. Some say the changes are contentious, particularly when applied to research and curriculum. Others say that the rationale for change is unclear. Why do post-secondary institutions need to change? In this article, I will focus on the historical aims of education so that I can address some of the ways that we can move forward.

The challenges to universities and colleges made through the Calls to Action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada are very specific. You can use "elder Google" to find the Calls and review which ones apply specifically to your world. Here are some numbers for you: Calls to Action 11, 12, 16, 24, 62, 65, and 86. The Calls echo earlier recommendations made in 1996 by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, by our accomplices and our elders who understood that it would require strong friendships and commitments to work against the assimilationist principles, laws, and attitudes that directed education to subvert and convert Indigenous Peoples.

The commissioners of the TRC Canada tell us that the framework for reconciliation is the United Nations Declaration of the Right of Indigenous Peoples. I am writing this on the tenth anniversary of its adoption by the UN General Assembly. (Canada did so nine years later.) Many of our elders were involved in the development of this human rights instrument that situates the sovereignty of Indigenous nations as a human right. Sovereignty is a founding principle and the heart of the treaties that have been made over past few hundred years. Sovereign nations agreed on friendship and sharing the land. These agreements are primary to Canadian Laws, and today, we are beginning to surface and uncover our forgotten responsibilities.

However, we still confuse the aims and outcomes of treaties with the Indian Act. They are not the same, and not connected. The Indian Act is legislation meant to identify and control Indigenous peoples and to ensure their assimilation into the body politic. The Indian Act was a way to destroy and replace the government, education, spirituality, economy, and languages of Indigenous peoples. All aspects of daily life could be controlled. Children were taken. Women were controlled. A genocide resulted. Survivors were provided with education — but not too much. Enough to become a farmer, enough to know how to cook and clean, and enough to practice your new place in Canadian society.

Blaire Stonechild, in his book Education is the New Buffalo, writes about the direct ties between the Indian Act and associated laws that built barriers preventing First Nations Peoples from entering and succeeding in universities. First Nations Peoples had to overcome the underlying racist attitudes that they were less, that they were primitive, and that their ways were dead and held no value for the future. The Indian Act provided that if one became a doctor, lawyer, teacher, or soldier, then your Indian Status was removed and you could no longer live on reserve. This punishment, termed "enfranchisement," was in place for women who married non-status Indians or white men. Their families would not be allowed to live on reserve. So entering university had its barriers, and their success in university held its punishments. The underlying attitudes, the outward behaviours of distaste and distrust, and the laws and legislation had built an educational system that was designed to assimilate. So what needs to change? The TRC provides us with the knowledge to find the path to reconciliation. As we heed the Calls to Action, we will work to support Indigenous students as we welcome who they are rather than have them "park their culture at the door."

Why is this important to CACUSS and its members? Indigenous people have and will continue to have a different relationship within Canadian society. Some have referred to us as "citizens plus." That is because of our treaty relationships, not because of the outcomes we live with today. In the past, being in universities meant that our educational pathway resulted in enfranchisement. Today, I am still asked whether assimilation is a good thing. No. A university education cannot be achieved at the cost of who we are. As educational institutions, there are factions and, in some cases, entire colleges and universities that know that this not the goal, and we have been acting to change this.

When we change the assimilationist purposes of education in Canada, we are tearing down the structures and barriers that prevent Indigenous Peoples from entering, succeeding, and leading today's institutions. We are changing the institution. This is an act of decolonization. Universities Canada, academics, and some others use the term "indigenization." Our goal will be to achieve Indigenous student success. Student success has many measures, and I suggest that our aims are comprehensive. We should strive for and measure a full and diverse range of positive outcomes.

Most certainly, the changes we will look for should come from the system itself. Is there a strong Indigenous voice in the curriculum and the research of the university? Are elders and knowledge keepers present within the courses? Are voices resident within the governance, the leadership, and the faculty? When you enter the university, can you see evidence of our people – in the present? Is the university developing and growing an academy with strong Indigenous leadership as priority? Posing these questions and seeking evidence of the results are critical to measure the institution's successes. Outcomes, as they relate to changes experienced by students, also need to be assessed.

As the new buffalo, education is a metaphor for a good life. Will convocation result in a good life? Will we have learned about our world in ways that we choose? Will we be leaders and change makers in our communities and in the world? Will we be knowledge builders and explore the world through our ways of knowing and being? These are some of the questions that we must seek to answer as we assess the successes experienced by Indigenous students.

I believe that universities must support Indigenous students through services such as Students Affairs, Counselling, and Residence Services. Frequently, this is a first step. Universities are improving the ethos of the campus and changing curriculum and research to include content and ways of knowing. I began writing about the TRC Calls to Action so that I could express that it is imperative to change institutions and circumvent assimilationist policies and practices. At the same time, I recognize that assimilation is alive today. For the children who were taken or sent to residential school, they experienced the practices of educational institutions designed to remove and ignore their languages and cultures. This was an aim of education at the time.

As we change universities, we identify the many ways that will enhance student success. We see the importance of supporting students and also taking responsibility to change our ways. We are calling this process "indigenization;" some view it as institutional change, and others say it is decolonization. The children were the ones who set out to have a Truth and Reconciliation Commission. As way to honour the children in residential schools, my heroes, I also use the term "education" for reconciliation.

John Fischer is the Director of the Iniskim Centre at Mount Royal University. John is Cree and a member of the Cowesses First Nation.

Small Steps

by John Hannah and Deena Kara Shaffer

Preface

Informed by insights from our campus elder, Joanne Dallaire, and framed by excerpts from Ryerson SA's response to the TRC crafted by John Hannah, shared here are snapshots of our intentions and initiatives in Ryerson Student Affairs to indigenize and decolonize our approaches, resources, and practices.

We are grateful for the opportunity to describe our reconciliation aims and attempts, fraught and unfinished without question, yet nevertheless representing genuine commitment, movement, and hopefulness.

An Official Response, Part 1 *(John Hannah)*

In the preface to the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC), Justice Murray Sinclair declares that "reconciliation is not an Aboriginal problem; it is a Canadian one." We are Student Affairs professionals at Ryerson University in Toronto. We are educators. We are citizens. We are mostly non-Indigenous. And we agree.

Reconciliation is a contentious and complex term. To reconcile can mean different things, all of which are relevant to us. Some examples from the Oxford Living Dictionary: to restore friendly relations between, to make or show to be compatible, to make (one account) consistent with another, to make someone accept (a disagreeable or unwelcome thing), to cause to coexist in harmony.

It is this last one — to cause to coexist in harmony — that feels the loftiest, the most hopeful, and the most germane to our work as educators in Student Affairs. This goal of harmonious coexistence is obviously bigger than our work alone, involving a more far-reaching acknowledgement of so many things: that the scars of colonization on Indigenous people are deep and profound, that the ugly realities of our shared history have been ignored for too long, that the way forward is through education and a willingness to see the truth of things. As educators, we commit to being active and willing participants in this thorny process of greater reconciliation in all its forms, but we commit ourselves especially to what is closest to us: our belief in the value of education as a force for truth and peace and a more just world. This particular reconciliation work involves a commitment to transformative learning, a reckoning with our habits of interpretation and muted awareness, to disrupting our inherited truths and accommodating new ones. At the heart of our effort towards this purpose, we commit ourselves to shifting colonial attitudes still present within our places of work, our policies, and our practices, and creating an education system that, in the words of the TRC, . . . treats Aboriginal and Euro-Canadian knowledge systems with equal respect."

This is our project, our word.

On Trying to Do Better *(Deena Kara Shaffer)*

In the fall of 2016, our then Executive Director (now Interim Vice Provost, Students) John Austin generously handed out copies of the TRC's Final Report. Mere pages in, I was horrified by all that I had not known, all that I had not been taught, and all that I was inadvertently complicit in through my very not knowing. I made it a heartfelt and immediate priority to ask and listen, relationship-build, and seed-plant.

In reaching out to Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services (RASS), I connected with campus Elder Joanne Dallaire for direction and insight. She welcomed my questions without judgment. She has met scores of non-Indigenous folk like me who suddenly "come to" and want to act. I shared my caution, I made clear my intentions not to impose, and above all I listened. At the end of one of our early conversations, she quoted

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Maya Angelou: "I did then what I knew how to do. Now that I know better, I do better."

Part of "doing better" led me to read, wonder, and write. Supported by my Ryerson SA colleagues, I wrote a series called "Heeding the Calls" for our blog. In the first piece, later reprinted by University Affairs, I posed questions about how to go forward in our work as we all further deepen our understanding about the unforgivable traumas that have and continue to be inflicted upon Canada's Indigenous peoples.

This initial article emerged organically into a series. They were my starting point, as I describe on the blog, my attempt to contribute to, open, and "further the conversation about the TRC's Final Report, its urgency, and what we can do in response as Student Affairs professionals" (Shaffer, 2016a, par. 1).

I laid bare then, as I do now, that "I am not an expert in Aboriginal histories or epistemologies," yet also how "in my greenness… [given that] when we learn, we become responsible for what we learn… I wish to be a participant in this redress instead of complicit in the status quo." As such, I simply could not, nor cannot, "not heed the call" (Shaffer, 2016a, par. 3).

So, "how to do this? How to be a novice and yet act? How to be an outsider and yet participate in the response? How to weave in and embed the TRC recommendations, at all cost avoiding (continued) tokenism and trauma?" (Shaffer, 2016a, par. 3)

In the second piece, "Myriad Knowledges," I inquired into "who's [sic] knowledges are left out, ignored, pushed aside, put down, wrongly told. And about remembering to ask: what are additional ways of knowing…this experience, project, wondering?" (Shaffer, 2016b, par. 8)

Third, in "Beginnings of Knowing," I explored relationship, relationality, and reciprocity through recounting some of my father's journey—Jewish, non-Indigenous, and teaching in Gitlaxt'aamiks — amidst a broader exploration of storytelling. I relayed my concerns about social locations, im/balances of power, overt and covert privileges, and implicated-ness. About complicity and responsibility. About empathizing without appropriating. About all that I don't know but long to. And about relating, relationship, and storytelling (Shaffer, 2016c, par. 3).

In "On Allyship, Doing Better, and Being a Good Friend," the fourth and final piece (so far), I asked, "what does it mean to be an ally?" (Shaffer, 2017, par. 3).

I interviewed historical researcher, Laurie Leclair; Anishinaabe writer, educator, and activist, Hayden King; and Ryerson's elder and traditional counsellor, Joanne Dallaire. I asked each about how to be a good ally. I asked what's hidden in the frequent use of the word "allyship." And in own my desire to learn and become an ally, or accomplice, I asked about what non-aboriginal people must be mindful of so as not to recreate harm. (Shaffer, 2017, par. 4)

And in another attempt to, as Joanne urged and invited, "do better," I felt propelled to propose a divisional *what if* to reconsider our underpinnings — our Ryerson Student Affairs Pillars — with the TRC Final Report and Calls to Action ever present. And so, we ventured into monthly — now semesterly — Talking Circles led by Joanne and Monica McKay, Director of Aboriginal Initiatives. Over the Winter 2017 semester, we explored and experienced such wonderings as belongingness and community-building, un-siloing and collaboration, the unique gifts we each offer, shared stories of attempts to enrich the oftentimes transactional, peak learning and teaching moments, and places of origin and "home." The "takeaways" have been personal and myriad, and one response shared again and again post-Talking Circles is the deepened sense of connection and care, collaboration and community.

An Official Response, Part 2 *(John Hannah)*

We in Ryerson Student Affairs appreciate the complex and nuanced territory that is embodied in reconciliation work. It can be a thicket that paralyzes. We need markers, signposts that will help guide us forward — not with fear or fragility but with confidence and humility. To that end, we pull on three threads of commitment to this process.

1. We commit to telling our story. We will continue to try things in Ryerson Student Affairs that aim to be inclusive of Indigenous frameworks, and then we will reflect upon and recount those things we try — our humble beginning.

2. We commit to action. We will imagine ways to advocate, to participate, to amplify, and to do real work in the world as a direct response to the Calls to Action — our willingness to engage.

3. We commit to learning. We will proceed from where we are and learn how Indigenous ways of knowing and learning can meaningfully inform and ground our work in Student Affairs — our pledge to a more inclusive pedagogy.

We proceed on the premise that it is through the building of relationships that we can most fruitfully begin — by engaging in what Indigenous scholar Gregory Cajete calls "Tapestries of Relations." We imagine our three threads of commitment as contributing to that tapestry. We fully acknowledge that our efforts are imperfect and incomplete, but we proceed with open minds to connect, to learn, to evolve, and, heeding the advice of Wurundjeri elder Colin Hunter, to take small steps often.

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Five Pillars of Ryerson SA: www.ryerson.ca/studentaffairs

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Indigenizing the Academy: Risks, Rewards, and Requirements?

by Mark Solomon

"Indigenization" has become a buzzword in the postsecondary circles in the past few years. Canadian postsecondary institutions saw themselves mentioned within the TRC calls to action that discuss the dismantling of colonial social structures in Canadian society. I am reminded that indigenization is not new to postsecondary; there have been many Indigenous peoples within institutions doing indigenization work. Postsecondary indigenization comes with many questions. The first question is simple yet the hardest: What is indigenization? Secondly, who is responsible for indigenizing? Finally, and maybe most importantly, why indigenize? The answers to this question may in fact ultimately resolve the previous two questions, but this "why" question is the hardest to be responsive.

What is Indigenization?

There is not a definition of the indigenization process similar to Jane Knight's definition of internationalization; however, Michelle Pidgeon (2015) provides context. "Indigenizing the academy is not one strategy, or one policy change - it is a culminating and complex living movement that aims to see post-secondary institutions empowering Aboriginal Peoples' cultural integrity through respectful relationships through relevant policies programs and services" (p. 81). This flexibility needs to exist to respect the land and the people of the land. There is no pan-Indian, one-size-fits-all answer as Indigenous peoples were and are unique Nations. "Because Indigenous Knowledges are deeply entwined with epistemologies of place, there are infinite ways that may be equally appropriate to inviting Indigenous Knowledges into Canadian post-secondary institutions, contingent upon local circumstances" (Kovach et al., 2014, p. 7). Therefore, as definitions will vary and are individual to the people and the institution, more time might be better spent on what should be indigenized.

Indigenization of governance will be the investment, long term, for an institution to Indigenous people. Stonechild (2006) stated that "the extent to which indigenization of large mainstream universities is possible depends on whether Aboriginal people are granted a significant presence on the institution's governance system as well as on whether significant funding is provided to programs for Indigenous peoples" (p. 68). This was written in 2006, almost ten years before indigenization became a common theme across Canada. Presence in governance must not be tokenistic, but meaningful and influential.

Governance documents and higher administrative roles within the academy are becoming more indigenized. "I have learned that 'Indigenization' requires leadership that is strong and enduring, courage and determination as those who pursue it may be on 'contentious ground' that requires intentional and strategic confrontation" (Ottmann, 2013, p. 8). Leadership needs to be committed to both doing the work of indigenizing but also indigenizing itself. One position and one document cannot be the sole stakeholder but rather a fully integrated model.

Postsecondary curriculum needs to be adjusted to incorporate more indigenous content. Two common models started with the University of Winnipeg, with a mandated Indigenous course, and Lakehead University, which means to integrate Indigenous knowledge into curriculum. Both are relatively new. There is a question of whether you want all students to have a baseline knowledge or practical application of that knowledge. "You don't want to be telling engineers they have to learn about the fur trade. … What prospective engineers do need to learn, however, is how understanding and acknowledging indigenous land interests could benefit their future professional projects" (As quoted by MacDonald, 2016, p. 6). However, if students do not have the context of the applied knowledge, will that not fail as well?

Who Indigenizes?

Postsecondary institutions are large educational machines. Who at an institution is responsible for indigenizing? The literature points out that there are easy victories to be had within the curriculum. The curriculum is owned and maintained – at least it should be – by faculty. For a long time, many faculty members have been responsible working with and for Aboriginal communities. Faculty are the key for the process on Indigenizing. However, some safeguards need to be established for both the communities and the faculty member.

Hiring Indigenous faculty members in non-Indigenous-specific departments across campus may have pitfalls. When there is a single Indigenous faculty member in a department, they have employment insecurity and therefore might be more accountable to their employer than to the Indigenous community. Issues such as precarious employment, tenure, and teaching loads (Deleeuw, Marho and Lindsay, 2013; Kovach et al, 2014) all become issues when an Indigenous faculty is alone. The trend of indigenizing non-Indigenous-specific departments can "…potentially lead to the fragmentation of Native Studies scholarly communities through the destabilization of existing methods of Aboriginal governance in universities and the undermining of Indigenous Knowledge protection and validation processes" (Fitzmaurice, 2011). There needs to be a home for Indigenous knowledge within the institution to safeguard it against erosion. "Canadian universities remain complicitous with residually colonial and defiantly neocolonial policies and practices that continue to produce Indigenous academic 'homelessness' " (Findlay, 2000). To ensure there is structure for Indigenous knowledge, academics can use existing processes to assist with Indigenizing.

Many Indigenous academics (Pete, FitzMaurice, MacDonald, and Kovack et al.) caution that the current round of Indigenization may cause a brain drain from Indigenous communities. Institutions, which are now willing to pay Indigenous people large salaries against which the communities cannot compete (FitzMaurice, 2011), may pull Indigenous people away. Institutions need to understand their impact on the community they are attempting to serve.

Indigenization also has a personal cost to Indigenous staff and faculty. "Acknowledge and act to minimize the perception of 'double-work' that many Indigenous scholars and staff face" (Pete, 2015). This double work comes when there is a request for indigenizing that happens in addition to an already full workload. Indigenous people feel torn that in order to help their people, they must participate – yet they are not supported nor compensated. The helping of their people is sometimes as simple as ensuring that the Indigenization is done appropriately. This appropriateness comes with neo-liberal accountabilities. "Neoliberal indigenization had three effects common to the neoliberal restructuring of education: increasing work intensity, decreasing instructor autonomy and vocationalizing education" (Mills and McCreary, 2013). Mills and McCreary (2013) found that although most faculty were supportive of indigenizing (p. 1308-9), there was a lack of support and autonomy to do the work. Therefore, how important can indigenizing be when it is not supported?

Indigenous people should not be the only people responsible for indigenizing an institution. The responsibility needs to be shared among the community to establish that the process is not ghettoized.

> We believe this is not solely an Indigenous issue for Indigenous faculty teaching Indigenous students in Indigenous classrooms. Rather, this ought to matter to all faculty of diverse positioning who teach courses across diverse populations. The attitude, effort and capacity of the post-secondary professor cannot be understated, for the professor becomes the initial exemplar for the new practitioner. (Kovach et al, 2014, p. 7)

Members of the dominant can discuss and reflect on the impact of that colonial relationship. Institutions need to "deconstruct the neutrality of whiteness" (Pete, 2015, p. 5), so that tough conversations can happen.

Why Indigenize?

There are fewer than 10 of the 94 calls to action in the TRC that relate to postsecondary, and even some are quite removed, such as call 65, which asks for more funding be added for research on reconciliation. There is no call that specifically asks the institution to Indigenize. "Educating Canadians for reconciliation involves not only schools and post-secondary institutions, but also dialogue forums and public history institutions such as museums and archives" (TRC, 2015, p. 241). Yet "[t]he TRC has made it clear that universities have a fundamental role to play in getting it right with the next generation of Canadians" (MacDonald, 2016, p. 2). Although not directly, there is a "call" to action from the TRC to make the legacy of the Canadian colonial past something that we learn about for fear of repeating or, worse forgetting.

There is some criticism of indigenization that it in fact pushes the university back into the dark ages. Through indigenization, knowledge will not be tested nor able to be questioned as it is seen as spiritual or cultural (Widdowson, 2016, p. 7). These viewpoints are very few but need to be addressed. The University of Regina has prepared a list of 100 ways to indigenize, and they are preparing for the push back against indigenization

> 23. Prepare a Faculty response to allegations that Indigenous content somehow diminishes the perception of a quality higher education;

> 68. 'But I teach other people too' – Folks often think that Indigenizing their teaching will somehow detract from addressing the needs of other diverse leaners. Too often, dominate group members want to fall back onto discourses of multiculturalism as a way of practicing curricular inclusion; (Pete, 2015, p. 3).

There will be conflicts against those that do not see the purpose or have become too settled in their settler colonial worldview. Responses need to be prepared. Indigenous people have always encountered backlash.

The process of decolonization is not simply hosting pow wows or Indigenous speakers. It is looking at structures and colonial frameworks within institutions. "For Indigenization to occur, Indigenous scholars argue it must also be a decolonizing process; Indigenity has to go beyond what 'others' are comfortable with, beyond the tokenistic representations of culture, or one-off events, programs and services, and misrepresentations of Indigenous peoples and their cultures" (Pidgeon, 2015, p. 80). Indigenization and decolonization must look deeper at an institutional level and not be surface level (Pidgeon, 2008). For Indigenous peoples, the academy is often a place for us to provide for our community and is a treaty right. "He [Daniel Health Justice] reminds Indigenous peoples that the academy is just as much our inheritance as being part of the land and we have a right and entitlement to be part of the meaning making of this world…" (Pidgeon, 2015, p. 79). Further than treaty rights, universities are seen as "meaning making" within society. Indigenousness must be included within that societal framework. "Indigenizing the academy would help strengthen not only our institutions but Canadian society as well" (Ottoman,

2013, p. 13). Ultimately, the answer as to why indigenize is to grow and strengthen Canadian and Indigenous communities.

Conclusion

There is a failure to discuss the risk of not Indigenizing, to maintain the status quo. The work is hard and there is a perception of little reward for the institution beyond the moral platitudes. Internationalization, a similar process for another group of "othered" people, has a perception of great revenue and reward. I reflect that in fact the cost may have already been paid. The colonial cost bared by the Indigenous community has been devastating. Yet many academics and students have experienced a culture of socialization and assimilation that is representative to a contemporary colonial process (Guenette and Marshall, 2008, p. 107). Indigenization, when complete, may address that issue or at least identify the issue. It will also create a better Canada for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. Indigenization is a process not simply for the Indigenous students but rather, much like the TRC, is for all Canadians.

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The CACUSS Student Affairs and Services Competency Model in Practice:

A Journey of Cross-Functional Professional Development at the University of Toronto Mississauga

by Chris Lengyell and Julie Guindon

Over the course of the last year, a collection of staff at the University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) has worked together to explore the various ways in which the CACUSS Student Affairs and Services Competency Model can be utilized as a tool for professional development (PD).

Evidenced by the literature review and extensive references included in the model, there is a significant body of research demonstrating the value of competency-based approaches to learning as it relates to describing, measuring, and understanding related outcomes (Cheetham & Chivers, 2001; Daley, 1999; Seifert & Billing, 2010). For those of us in student affairs with a background in education, this is something that many of us are familiar with in terms of our work with students. Yet, rarely do we take the time to consider competencies as they relate to our own professional growth and development. Too often it seems we find ourselves absorbed in our day-to-day responsibilities, dedicated to the development of students, that we miss the opportunity to think critically about the ways in which we are learning and growing as professionals ourselves.

In 2016, when the newly proposed competency model was opened for feedback, we saw an opportunity for us to contribute to a purposeful and uniquely Canadian model that could serve our professional association with a mechanism for describing and assessing the cluster of knowledge, skills, and abilities that define our work. As our first step, we volunteered to host a local consultation at UTM to give our colleagues a voice in the process. Through this consultation, we heard from a number of staff, across a variety of functional areas, who shared that although they greatly appreciated the ethos of the model, they felt as if they did not know where to begin when it came to how to apply it practically in the context of their own development. There was a distinct desire to see the newly released competencies integrated into workable professional development planning documents, templates, or training materials. Additionally, there emerged a growing desire from staff in academic divisions, beyond the boundaries of typical student affairs units on our campus, to learn more and get involved. The shared interest of professional development with the aim of better serving students arose as a uniting impetus for participation.

Feeling motivated by the enthusiasm of our staff community and taking the point that "the professionalization of our field in Canada can only be advanced by the collective actions of those within the field" (Fernandez, Fitzgerald, Hambler, & Mason-Innes, 2016, p. 4), we sought to take action. Working in close consultation with Megan MacKenzie at CACUSS, we aimed to create a distinct offering at UTM to

establish a deeper understanding of the competency areas and to enable participants take an initial step towards an intentional competency-based professional development plan. Our desire was to create an accessible way for staff on our campus to engage in self-assessment and goal setting by utilizing the competency model as a guide. Under the umbrella of our on-campus Student Life Professionals (SLP) network (www.utm.utoronto.ca/slp/slputm), the SLP@UTM CACUSS Competency Working Group was created as a cross-functional space where staff could gather and connect about competency-based professional development interests. Having previously engaged in competency/PD planning in the context of our graduate work at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), we drew from our experiences in LHA1820H: Introduction to Student Services, instructed by Dr. Tricia Seifert (2013) and Dr. Katherine Janzen (2015), as a framework for how SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-based) goals could be employed as a method to activate a competency-based approach to professional development planning. By examining trends and sharing resources across the divisions of student and academic affairs, we developed a lunch and learn series with the aim of providing participants opportunities to consider, revise, and produce tangible outcomes and next steps regarding their professional paths in a supportive and collaborative environment.

Proposed as a three-part lunch and learn series beginning in February 2017 (www.utm.utoronto.ca/slp/cacuss-competencies), our first session sought to introduce the model and establish a common understanding of its roots and fit within the field. Through provided materials, participants took part in a self-assessment strategy to set a baseline for themselves within each of the 11 competencies. Our second session (April) allowed staff the opportunity to refine individual areas of interest by selecting three relevant competencies that could be explored as pathways for professional development. Through a prioritization exercise, our participants were then directed to select one skill or area to enhance within one specific competency, which they could structure their development plan around. As facilitators, it felt as though prioritization was essential - recognizing that if the PD plan became overly daunting, it would be less likely to be completed as a whole. We identified early on that these plans needed to be flexible to meet the evolving needs of our priorities and roles, while also leaving room for life to happen. To assist with this, we created a worksheet that would help participants to narrow the direction of their learning and hone in on one discrete area of focus at a time, rather than trying to tackle a large and complicated goal that could easily become unmanageable.

Fixating on the selected competency for each participant, our third session (May) enabled participants to craft a SMART goal that could enable growth with the intent of shifting from core to intermediate or intermediate to advanced, localized within an individual competency. When determining our goals, key areas of consideration included:

- What types of positions am I interested in down the road?
- Are there particular things in my current role that I want to be better at?
- What could enable me to feel more fulfilled in my work?
- Who can help me to assess or achieve my goals?
- Do my goals reflect departmental or institutional objectives?
- Are my goals connected to current trends in the field?

Drafting effective SMART goals as they relate to professional development is an iterative process and benefits from consistent cyclical attention. As we refined our goals as a group, it was helpful to talk through the particular pieces of our goals that were not explicit, to pull out the latent aspects, and to elaborate on what we needed to make our objectives become real. Through another worksheet exercise, participants broke down the specifics of their SMART goal in order to understand the activities or tasks, resources, and timelines that would be needed to actualize their chosen goal. We also encouraged participants to create their own method of documenting and assessing their individual progress, and how they might share their learning with others. Many in our group reflected that their motivations for participating were mixed. Some were

searching for ways in which to describe and track their progress and work toward future aspirations. Others saw this as a way to take ownership of their professional development and not to simply relegate that responsibility to their supervisor. Important topics of discussion for us touched on accountability, transparency, the function of community, and the ways in which we could provide support when others encountered challenges and roadblocks. It was important to utilize our time in group sessions to learn from each other and engage in self-reflection while capitalizing on the various strengths, resources, and subject-matter experts within the group. To help maintain momentum, we created a Google Drive that serves as an online platform for us to be able to track, share, and provide comments about each other's progress. Participants were then paired up and expected to connect outside of the group sessions as another method of maintaining accountability, momentum, and support. Some participants have remarked that the most valuable aspect of the competencies, and our work in this group, has been the opportunity to step out of the day-to-day and focus on professional progress in a way that is measurable and broadly recognized in the field. Others noted that being given the encouragement to think critically about professional development and how we can be held accountable to our goals, without overly being overly formal or rigid, has been particularly helpful. Additionally, the opportunity to engage in conversations such as these with individuals who are beyond our typical circles of interaction has led to creative ideas for cross-collaboration that will aim to serve our students better in new and innovative ways.

In terms of where we go from here, our group will continue to meet and we will be exploring ways to invite and onboard new participants as we see this project as a venue for mentorship among new and more seasoned professionals. Thanks to the support and work of our participants, our goals are to continue to provide an interdisciplinary and cross-functional space for like-minded peers who are committed to professional growth and development on our campus. As a group, we will remain committed to reinvigorating each other's goals through continued support that we hope will lead to new partnerships, mutual resource sharing, and collective progress.

If you are interested in learning more or staying up-to-date with the journey of our group, feel free to get in touch!

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University of Toronto's Innovation Hub:

Working Collaboratively to Understand Students' Needs

by Alexandra Rodney, Julia Smeed, Heather Kelly and David Newman

The world is changing at a rapid pace and each year our incoming students at the University of Toronto (U of T) are vastly different from the year before. The Innovation Hub, a project within the division of Student Life, started because of a desire to answer two core questions: 1) Who are our students? and 2) How is the world changing for our students? We wondered how the answers might have implications for how we design programs, services, and resources to support students during their time at university. The Innovation Hub is listening to the voices of students to understand their complex needs in order to re-think and re-imagine their experience at U of T. It is a place where students, staff, and faculty can explore these questions and experiment with the answers we find.

Impetus: Why Innovation?

The Innovation Hub was inspired by a conference, "Leading Innovation and Change in Student Affairs," that Student Life senior directors attended in 2015. They were energized by the AVP from Seattle University, Michele Murray, who fostered innovation through bringing diverse, creative minds together from across campus across to work on improving the student experience. Whether walking the halls of the University of Toronto or visiting its online spaces, it is hard not to notice the stories of successful students. What we hear less about are the stories of the everyday students who make up the bulk of U of T's undergraduate and graduate student body. We wanted to know more about daily student experiences and use this information to make every U of T student's experience a successful one. Where are they struggling? When do they feel capable? What are their challenges? What do they enjoy most about U of T? This is the work that the Innovation Hub set out to do.

The Changing Student Population

Understanding student experiences at the University of Toronto is especially important given how rapidly the student demographic is changing and growing. Much of this is a result of broader structural changes that are influencing higher education, such as globalization, technology, labour market demands, and changing student demographics (AUCC, 2011; Smith et al., 2015). In Canada, the university student demographic is evolving towards increased enrolment, particularly urban students, international students, and graduate students (AUCC, 2011).

The University of Toronto's student population, both undergraduate and graduate, is growing across all three campuses and has unique dynamics. Student data (University of Toronto, 2015; University of Toronto Planning and Budget Office, 2016) tells us that of the almost 90,000 students at U of T, the majority are non-white, live off campus, and have degree aspirations beyond a Bachelor's degree. U of T students are working more, commuting more, and have fewer hours to relax than ever before.

Why Innovation?

Student Life at U of T has a responsibility to respond to our unique student body

and changing student demographics. This is where innovation comes in. The idea that innovative leadership is necessary for organizations to thrive has spread from the business world to the field of higher education (Christensen and Eyring, 2011; Smith et al., 2015; Wildavsky, Kelly and Carey, 2011). In the student affairs context, innovation has been defined as "novel ideas for meeting needs or solving problems that are then given utility through implementation" and results from putting creative ideas into practice (Smith et al., 2015, p. 51). Student affairs staff are seen as key players who can keep universities relevant in the future through creating cultures of organizational learning and innovation, and ensuring that student success is prioritized in every corner of the university (Smith et al., 2015). Student Affairs staff are no strangers to innovating in response to changing student needs, so they are well poised to lead campus innovation projects.

What is an Innovation Hub?

In regards to higher education organizations, Smith et al. (2015) advocate creating an "innovation hub" as a strategy for invigorating novel strategies for change. An innovation hub creates an environment in which innovation can happen through developing infrastructure and acting as a campus-wide resource. The hub can be a physical space, a point of contact, or an environment in which innovation is fostered and modeled. Within an innovation hub, the goal is to discover "sustaining innovations" (those designed to improve existing systems) and "disruptive innovations" (revolutionary creations that significantly alter the existing landscape) (Smith et al., 2015, p. 52).

At the University of Toronto's Innovation Hub, students, staff, and faculty work together to understand what life is like from students' perspectives. Based on the information gathered about students' experiences, we collaboratively think about innovative ideas that can be implemented to make students' lives even better and in ways where we may not have realized there is room for improvement. This work is grounded in our vision of the U of T as a place where all students experience a sense of community and connectedness, enjoy both academic and personal success, and feel well prepared for their futures. Amongst our core values is the commitment to listen to students and seek out their voices when we plan, program, and make decisions. In the spring of 2016, the Innovation Hub was originally conceived as a project-based, volunteer-driven organization with opportunities for participation from students, staff, faculty, and members of the community (see image 1 for the timeline of the first year). We began by hiring a dedicated staff to lead the project, and then we created teams of students, staff and faculty, grouped into five focal domains (see image 2), with students co-leading each domain team.

Image 2

Image 1
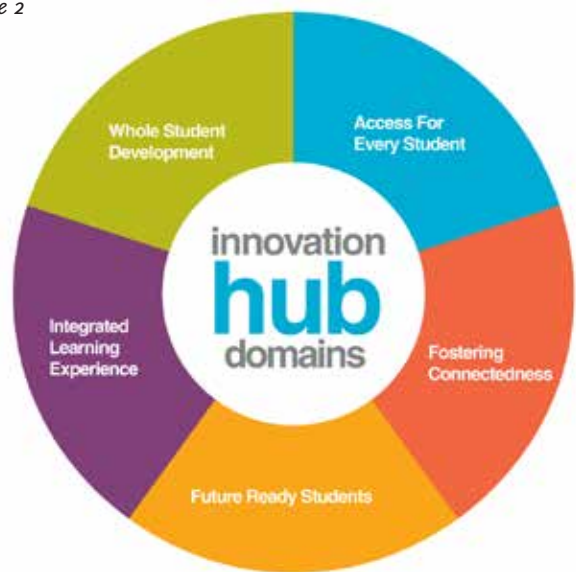
Our Method

The Innovation Hub incorporates innovation into all aspects of project design and process, and began with three core functions:

1. To conduct ethnographic research with students and ideate/test ideas for sustaining and transformational innovations in student services.
2. To engage in the sustaining and transformational innovation projects by seeking project approval, completing a full implementation plan and participating in implementation.
3. To form a community of practice to share insights discovered in research with students and get input on new program/service ideas.

Building on existing data generated from assessment and research initiatives (e.g. focus groups, surveys, etc.) we chose to use a design-thinking methodology (IDEO, 2011) to generate new insights and keep students' diverse perspectives at the centre of the process. IDEO (2011) defines design thinking as a "human-centered and practical, repeatable approach to arriving at innovative solutions" that provides "a step-by-step guide to unleashing your creativity, putting the people you serve at the center of your design process to come up with new answers to difficult problems." Our teams were trained in design thinking by Nogah Kornberg, of Rotman School of Management's I-Think Initiative.

A design-thinking approach includes three key phases of the research process, each of which was applicable across all domains: (1) immersion, (2) ideation, and (3) implementation (IDEO, 2011; Kumar, 2012; Liedtka and Ogilvie, 2011). During the immersion phase, the domain teams engaged in a series of interviews, conversations, and observations designed to understand life through students' eyes. In this phase, we realized the importance of bringing students' stories to the forefront of designing services for them. Insights gathered from students revealed opportunities to meet student needs. In the ideation phase, we developed prototype solutions to meet students' needs and realized the power of designing services *with* students rather than *for* them. Both the immersion and ideation phases were iterative processes of gathering feedback through community consultations. Innovation Hub events were open to all members of the U of T community and included forums to talk about insights gleaned during the immersion phase and to gather feedback on the 25 prototype ideas generated by the domain teams in the ideation phase.

We have assembled teams of students and staff to explore and assess the viability of five of the proposed solutions, which we are calling our "Big Ideas." Each team will research the idea, complete a viability analysis, and present recommendations to senior academic leadership in early spring, 2018. One example is the Student-Faculty
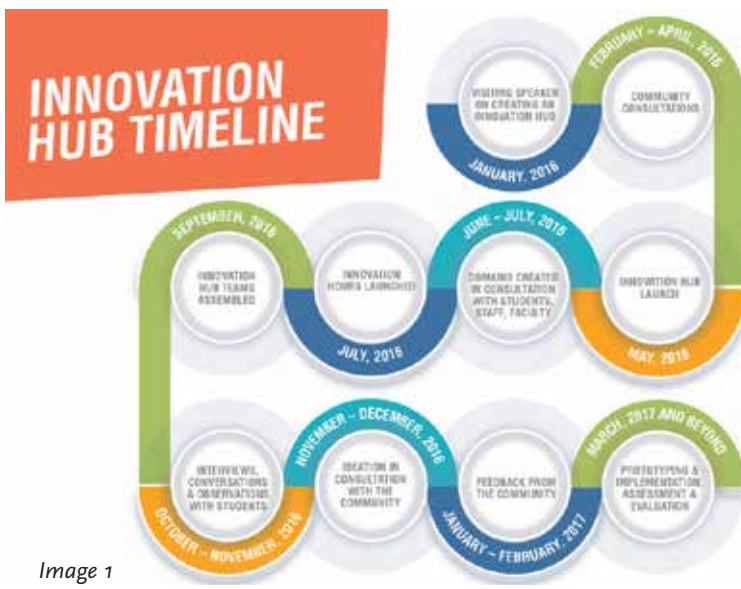
Images from Innovation Hub Events

Exploration Café, an idea that seeks to meet students' need to have more opportunities to connect with their instructors. Interaction with instructors can be difficult in large classes, and students are interested in exploring curricular learning outside of the classroom and making direct connections with faculty. Our Big Ideas team is assessing our ability to re-purpose an existing central space on campus to act as a hub of activities that support engagement between faculty, teaching assistants, and students.

The Evolution of the Hub

As of the 2017-18 academic year, the Innovation Hub's core functions have evolved towards creating a team of highly trained students who can work with departments or divisions to explore student needs, co-create programs/services, and collaborate with other like-minded members of the community. In the future, we will continue encouraging collaborations between students, staff and faculty across disciplines and departments. We will remain student-centred and innovative while we inspire new and creative ideas across campus to meet students' needs.

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