

Academic Matters

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Spring 2019

Decolonizing the university in an era of Truth and Reconciliation

Tanya Talaga

Bringing Indigenous viewpoints to higher education

**Lori Campbell, Shannon Dea,
and Laura McDonald**

The role of faculty associations following the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Mary Ann Corbiere

Protecting Indigenous language rights

Ashley Courchene

A move towards conciliation in academia

**Hannah Tait Neufeld, Brittany Luby,
and Kim Anderson**

Indigenous researchers plant seeds of hope for health and climate

Malinda S. Smith and Nancy Bray

The Indigenous diversity gap



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Academic Matters is published two times a year by OCUFA, and is received by 17,000 professors, academic librarians, and others interested in higher education issues across Canada. The journal explores issues of relevance to higher education in Ontario, other provinces in Canada, and globally. It is intended to be a forum for thoughtful, thought-provoking, original, and engaging discussion of current trends in postsecondary education and consideration of academia's future direction.

Readers are encouraged to contribute their views, ideas, and talents. Letters to the editor (maximum 250 words) are welcome and may be edited for length. To provide an article or artwork for Academic Matters, please send your query to Editor-in-Chief Ben Lewis at editor@academicmatters.ca.

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A time for action

ONTARIO'S UNIVERSITIES are built on models of scholarship developed in the United Kingdom and western Europe. Founded by and for European settlers, Ontario's universities have excluded Indigenous voices and played an active role encouraging the colonization of Indigenous lands, nations, and peoples.

With the release of the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in 2015, the destructive results of colonization have been made crystal clear to everyone. The TRC's purpose was to document truth—a goal aligned with a core mission of the university—and through the testimony of thousands, the report paints a vivid picture of kidnapped children, destroyed families, devastated communities, endangered languages, stolen land, and a cultural genocide across the continent.

The report identifies education as a priority and calls for Canada's universities to take immediate action, including eliminating education and employment gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, providing more funding and assistance to end the backlog of Indigenous students seeking postsecondary education, protecting the right to learn and study in Indigenous languages, developing culturally appropriate curricula, and advancing reconciliation in the academy.

Decolonizing all levels of our education system is crucial. An urgent and fundamental commitment from our educational institutions is required to increase awareness of the horrors of colonization and to create a society that embraces, supports, and makes space for the vibrant

First Nations, Inuit, and Métis cultures that have survived.

Many universities have taken up the TRC's Calls to Action and made public commitments to Indigenous reconciliation. Strategies have been developed, new supports have been created for Indigenous students, Indigenous studies program offerings have been bolstered, and some Ontario universities now offer courses in languages, including Algonquian, Nishnaabemowin, and Ojibwe.

However, there is real concern these initiatives do not reach the foundations of the academy. The past year has seen several resignations of Indigenous academic leaders who argue that university governing bodies are not committed to the work required for reconciliation and decolonization. This prompts the core question we explore in this issue: Are universities doing enough to respond meaningfully to the TRC's final report and the continuing colonization in higher education?

This question is profound, and we are lucky to have such an insightful group of Indigenous scholars contributing their perspectives to this issue.

In a special interview, Tanya Talaga discusses the changes needed for more Indigenous students to access postsecondary education and how institutions can move towards decolonization.

Reflecting on the roles of faculty associations, Lori Campbell, Shannon Dea, and Laura McDonald argue that it is time for non-Indigenous faculty to get uncomfortable and do the work needed to support their Indigenous colleagues.

Mary Ann Corbiere provides an important perspective on the role higher education institutions can play revitalizing Indigenous languages by meaningfully integrating them into university curricula.

Reflecting on the broader debate, Ashley Courchene suggests reconciliation has stalled, in part because it is founded on the false premise that a harmonious relationship previously existed between Indigenous peoples and European colonizers.

Hannah Tait Neufeld, Brittany Luby, and Kim Anderson illustrate how Indigenous land-based learning provides hands-on opportunities for knowledge development that shift away from Eurocentric forms of education.

Finally, Malinda S. Smith and Nancy Bray spotlight the stark Indigenous diversity gap at Canadian universities through a series of data and infographics.

It is important to acknowledge this journal is produced in the *Dish With One Spoon Territory*, which extends from the Great Lakes to Quebec and from Lake Simcoe into the United States. The territory exists as the result of a treaty between the Anishinaabe, Mississaugas, and Haudenosaunee that bound them to protect and share the land and creatures within it. Subsequent Indigenous nations and peoples, Europeans, and all newcomers have been invited into this treaty in the spirit of peace, friendship, and respect.

I would like to thank Victoria McMurchy, a student in Ryerson University's School of Journalism, for her keen-eyed editing and James Mathieu Chambers at Design de Plume whose original artwork gives this issue such warmth. As always, we love to hear your thoughts. A reminder that all of these articles, and many more, are available on our website: AcademicMatters.ca. Thanks for reading. ■■

Ben Lewis is the Editor-in-Chief of Academic Matters and Communications Lead for OCUFA.

Bringing Indigenous viewpoints to higher education

Tanya Talaga and Victoria McMurchy



For this issue, Ojibway author and journalist Tanya Talaga sat down with Victoria McMurchy from *Academic Matters* to discuss how Canadian postsecondary institutions have responded to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. What needs to change for more Indigenous students to access postsecondary education and how can institutions move towards decolonization?

What was your university experience like?

My university experience was pretty good. I went to Victoria College at the University of Toronto. I commuted my first year from my home, moved into residence for my second and third year, and lived off campus in fourth year. I loved it. I was the news editor for *The Strand*, Victoria College's newspaper.

It was a totally different time though in universities. I do not recall there being a First Nations presence whatsoever. When I would tell people about my background, or when they would ask me, being Ojibway was not on anyone's radar. It was a surprise to people.

There was not very much space for Indigenous people to be honest with you. I took Canadian history, I took Canadian politics, I took the courses that were required for my degree and—other than a few passages in some of the history books concerning the fur trade—there was hardly anything about Indigenous culture or history built into the Canadian history classes we were taking. I do not recall ever learning about the Indian residential school system in my history class, or even covering the Indian Act and how racist it is. How can you leave those things out of a degree in Canadian history? But that wasn't the focus. The focus instead was on the National Energy Program, Pierre Trudeau, and the Suez Canal Crisis. Meanwhile, we had these issues in this country that were completely ignored at university.

What are some of the things that you think need to change if we are to decolonize universities in Ontario and Canada?

There needs to be more Indigenous faculty hired at all universities and colleges. And the faculty that are hired have to be fairly compensated and treated just like the non-Indigenous faculty. I just saw a report from the University of Alberta that Cydney Blackstock tweeted, and it concerns how Indigenous faculty members, on average, are often paid less than non-Indigenous people. Why is that?

Beyond faculty, what about students? I think universities need to step up their outreach services by going into

high schools and colleges, reaching out to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students, and helping them out a bit. Sometimes students need the extra support in order to get into university. Get to know the communities, reach out a little bit more. As opposed to making changes to entrance and admissions requirements, go deeper than that. Go to the high schools themselves and try to bolster learning in that environment.

What are some of the systemic barriers you see Indigenous students facing when trying to access postsecondary education?

Depending on where students are coming from, some of the First Nations high schools are not seen as on par with non-Indigenous schools. What happens is that the kids have a more difficult time getting into university or they are not being let into university because the standards are different.

But that should not be happening anywhere, the standards should be the same all across the board. The standards need to be the same so everyone has a fair playing field. If that is not possible, maybe there is some other way we could look at admitting First Nations kids with the skill sets that they have, which can sometimes be different than non-Indigenous kids. Look at the different courses taught at First Nations high schools and treat those courses the same as courses being taught at other Ontario high schools.

How can we address those barriers?

It's mostly about reaching out. It is making sure that universities and colleges get to know the communities they are in and get to know the nearby nations. Just reach out. Reach out to the band council members, reach out to the local Indian friendship centres—there is actually a lot more that universities and colleges could be doing to learn about the first people in their communities. It is not that hard. The wealth of knowledge, I think, that universities would gain would really help them—especially when looking at Elders and the stories they hold.

How can mentorship or tutoring opportunities impact Indigenous youth?

I think that mentoring and tutoring students is really important because a lot of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit kids don't come from histories, often times, where parents or grandparents went to university. Sometimes the students are flying blind when they are going into university or college. When they are applying for something, often they are the very first generation of their family to go off to postsecondary education. The change—both physical and cultural—is so different for kids coming from rural or northern communities into the city or onto a campus.

Universities need to get back to going into high schools and showing Grade 9 and 10 students what postsecondary schools can offer, what is available, and all the different career paths that are out there. You need to inspire children. By inspiring them, you will also get to know them and that is where the tutoring or mentoring can really become quite helpful. Universities will then be able to identify who needs tutoring, where the tutoring needs to happen, in what subjects, and they can be playing the part of strengthening the curriculum in high schools. To show the students that there is a place for them at universities and colleges.

How do you think the presence of Indigenous faculty would help with mentoring students?

It always helps to see yourself mirrored in other people. It would definitely help for Indigenous students

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to see First Nations, Métis, and Inuit professors and faculty members because it's always going to make someone think, "I can do that too. If they are doing it, then there is a place for me here as well."

What supports do you think Indigenous students would benefit from on campuses?

A safe place to go is always a great thing. I think Indigenous students just need to feel comfortable. It would be lovely if there was a place that said, "Hey, we know and we understand that our university is here on your land and this place is representative of you too." And so having a special place, like a First Nations House, that people can feel like they are part of and

in which they can see their culture recognised, I think, is important. Representing the culture of the First Nations of the host city also has to be very strongly represented throughout campus. This would make the university more relevant, inclusive, and welcoming.

We have seen several new university buildings, programs, and announcements focused on Indigenization but, at the same time, we have also seen a series of resignations of high-profile Indigenous university scholars. How do you think this reflects the nature of the progress being made on decolonization?

It is not an easy road. We are always going to see some trial and error going when there are going to be different

Bringing
Indigenous viewpoints
should be
paramount.

visions. Universities are often stuck in this cement of “this is how we have always done things.” They cannot move. The institutions themselves, it is sometimes like trying to turn around the Titanic. That has to change, that type of thinking has to change. You know, maybe it can be done in a different way and you do not always have to do it in a way that restricts a certain point of view or others’ cultures and beliefs. Universities had not been thinking about Indigenous people when they were moving forward with their governance structures and plans. They are now, but for a long time, that was not the case.

How do you think the leadership—or the lack of leadership—at postsecondary institutions impacts both Indigenous and non-Indigenous faculty, students, and staff?

I think since the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions’ Calls to Action were put out by Murray Sinclair, institutions have taken a hard look at what they can do, especially if they are an institution of learning. The Indian Residence School experience has been left out of so much of the curriculum and so much of the basic knowledge of understanding of what has happened to this country since colonization has been left out, as an institute of learning, how can you ignore all of that? You have to understand it and also you have a job to make this country better, you have a job to make this country more inclusive, and, as an institute of higher learning, bringing Indigenous viewpoints should be paramount. But it has not been. Before 2015, it was mostly left out.

How do the non-Indigenous descendants of those who colonized the country now known as Canada work to undo the damage our ancestors created, and we continue to allow?

Inviting Indigenous students, faculty members, and Elders and making a place for them helps open up learning space. But it is also taking a hard look at the curriculum too. What do you have in your English department and in your history department? What books are you reading? Are you looking at Indigenous authors? And not just in Indigenous literature courses but when you are teaching about English literature? Open up those doors, do not just put all Indigenous learning in silos so you only have Indigenous-specific courses—incorporate Indigenous learning throughout the curriculum.

What advice would you give to our readers?

Keep extending a hand. Keep looking in different places. Reach out to friendship centres, reach out to your local First Nations community, and find out what is going on. There is something you can do, it is not daunting and it might even be something as simple as just opening up your reading list and adding a book, a voice—that makes a difference. **AM**

Tanya Talaga is a columnist with the Toronto Star. She is also the author of Seven Fallen Feathers and All Our Relations.

Victoria McMurchy is the Associate Editor for the 2019 Spring Issue of Academic Matters.

GET UNCOMFORTABLE, DO THE WORK:

The role of faculty associations following the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Lori Campbell, Shannon Dea, and Laura McDonald



As universities take on the work of Indigenization, what role do faculty and faculty associations have in advancing the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report and the rights of their Indigenous members?



WHAT IS A FACULTY ASSOCIATION TO DO?

It has been just over three years since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) issued its final report and 94 Calls to Action. Since then, the term “Indigenization” has increasingly been on the tongue of Ontario’s university administrators and professors. However, the province’s faculty associations have been slow to take up the call.

Much of the hesitation is caused, no doubt, by a fear of getting things wrong, of making matters worse. Fair enough. Both “reconciliation” and “Indigenization” are fraught terms with complicated histories. Moreover, efforts to Indigenize postsecondary institutions often take the form of what Adam Gaudry and Danielle Lorenz term “Indigenization as inclusion”—that is, Indigenization aimed at supporting the adaptation of Indigenous students and employees into a settler-colonial university that remains largely unchanged by their presence. Even when well intentioned, Indigenization as inclusion puts the onus on Indigenous people. And, if the TRC taught us anything, it is that settler-colonial institutions, not Indigenous people, are the ones that should be doing things differently.

Against the background of centuries of anti-Indigenous racism and universities that are slow to change, what is a faculty association to do?

In 2017, a small group of mostly non-Indigenous faculty and staff within the Faculty Association of the University of Waterloo (FAUW) (including FAUW Vice-President Shannon Dea and FAUW Community Relations Coordinator Laura McDonald) started working together to try to answer this question in small, manageable, but meaningful ways. Earlier the same year, Lori Campbell had been appointed Director of Shatitsirótha’ Waterloo Indigenous Student Centre (WISC). The FAUW team connected with Lori to ensure that she thought they were more or less headed in the right direction. By late 2018, this group had made enough progress that Lori, Shannon, and Laura started to offer advice to other Ontario faculty associations about actions they could take in response to the TRC’s report and recommendations.

This article introduces readers to some of that advice, some of the reasons for the advice, and some examples of things that have worked at the University of Waterloo. There are two voices in this article. The article

is primarily written in the voice of the group, reflecting the character of our ongoing collaboration. However, in places Lori’s voice emerges alone. Lori is the only Indigenous co-author of this article and the person who has been doing this work the longest. At various points in this article, Lori speaks and Shannon and Laura “stay in their lane” and listen.

We offer four overarching pieces of advice for faculty associations who wish to take on reconciliation, Indigenization, or decolonization:


- Get uncomfortable,
- Do the work,
- Establish relationships,
- Teach (and learn from) the right people.

GETTING STARTED

A thread that runs through this advice is that people need to start from where they are. For some people, that will mean starting slowly and carefully recognizing that many people—especially Indigenous people—have been doing this for a long time. Here is Lori’s starting point:

Lori: I am a Two-Spirit *nēhiyaw āpihtāwikosisān* iskwew from Treaty 6 territory in *kīwētinoḥk* *kisiskāciwan* with matrilineal ties to *mōniyawī-sākahikanihk*.

When I started university in Regina in 1991, I found the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College, now the First Nations University of Canada. When I walked in and saw Indigenous faculty members, administrators, and students, and heard the languages being spoken, it was like a homecoming. I often say that I spent kindergarten to Grade 12 learning about who I was from a family and a community and an education system that had no idea who I was. But when I walked in those doors for the first time, people knew who I was and how I came to be there. That was the first time I felt something like that. It would continue to take many years to really find out—and to feel a connection with—who I was and where I came from.

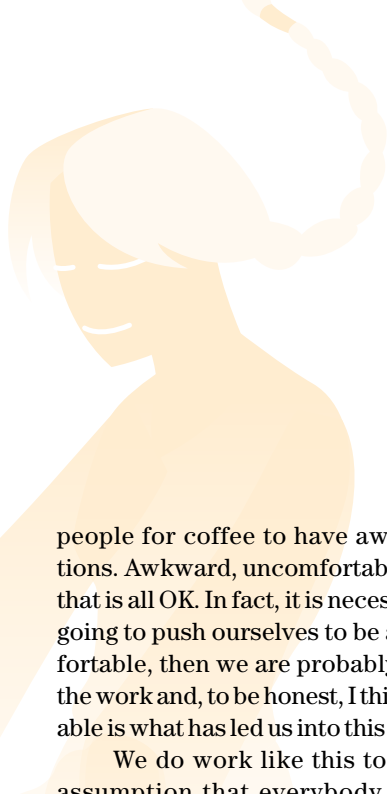


The reason that I work in education is a result of that experience I had when I was 19 years old and walked into the university. I saw the value of our education system and the impact that it can have—that it had on me and on the other students.

From my perspective as an Indigenous person and as I have learned from my Elders and relatives before me, Indigenization is not new. Indigenous people have been working to Indigenize these institutions since they were first established. The newness is that non-Indigenous people are now coming to the table to take up their part in the work. My Elders, teachers, and aunties were doing this work before me, and I need to honour that they were in these hard places at a time when they were the only ones.


Anyone in my role knows the stories of when we first entered these spaces—of having a sort of broom closet in the basement of the university where students could sneak in and come see us. Now we have reached the point where we are at least no longer in the basement, and have windows that let daylight in.

I also want to note that my Elders have specifically asked that those of us in positions like mine, with access to venues like *Academic Matters*, should make sure to let people know that we do not want non-Indigenous people to view Indigenous stories as narratives of trauma, victimization and pain. Our stories and lived experiences are those of survival and the undeniable strength of our Indigenous ancestors.



people for coffee to have awkward conversations. Awkward, uncomfortable, messy, I mean, that is all OK. In fact, it is necessary. If we are not going to push ourselves to be a little bit uncomfortable, then we are probably not really doing the work and, to be honest, I think being comfortable is what has led us into this mess.

We do work like this together under the assumption that everybody doing this work wants to learn, wants to engage, wants to share, and is coming from a good place. You may get words wrong; that is OK. There is a lot of learning for all of us to do.




Both “reconciliation” and “Indigenization” are fraught terms with complicated histories.

GET COMFORTABLE WITH THE UNCOMFORTABLE

Lori: So first—get comfortable with the uncomfortable. I know that this kind of work is awkward. I used to facilitate conversations with a settler colleague back when I was working at Saskatchewan Polytechnic and we called them “Awkward Conversations”; we would invite





Among the non-Indigenous FAUW faculty and staff who are working on Indigenization, this theme of being uncomfortable seems to capture everyone's starting point. Laura first connected with the University of Waterloo's Indigenous community by attending WISC's weekly soup lunches. While it felt awkward at first, she kept going and got to know the staff members who work at WISC and the students and non-Indigenous people who attend regularly. Eventually, she started to help wash dishes, and then suggested that FAUW join the rotation of campus groups making soup. Several of the folks at FAUW who are working on Indigenization tell similar stories about having to get up the nerve to start visiting WISC and making those connections outside of their comfort zones.

For most of us, the willingness to get uncomfortable is a crucial first step. Much of this discomfort comes from a fear of making mistakes. But, as an Indigenous student told Shannon, non-Indigenous people have a long history of making mistakes when it comes to Indigenous people. This fear of making mistakes is not exactly fear of the unknown.

DE-CENTRING SETTLERS WITHOUT BURDENING INDIGENOUS FOLKS

For FAUW, the mistakes that non-Indigenous people make are front and centre because the majority of its members and staff are non-Indigenous. FAUW represents about 1,400 faculty members. Among these, we know of only two who are Indigenous. In addition to these professors, Waterloo employs a handful of Indigenous sessional instructors, but they are not represented by FAUW. None of FAUW's staff are Indigenous. Waterloo is pretty typical in this regard. According to recent Statistics Canada data, 1.4 per cent of professors and 1 per cent of PhD students across Canada are Indigenous. (It is worth noting that not all non-Indigenous faculty are white. For the purposes of this article, we primarily use the term "non-Indigenous", but we recognize that it does not quite capture the relational significance that different non-Indigenous groups have to settler colonialism.)

One of the big challenges that inspired FAUW's creation of its Indigenization Working Group was to help non-Indigenous faculty support Indigenization in meaningful ways, without either appropriating Indigenization from Indigenous people or placing additional burdens on over-worked Indigenous colleagues and community members.

As Lori stated, it is time for non-Indigenous people to join in the Indigenization work Indigenous people have been doing for generations. So, how could we help our members get it right?

This is a serious issue. As non-Indigenous faculty become attuned to the injustices and trauma experienced by Indigenous people, they frequently try to help by inviting Indigenous speakers into their classes, by contacting WISC (or their local equivalent) for advice and information, or even by assigning their students to consult with WISC staff about course assignments. In this way, non-Indigenous consciousness-raising ends up making more work for Indigenous folks who already have too much work to do. Moreover, it is boring work! Indigenization 101 is interesting and new to many non-Indigenous academics, but it is old hat for Indigenous people.


FAUW's Indigenization Working Group follows three guiding principles:

- Help non-Indigenous faculty members take baby steps,
- Do not add to the burden on Indigenous faculty and staff,
- Stay in our lane. (That is, do not assume we know what the Indigenous community needs; do more listening and less talking.)

We have already talked about getting uncomfortable. Here is how the other three pieces of advice we listed above intersect with these guiding principles:

DO THE WORK

Making change takes work. Indigenous people should not have to do any more of the work than they are already doing. FAUW therefore seeks ways we can take on some of the work. Some of this work supports non-Indigenous faculty better understanding their role in Indigenization and some of the work is aimed at supporting (rather than burdening) the Indigenous community. We have provided structure and incentives for faculty members to work together on online courses related to Indigenization. We also read what Indigenous scholars have to say about Indigenizing the postsecondary system and teach our colleagues about what we have learned through blog posts, reading circles, and resource pages. Other things we have done include providing soup and labour for WISC's soup lunch from time to time, raising money for a fund to support



Indigenous student leaders, and funding an Indigenous colleague to attend a conference.

ESTABLISH RELATIONSHIPS

Many professors do a lot of solitary work. One of the striking things about the work the FAUW Indigenization team has been doing is how grounded it is in relationships. Whether we are meeting to talk about a course or an article about Indigenization, or rolling up our sleeves at the soup lunch, most of the work we do is done with other people. This reflects the Indigenous emphasis on community and relationships.

While FAUW is careful not to add to our Indigenous colleagues' workloads, we also make sure to touch base regularly with Indigenous colleagues and community members to make sure that we understand what they need and that we are engaging in useful work. Too many Indigenization efforts end up allowing non-Indigenous folks to feel like they are helping when the opposite is true. Lori and the FAUW team have built up a trusting relationship that allows us to check in regularly to ensure we are getting it right.

Of course, one of the most important relationships is with the land. FAUW now starts its events with land acknowledgements. But a land acknowledgement should not be a rote recital. It should be done, as Indigenous folks sometimes say, in a good way with a good mind. To that end, we offer blog posts and tip sheets about land acknowledgement practices, including the complexities associated with such acknowledgements, and are in the early stages of planning a workshop on the topic.


Lori: I am Cree Métis from Treaty 6 Territory in northern Saskatchewan. The territory that I am from has Indigenous peoples who are very different than the Indigenous groups that have their home in Waterloo. Where I am from, we have the Cree, Saulteaux, Dene, Lakota, Dakota, Nakota, and Métis peoples. It's very important to follow the protocol of acknowledging the original peoples.

As Indigenous peoples, we have always located ourselves in that sense. There was definitely a long time when, in mainstream settings, we may not have done this in a mixed Indigenous and non-Indigenous group, but I guarantee you that at the first coffee break or the first moment

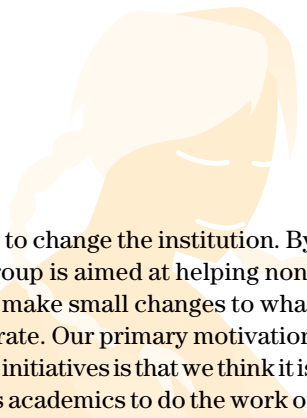
where we had opportunity to get together we were locating ourselves in that way. There is so much that we can learn from doing that. When a speaker acknowledges the territory, there is so much I know about them already. It is also an opportunity to make visible the original peoples of the land, who have been made invisible and marginalized and yet, are the original caretakers of the place. It shows respect for and recognition of Indigenous peoples, both in the past and the present. Because we are still here.

TEACH (AND LEARN FROM) THE RIGHT PEOPLE

We previously referred to Gaudry and Lorenz's research which shows most Canadian universities engaged in Indigenization seek to change Indigenous faculty and



Indigenization is not new. Indigenous people have been working to Indigenize these institutions since they were first established.



students, rather than seeking to change the institution. By contrast, FAUW's working group is aimed at helping non-Indigenous faculty members make small changes to what they know and how they operate. Our primary motivation for focusing on self-education initiatives is that we think it is important for non-Indigenous academics to do the work of learning about Indigenization, rather than imposing on Indigenous people the task of teaching them.

Too often, a non-Indigenous scholar starts their journey by contacting an Indigenous student centre or a senior Indigenous administrator to ask them where to begin. We scholars would never take such an approach in any other scholarly domain. Before we approach a historian or physicist for their expertise, we put the time in to teach ourselves the basics. To seek education from overworked Indigenous colleagues before doing one's homework disrespects their time and expertise.



There is a lot of learning for all of us to do.

That said, it is crucially important that what we are learning comes from an Indigenous perspective. Therefore, we focus on Indigenous scholars, authors, advocates, creators, and organizations in the materials we review and share. Sometimes, of course, we need to learn more directly from Indigenous people themselves. Whether we are consulting with Indigenous students or hosting Indigenous speakers or facilitators, we try to make sure that the work is interesting for them and we compensate them appropriately for their time and expertise.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

We have sketched some general principles that guide our Indigenization work: get uncomfortable, do the work, establish relationships, teach and learn from the right people. And we have suggested that faculty associations dominated by non-Indigenous members ought to work to help non-Indigenous faculty members take baby steps, to avoid adding to the burden on Indigenous faculty and staff, and to “stay in their lane.” Principles are great, but what specific actions flow from them? We conclude with a list of simple things that you may wish to try in your faculty association.

ASSOCIATION ACTIONS

Learn

- Host a monthly reading circle
- Host a massively open online course (MOOC) discussion group

Raise awareness

- Include context-specific land acknowledgements on your website, at major events, and at meetings
- Create an Indigenization section in your faculty handbook
- Organize a workshop on land acknowledgements, Indigenizing your syllabus, etc.
- Feature Indigenous faculty and research in newsletters
- Share Indigenous cultural, educational, and academic events with members

Support

- Attend/host soup lunch at your university's Indigenous centre
- Volunteer to help at Indigenous centre events
- Sponsor Indigenous faculty to attend conferences

Transform

- Build land recognition into collective agreements, constitutions
- Advocate for faculty positions for Indigenous scholars in all academic areas, not just Indigenous Studies
- If enough of your members are Indigenous, provide support and infrastructure for an Indigenous faculty caucus—and listen to their suggestions

INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

- Show up: regularly attend events (and offer to help!)
- Self-educate: read, listen to podcasts and radio shows, watch movies, follow social media accounts, join a MOOC (and host a discussion group!), subscribe to *Academica Indigenous* Top 10
- Advocate at your university's senate and board of governors
- Introduce Indigenous authors/content into your courses
- Try to have Indigenous peoples backs on social media
- Know whose land you grew up on (if you grew up in North America) and whose land you now live and work on
- Look up whose land you are visiting when you travel

Want to see more of how FAUW is helping its members respond to the TRC or find resources to help you do these things? Check out its faculty guide page on Indigenization: uwaterloo.ca/fauw/indigenization. **AM**

Lori Campbell is a Two-Spirit nēhiyaw āpihtākosisān iskwew from Treaty 6 Territory; she is Director of Shatitsirótha' Waterloo Indigenous Student Centre and Chairs the Indigenous Studies department at St. Paul's University College.

Shannon Dea is an Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Waterloo and Vice-President of the

Faculty Association of the University of Waterloo; she is a settler who grew up on the traditional territory of the St. Lawrence Iroquois, Omāmiwininiwak (Algonquin), and Huron-Wendat peoples on land covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

Laura McDonald is the Community Relations Coordinator at the Faculty Association of the University of Waterloo; she is a fourth-generation settler who grew up on the traditional territory of the Anishnabeg and Huron-Wendat peoples on land covered by the Williams Treaties.

Lori, Shannon, and Laura all live and work on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishnabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract—land 10 kilometres on each side of the Grand River that was promised to the Six Nations.

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The Indigenous diversity gap

Malinda S. Smith and Nancy Bray

Where are the Indigenous Peoples in Canadian universities?

Canadian postsecondary institutions have pursued equity, diversity, and inclusion policies and programs since the late-1980s. Since then, progress toward a more equitable academy has not advanced as many had hoped.

One issue repeatedly raised is the lack of good data, particularly data that is disaggregated and intersectional for members of racialized groups and for Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit). Recent research, notably the co-authored book by Frances Henry, Ena Dua, Carl James, Audrey Kobayashi, Peter Li, Howard Ramos, and Malinda S. Smith, *The Equity Myth: Racialization and Indigeneity at Canadian Universities* and the Canadian Association of University Teachers' *Underrepresented and Underpaid: Diversity & Equity Among Canada's Post-Secondary Education Teachers* have identified the equity data gap in representation, experiences, and pay for racialized and Indigenous scholars in Canadian universities.

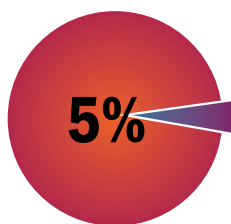
Since 2016, *The Diversity Gap* series created by Dr. Malinda S. Smith, a professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Alberta, has presented disaggregated and intersectional data on women, racialized minorities, and Indigenous peoples in the Canadian academy. The research data have been disseminated in an infographic designed in collaboration with Dr. Nancy Bray, a lecturer in Communications Fundamentals

for Professional and Writing Studies at the University of Alberta. The Diversity Gap series are published by the Academic Women's Association.

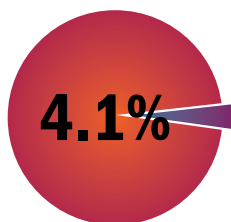
The Indigenous diversity gap infographic presented here provides answers to the question: "Where are the Indigenous Peoples at Canadian universities?" and presents for the first time an outline of an "academic pipeline" for Indigenous peoples in Canadian universities.

The infographic represents, where possible, disaggregated and intersectional data on First Nations, Métis, and Inuit in Canadian universities. According to the 2016 Canadian Census, Indigenous peoples constitute 5 per cent of the population. Although there are more Indigenous students in the postsecondary sector, the gap in completion rates for Indigenous and non-Indigenous undergraduate students persists and has remained around 14 per cent since the 1990s. Indigenous students constitute 1 per cent of PhD students on Canadian campuses. The gap in college and university teachers is closing with new target hires. Still, in 2018, Indigenous peoples constituted only 3 per cent of college instructors, 1.4 per cent of university professors, and 5 per cent of university presidents. There is a significant—15 to 20 per cent—wage gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous professors.

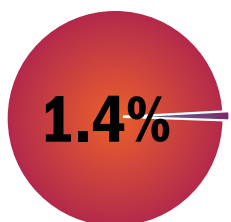
Indigenous population



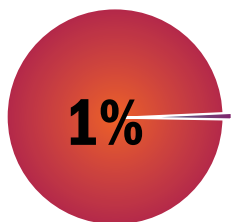
Indigenous university presidents



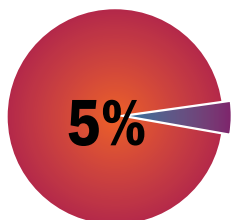
Indigenous professors



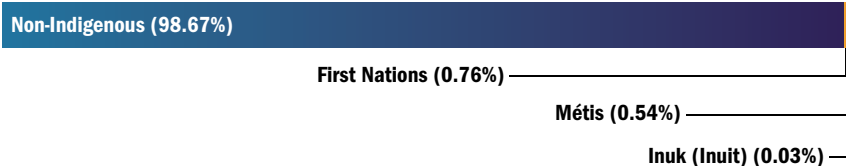
Indigenous PhD holders



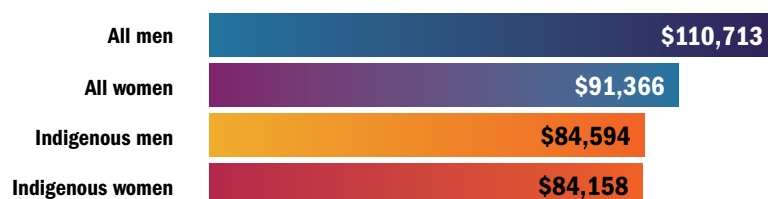
Indigenous students



Indigenous representation - university professors



Indigenous wage gap by gender - university professors

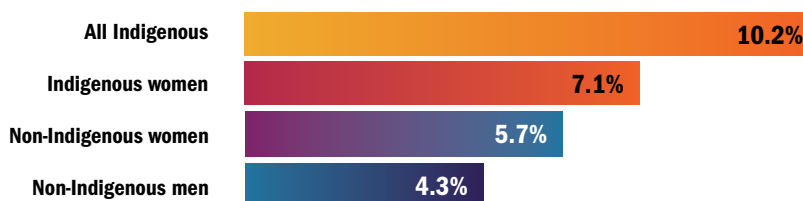


Indigenous wage gap - university professors*



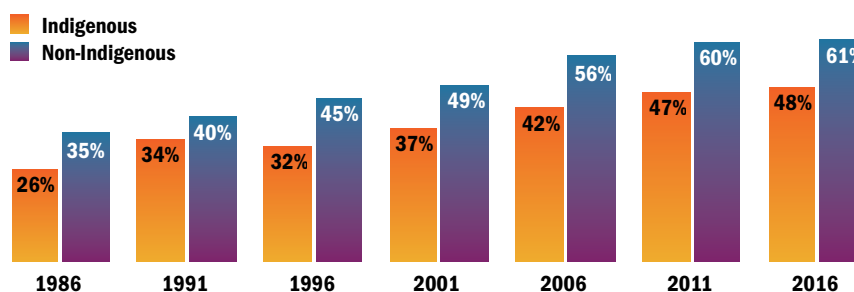
*Data not available for Inuk

Indigenous professors - unemployment rates*



*Data not available for Indigenous Men

Indigenous vs non-Indigenous postsecondary completion rate



Protecting Indigenous language rights: Much more than campus signage needed

Mary Ann Corbiere



Despite the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, many universities are only making superficial efforts to integrate Indigenous languages into their curricula. How can universities play a leading role in revitalizing Indigenous languages?



Indigenous language teacher training programs are seeing a decline in the number of mother-tongue speakers

A HISTORY OF MARGINALIZATION

As one navigates their way through a university campus and its hallways nowadays, one may notice the signs in Indigenous languages that have sprouted up. This is a response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action regarding the use of First Peoples' languages along with English (and French in bilingual institutions) on buildings, rooms, and slogans.

Although this may seem like a positive sign that universities are on a road to decolonization, delving deeper into university policies reveals that approaches to Indigenous language programming remain entrenched in colonialism. Yes, several undergraduate degree programs in Indigenous studies now exist and these typically include at least one course on the germane Indigenous language(s). There are some noteworthy Indigenous language programs at First Nations University of Canada, Algoma University, and the University of Alberta.

In Ontario, one would expect even more extensive Indigenous language programming, considering the province is home to about 60 per cent of those in Canada who speak one of three major Indigenous languages: Ojibwe, Cree, and Ojéweweh (Iroquoian languages). That is roughly 26,000 speakers. However, apart from Algoma University, there are no other degree programs on Indigenous languages in Ontario except for Six Nations Polytechnic's Ojéweweh languages program.

Two universities that have offered Indigenous language courses for over 30 years have only minors, one on Algonquian languages, and the other on Nishnaabemwin. The latter was created only recently. Such initiatives are well overdue; comprehensive programming was already urgently needed 40 years ago. Moreover, these initiatives

will not suffice as they alone cannot address an equally urgent need—production of comprehensive language learning resources. An overview of systemic factors that shape faculty complements explains why.

Indigenous language courses typically are a small component of a broader Indigenous studies program. A specialization or major in this field generally requires that students take an introductory course in an Indigenous language. This enjoys a healthy enough enrolment as it also attracts students from other programs needing an elective. That and other factors make an enrolment drop in higher-level Indigenous language courses almost inevitable and those courses often not viable.

Of the students who begin with the serious intent to learn their language, a number discover that learning a second language as an adult is very challenging. The prospect that postsecondary institutions will ever be able to create degree and diploma programs *taught in* Indigenous languages, one of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, seems worryingly slim. How can universities facilitate the pursuit of that dream?

FULL-TIME FACULTY POSITIONS ESSENTIAL

The solution requires a multi-pronged strategy. A key feature is stable full-time faculty positions that are not reliant on external funding subject to the vagaries of governments' priorities. Without these, the survival prospects of Indigenous languages will be vastly diminished. Indigenous languages will remain in the form of some rote expressions and phrases of the "My name is" and "I come from" variety uttered simply as emblems of one's identity. That is the extent of the speaking ability in their language that most Indigenous youth and



Without more fundamental changes and support from postsecondary institutions, students who have studied their language from kindergarten to Grade 12 will be stepping into a void.

adults under 40 now possess. Their learning has largely been constrained to Indigenous language as a second language, the only means most have to learn their ancestral language. The kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum and/or an introductory course in university do not afford sufficient exposure to foster full linguistic vitality.

Comprehensive learning resources and applied research in how teaching methods might be tailored to Indigenous languages are vitally needed. These issues can be addressed only if there are faculty in stable tenure-stream and tenured positions. It is in this regard that the nature of the academy—a culturally foreign edifice—is highly obstructive.

Faculty hiring criteria constitute one major roadblock. Historically, very few mother-tongue speakers of Indigenous languages obtained university degrees. Those who did, have them in non-Indigenous language fields since no degrees in Indigenous languages existed at the time. Relevant teacher training programs that have been established (the first around 1980) are certificate or diploma programs that only prepare trainees for certification as kindergarten to Grade 12 Indigenous language teachers. In Ontario, Lakehead's diploma program is the longest standing while Nipissing's was established relatively recently.

Generally, few mother-tongue speakers coming out of this type of program have gone on to obtain degrees. Some kindergarten to Grade 12 teachers also teach their Indigenous language in university on a contract basis. In very few instances have mother-tongue speakers without a degree been hired as full-time university faculty to teach their language. They, and the few other Indigenous language professors with graduate degrees, will be in a position to retire within the next five years or so. Indigenous students learning an Indigenous language are

keenly aware of the implications this situation holds for them. This has galvanized some to become actively involved in language programming.

INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION BY LEARNERS OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

A number of these learners are now actively pursuing Indigenous language revitalization through their own continued, informal studies after obtaining degrees, procuring whatever resources they can find, and creating non-credit programming for their fellow learners. A few are enrolling in linguistics degree programs, some at the graduate level. As a result, some could meet faculty-hiring criteria.

Indigenous language teacher training programs are seeing a decline in the number of mother-tongue speakers—as an aging group, few are inclined to embark on a teaching career—and the programs are increasingly admitting learners of the language. This group tends to go on to bachelor of education programs. However, certificate and Indigenous studies programs typically only have one course on the language available. Clearly, resources to serve ongoing learning needs are critical.

Although Indigenous languages historically thrived in spoken form, the context of Indigenous lives today makes a large corpus of literature also vital for language revitalization. It would facilitate literacy essential for communication among community members, many of whom reside in urban areas. It can also enable a “reawakening” of languages that are moribund. In the case of a few languages, this is occurring through collaboration between Indigenous communities and linguists who are drawing on documents such as lexicons and grammars of Indigenous languages written

by missionaries a century or more ago. Universities should not wait until a language becomes moribund or for technically savvy linguists with access to language preservation archives to come along before initiating concrete actions to help save Indigenous languages.

LEARNING RESOURCES VITALLY NEEDED

Resources must be created and curricula developed by Indigenous language teachers who are mother-tongue speakers. If more such speakers held tenure-stream and tenured positions, they could develop materials that would help not only their students but also kindergarten to Grade 12 teachers who are not fluent. For instance, this group of people has no resources in Nishnaabemwin (Ojibwe) that they can refer to akin to the *Bescherelle* handbooks for French. The number of books in Nishnaabemwin that one might find in school libraries is nowhere near the number that exist in French. This corpus—mainly compilations of traditional stories or accounts of historical events told by Elders and transcribed—is growing too slowly in volume and scope, and too haltingly, to reverse Indigenous language erosion.

Performance evaluation criteria utilized by universities inhibit this vital work. The lessons and learning activities Indigenous language instructors develop do not lend themselves to publication in academic journals, a key metric of research productivity. Creative writing, such as short stories that would serve pedagogy, is also unlikely to be deemed scholarly work. Yet, these are the kinds of materials that will foster language revitalization. Linguistics articles about intriguing Indigenous language features and sociolinguistic studies examining the rela-

tionships among language, culture, and identity—however compelling they are—will not.

No Indigenous community has ever, in the history of its language, had to develop coherent, comprehensive curricula and resources. University administrations need to recognize what this implies for the faculty engaged in this work. Indigenous language faculty draft learning materials on an ongoing basis. The new activities they regularly devise are, in effect, piloted by them, and improved and expanded in subsequent years. They analyze how the intricacies of their language can best be sequenced to facilitate learners' progress.

Grammatical terms taken for granted in English—verb, noun, adverb, clause, active voice, and so on—have no equivalents in Indigenous languages. Over generations speakers simply acquired their language and none were ever compelled to dissect its features. The specialized terms linguistics has to offer—morphemes, conjunct order, voiced and devoiced consonants, and so forth—likewise lack Indigenous language equivalents. The teacher training programs usually can only introduce pertinent concepts for this field briefly.

Faculty also need to educate themselves further on linguistic concepts, in effect training on the job, to ensure that any explanations they give learners concerning grammar are accurate. Adult learners cannot be expected to internalize the numerous complex transformations entailed in conversing in an Indigenous language solely through hearing copious examples. A Nishnaabemwin verb illustrates what is involved. *Mnazaan* (He is cooking it) undergoes a radical transformation in a remark like *Wegnesh iidik ge-mnazmawaambaane* (I wonder what I should cook). Fluency does not mean patterns fall readily into a sequence from least to most complex in instructors'

Performance evaluation criteria utilized
by universities inhibit this vital work.



minds when they go to write a comprehensive curriculum. The problem solving in which they engage is theorizing and the piloting of learning activities research.

TOMORROW WILL BE TOO LATE

Any university that does not yet recognize these kind of activities as scholarly in nature needs to. Without that recognition, there will be no materials that can actually facilitate Indigenous language revitalization. Writing academic articles regularly to meet standard performance evaluation criteria takes time away from producing materials that are needed more urgently as the retirement of mother-tongue faculty looms closer. The second-language learners who will need to deliver Indigenous language programming in the future will need those resources. Materials truest to the language can be developed only by those who hear the language—its phonology and phraseology—in their minds the way that mother-tongue speakers do.

Already I get periodic queries from non-fluent Indigenous language teachers in school boards who ask if there are resources they can use to learn more of the language. Already their teaching at the intermediate levels is stunted because of the knowledge they cannot access. Materials developed at universities must be made available to such learners, and to anyone who is striving to learn an Indigenous language. Materials must not be restricted to only those students registered in the university's courses. For those languages that are even closer to extinction—the situation for most Indigenous languages—such resources are even more crucial.

Unless such work is nurtured and shared beyond an individual university, it will never be possible for Indigenous

postsecondary students to enrol in courses *taught in their language* that are not courses *on* their language. Without more fundamental changes and support from postsecondary institutions, students who have studied their language from kindergarten to Grade 12 will be stepping into a void if they go to university with the intent of doing further studies in their language. Non-fluent speakers teaching their language will only be able to give skeletal coverage of its vast complexities. This is as unacceptable to the Indigenous community as skeletal coverage of French would be to the Francophone.


The challenge to universities is a tall one given that their rankings are largely determined by the credentials their faculty possess, the scholarly publications they churn out, and the rank they hold, as well as the fact that these criteria have been entrenched in provincially-mandated quality assurance processes.

In the face of such monolithic forces and the financial pressures universities face, it would take a brave institution to make the commitment needed to answer—in a meaningful way—the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action with respect to Indigenous language preservation and revitalization. Do any dare? Or would doing more than sprinkling Indigenous language signs in a few highly visible places pose too great a risk to one's ranking? Is dedicating full-time positions to Indigenous language faculty too onerous a cost? Are token symbols that burnish their image as responsive institutions all they are willing to invest in? ■■

Mary Ann Corbiere is a tenured Professor of Indigenous Studies at the University of Sudbury where she teaches her mother tongue, Nishnaabemwin. She has also served as Native Languages Co-Chair of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Association of Ontario.

REFRAMING RECONCILIATION: A move towards conciliation in academia

Ashley Courchene

An illustration featuring a wide, orange chasm. A bridge made of two vertical orange pillars and a horizontal blue beam spans the gap. On the left side of the bridge, two Indigenous figures stand near a traditional teepee and forest. On the right side, two academic figures stand near a modern university building. The background is a gradient of orange and purple with stylized clouds. The text is centered within the chasm.

After four years,
reconciliation is
not what we hoped
it would be in our
classrooms. How did
we get here, and is
there any way to fix
what is broken?



RECONCILIATION IN ACADEMIA IS DEAD

In fact, reconciliation as a national project may have been dead on arrival after the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) released its final report in 2015. Failed attempts of reconciliation in Canadian politics can be seen in the ever-present discordance in the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, the increasing number of boil-water advisories on First Nations communities that are not being fixed, the disproportionate number of Indigenous peoples in the justice system, and the disproportionate number of Indigenous youth in the child welfare system.

Higher education institutions have continued to try and foster good relationships with Indigenous people in university settings. However, many postsecondary initiatives ring hollow with Indigenous faculty members and students.

Several examples in Ontario showcase this. In 2018, Angelique EagleWoman—the first Indigenous dean of law at Lakehead University—resigned from her position citing systematic racism and tokenization, despite the university administration’s commitment to Aboriginal and Indigenous law. Reports of similar occurrences within universities across Canada further illustrate a disturbing trend.

In 2018, Doug Ford scrapped a program that would have increased Indigenous content in the provincial elementary and high school curriculum. Misinformation about Indigenous peoples still runs rampant in our classrooms and Indigenous students are often gaslighted by professors for speaking out, making these students question their own knowledge of their people.

If reconciliation was a fad shaped by political discourse, 2018 may have been the year the fad ended.

As an Anishinaabe scholar watching any hope of proper reconciliation dwindle over the course of four years, I have to ask the following questions: How did we

get here? What do we do now? And is there any way to fix what is broken?

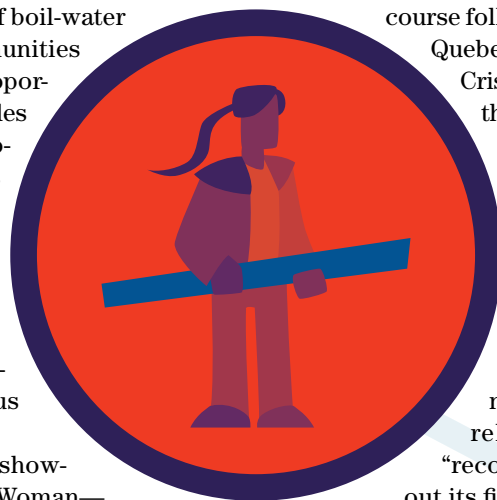
HOW DID WE GET HERE?

Reconciliation did not start with the release of the TRC’s Final Report. It originated in Canadian political discourse following the 1990 standoff in Kanesatake, Quebec, known to many Canadians as the Oka Crisis. In the aftermath of the 78-day conflict that left a Quebec provincial police officer dead and a community with few coping mechanisms to address the impacts of militarized state violence, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) was established.

RCAP was first formed in 1991 to address the strained relationship between Canadians and Indigenous nations. After five years, the Commission released its report featuring the word “reconciliation” in various contexts throughout its five volumes. This included a promised Royal Proclamation on Reconciliation, which has yet to materialize.

In response to RCAP, Canada published *Gathering Strength: Canada’s Aboriginal Action Plan* in 1998. The document recognized and apologized to “those who experienced physical and sexual abuse at Indian residential schools,” and acknowledged the Canadian state’s role in the development and administration of these schools. *Gathering Strength* also unveiled a long-term broad-based policy approach to reconciliation. This became the catalyst for the 2006 Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement—a \$2 billion compensation package for residential school survivors and the creation of the TRC.

Canada did not suddenly jump into action to fix the problems it created through the residential school system. Even though RCAP made recommendations for a public inquiry, it took the continued persistence of survivors to create the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement

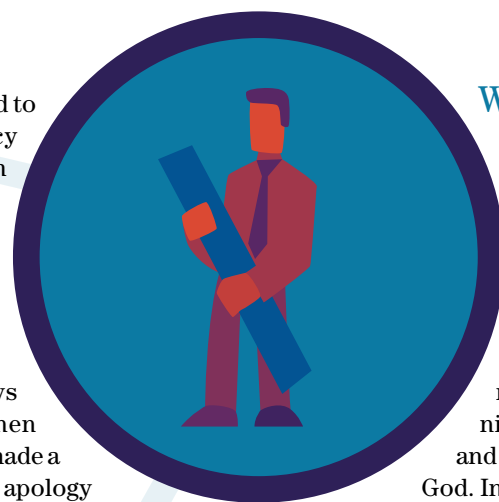


If reconciliation was a fad shaped by political discourse,
2018 may have been the year the fad ended.

and the TRC. Canada only agreed to these because its bureaucracy grew financially exhausted from fighting battles in court. Despite Canada's refusal to implement change, the TRC was finalized in May 2006 through the hard work and persistence of residential school survivors.

On June 11, 2008, 10 days after the launch of the TRC, then Prime Minister Stephen Harper made a public apology to survivors. The apology and the Commission were mandated outcomes of the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement. Reconciliation seemed to create a model for "forgiveness" that would bring Indigenous peoples back into the fold with the rest of Canada. This was the government's commitment to reconciliation. Then on December 15, 2015, with the release of the TRC's Final Report, Justin Trudeau, who has since become Prime Minister, tearfully stated Canada's commitment to implementing every Call to Action made by the Commission.

Since then, the term "reconciliation" is used almost every time Indigenous peoples are brought up in conversation. Justice Murray Sinclair, the chair to the TRC, stated in 2015 that reconciliation was a Canadian problem, not an Aboriginal one. Yet, the emergence of reconciliation as another empty buzzword creates problems for Indigenous peoples. Historian Ian Mosby revealed in 2017 that only 7 of the 94 Calls to Action were implemented over two years, and as of March 2019, only 10 of the 94 calls have been completed, according to the CBC.



WHAT NOW?

If reconciliation is not what we hoped it would be, then what does it really mean?

Métis professor David Garneau makes the link between reconciliation and Judeo-Christianity in his article *Imaginary Spaces of Conciliation and Reconciliation*. Garneau states that reconciliation refers to a previously harmonious relationship between the individual and the church, or between the individual and God. In the context of Indigenous-Canadian relations, this concept of reconciliation lends itself to question whether there was ever a previous harmonious relationship between Indigenous nations and the Canadian state to which we can return.

For me, the answer is invariably "no." Given that the first Prime Minister of Canada, John A. MacDonald, was eager to strip Indians of their title to land and force Indigenous children into residential schools, I would be hard pressed to find a harmonious relationship that ever existed prior to the (illegal) establishment of the Canadian state.

Duncan Campbell Scott, Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs from 1913-32, drove MacDonald's assimilation policies even more aggressively. Scott has been most famously quoted for wanting to "get rid of the Indian problem" by ensuring the assimilation of Indigenous people into the Canadian body politic until there was no "Indian question, and no Indian department."

There was no previous harmonious relationship.

So, what does that mean for reconciliation? I think we, as academics, need to shift our thinking from reconciliation to conciliation, or simply finding a resolution to the conflicts between Indigenous peoples and the Canadian state. The question is not about forgiveness, moving on, or any term we currently associate with reconciliation. This includes Indigenousization or decolonization of academia, which I will discuss further.

Instead, we need to frame our discussions and research around the conciliation of poor Indigenous-Canadian relations—whether they have manifested





If we wish to advance conciliation
between Indigenous peoples
and the Canadian state,
we must take seriously the idea
of true decolonization.

as standoffs, courtroom battles, or uneven dynamics in the classroom.

Yet the question remains: How?

DECOLONIZATION IS NOT A METAPHOR

Many times when we speak of reconciliation, we speak of the Indigenization or decolonization of our classrooms. Indigenization and decolonization are often used interchangeably, and multiple definitions have emerged as scholars have grappled with solutions to problems we observe in our fields. For instance, one definition of Indigenization proposed by Matthew Stranach in an article published by *The Conversation* is “the process by which Indigenous ways of knowing, being, doing and relating are incorporated into educational, organizational, cultural and social structures.”

Moir MacDonal has outlined the many ways that campus Indigenization can take place, whether it is through the establishment of Indigenous spaces and symbols, increased academic programs and resources, or through the creation of research chairs and projects. These initiatives seem to place emphasis on the incorporation of Indigenous ways of knowing, being, doing, and relating in academic spaces.

However, Tuck and Yang remind us that decolonization is not a metaphor for improving our schools or society. In fact, decolonization is the “re[mat]riation of Indigenous land and lives.” If we wish to advance conciliation between Indigenous peoples and the Canadian state, we must take seriously the idea of true decolonization.

In 2016, the Infrastructure Resiliency Research Group (IRRG) at Carleton University was caught holding a symposium that brought together energy corporations and law enforcement agencies to ask how to deal with protestors. The topic was framed as a matter of “security.” In *Policing Indigenous Movements: Dissent and the Security State*, Andy Crosby and Jeff Monaghan have made the link

between extractive industries and surveillance of Indigenous land defenders by Canadian security agencies.

Knowing that Indigenous people are at the forefront of these protests, a group of student organizers shut down IRRG’s event. I was a part of this group and held meetings with faculty members associated with the IRRG in an effort to explain why IRRG’s symposium was so problematic and to identify a common way forward. After a series of denials and broken promises, it was clear no viable resolution could be reached. IRRG still exists today.

Later in 2019, while participating in a newly established committee to update Carleton’s Indigenous Strategy, it was revealed that the university pension plan includes investments in oil and energy corporations. The January 2019 invasion of Wet’suwet’en territories by the RCMP to enforce an injunction that allowed Costal GasLink Pipeline Ltd (a subsidiary company of TransCanada) to begin work on a pipeline, demonstrates the disregard for Indigenous peoples’ lands and lives held by many of these oil and energy companies.

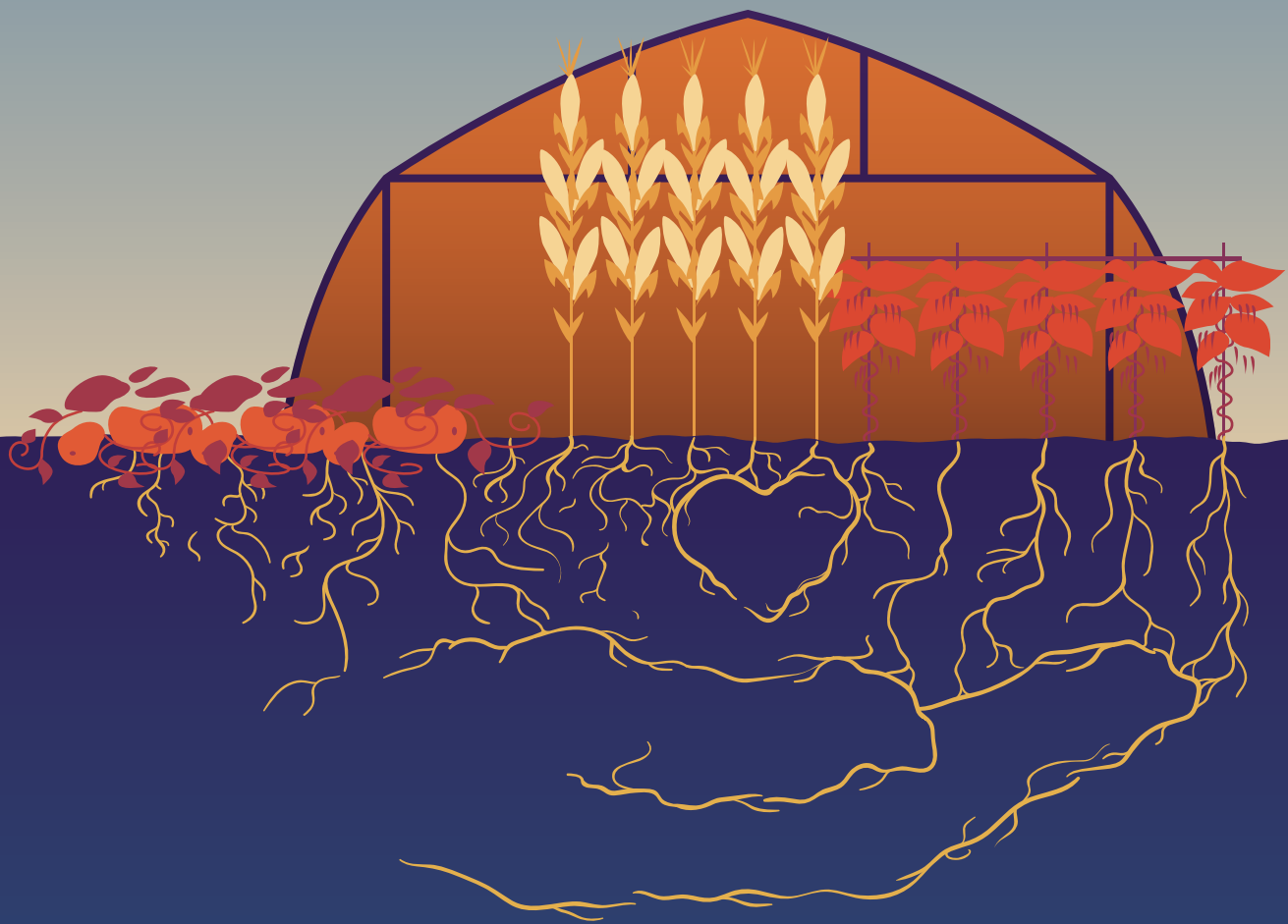
We cannot speak of conciliation in academia while university administrators, faculty, and staff are complicit in violations of Indigenous rights and sovereignty. Until privileged members of the academy take seriously the rematriation of Indigenous land and lives as the only path to conciliation and focus their work on this topic, any attempt to Indigenize or decolonize academia will only wind up as a dead-end, much like the concept of reconciliation. **AM**

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Indigenous researchers plant seeds of hope for health and climate

Hannah Tait Neufeld, Brittany Luby, and Kim Anderson



Indigenous land-based learning provides hands-on opportunities for knowledge development that shift away from Eurocentric forms of education. How can universities use land-based learning to impact students, research, and the environment?



Organic farm hoop house and gardens. (Hannah Tait Neufeld), Author provided



Three sisters (winter squash, maize and climbing beans) summer garden at the University of Guelph. (Hannah Tait Neufeld), Author provided

As we learn more about climate change, this knowledge can be paralyzing, especially for young people who are contemplating life pathways.

Indigenous land-based learning offers an avenue for hope, embedded in action. This approach has been taken up in recent years by a number of postsecondary institutions in Canada and internationally.

This is the focus of our work—as mixed ancestry (Hannah), Anishinaabe (Brittany), and Métis (Kim) scholars at the University of Guelph in Ontario. According to Indigenous ways of knowing, we are only as healthy as our environments. And so our research addresses sustainable food practices that feed the well-being of all our relations: human, land, spirit.

Using food as a starting point for action, we have launched a community-based research program—to promote conversations and opportunities across geographic and social spaces that forge and rekindle relationships focused on traditional food ways.

This work starts with relationships, and it involves labour—both of which are critical to Indigenous pedagogy. With Indigenous community partners, we engage social science, nutrition, and engineering students in hands-on

work in Indigenous food and medicine gardens and in manomin (wild rice) fields.

This enables us to focus on time-honoured relationships in our homelands and university lands while preparing for the future.

“GREEN SHOOTS THAT GROW AFTER A FIRE”

The relationship that Indigenous peoples have with the land encourages practices and traditions that perpetuate healthy families and communities. On- and off-reserves, momentum is building and communities want to be involved in building opportunities for learning and social interactions around food.

In collaboration with other Indigenous faculty, students, and a growing urban network, we have been working to expand gardens in the wider Grand River Territory and at the University of Guelph on the ancestral lands of the Attawandaron people and the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit. We work together to strengthen land-based relationships and local food sovereignty.



Preserving foods from the garden at a fall 2018 canning workshop. (Hannah Tait Neufeld), Author provided

In an effort to address community needs in southwestern Ontario, our ongoing research is designed to engage a diverse group of partners, collaborators, and knowledge users. Garden sites have been established with the assistance of the local Indigenous community at the University of Guelph Arboretum to address food access and knowledge barriers and explore innovative land-based education and practices.

Since the spring of 2018, a group of committed community members, faculty, and students have planted and nurtured edible and medicinal plants. The gardens are known collectively as *Wisahkotewinowak*, which means “green shoots that grow after a fire.”

The garden brings together community agencies such as the Grand River Métis Council, White Owl Native Ancestry

Association, and Global Youth Volunteer Network. Elder-led workshops on medicinal plants, and preservation methods have taken place throughout the four seasons.

This project has strengthened inter-generational and inter-regional relationships. Using food as a starting point, conversations and opportunities for sharing allow people to share their knowledge and to forge relationships with the land and each other.

HISTORIES OF LOSS OFFER CLUES FOR REGROWTH

In some cases, however, environmental change has limited the ability of Elders to pass on traditional knowledge through hands-on activities such as planting and harvesting foods.

Such is the case at Dalles 38C Indian Reserve from which Brittany’s Anishinaabe ancestors originate. Upstream and downstream dams control the flows into and out of the Winnipeg River which runs through the reserve.

Water depths within manomin habitats have been altered by hydroelectric development and continue to be

We work together to strengthen
land-based relationships and
local food sovereignty.





A damselfly resting on a manomin plant in July 2018. (Brittany Luby), Author provided

subject to fluctuations during the growing season that do not resemble the natural patterns to which manomin adapted.

Discharges from upstream sources have also affected sediment and water quality. These sources include the community of Kenora, Ontario and a pulp and paper mill that ceased operation in the 2000s.

Researchers at the University of Guelph have partnered with the Economic Development Committee at Dalles 38C Indian Reserve to determine which factors are limiting the growth of manomin and to develop management strategies to control these factors.

The traditional knowledge of Elders—shared through interviews and river tours—aid in understanding the historical relationship between water fluctuations, urban discharge, and the growth of manomin.

By combining traditional knowledge of manomin with more recent observations about riverine change, youth involved in the research can begin to understand that histories of loss may, indeed, provide clues for regrowth. This changed lens results in a future-oriented view of the Winnipeg River that challenges the nature and duration of settler-industrial landscapes.

Elder knowledge allows youth to envision compromised fields as productive Anishinaabe spaces.

ALL OUR RELATIONS

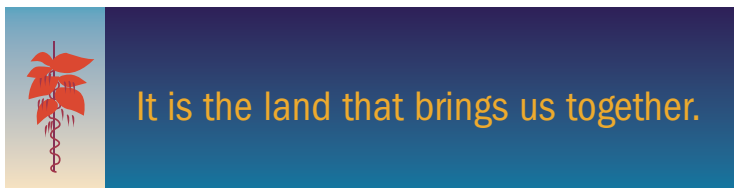
University research and teaching through projects like the *Wisaktowinowak* gardens and the manomin project create new opportunities for youth and Elders to interact, both on campus—by planting seeds—and in Anishinaabe homelands through the revival of traditional harvesting.

It is the land that brings us together, the land that teaches relationship-based ways of knowing about the natural world and its food systems.

And with the increasing uptake of postsecondary land-based education, we may just change the way upcoming generations envision our environment and shape the future that unfolds on it. **AM**

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