

Indigenizing Curriculum | Text Transcript | The Hub for Teaching & Learning Excellence

This is a text transcript for the recorded event “Indigenizing Curriculum” presented by the Hub for Teaching & Learning Excellence in the College of Social and Applied Human Sciences (CSAHS). The event was recorded on February 8, 2019.

Transcript:

Byron Sheldrick:

Alright, everyone, I think we'll get started. I know there's probably a few more people on their way. So, welcome to this Lunch and Learn and dialogue sponsored by the College of Social and Applied Human Sciences: Teaching and Learning Excellence Hub.

My name's Byron Sheldrick, and I'm the Associate Dean Academic for the College.

Today we're very fortunate to have Kim Anderson, a faculty member in the Department of Family Relations and Applied Nutrition here who's gonna speak to us about Indigenizing the curriculum. I've known Kim for quite a long time now. She is fantastic and she also has been helping the College in developing its strategy around Indigenization.

This is a major plank in the College's Strategic Plan. So I think I'm looking forward to the dialogue. I'm gonna let Kim say a bit more about herself and take it away.

Just before we do, one item of business. We've realized that as we've done these things we haven't really tracked who's attended and who hasn't, and we haven't, as a result, been able to send out requests for feedback.

So, if you haven't, Chris Donaldson over there has a clipboard that has the names of everyone who signed up to attend. So if you could before you leave today just check your name off.

If you didn't sign up, that's fine you don't have to leave. We still welcome you. But just maybe write your name and email on the list so that we can get in touch. And that will also help us keep you informed about future events as well, and to seek feedback about this event.

So with that, I will just turn it over to Kim.

Kim Anderson:

'Kay, thank you. So, thank you for inviting me to do this, and Chris for all the work he did organising.

As Byron said, I'm a faculty member in FRAN. I'm a Canada Research Chair, so I have a smaller teaching load so I'm not actually, I'm gonna talk about the type of teaching I've been doing

But, I have had more limited experience teaching on this campus than the teaching that I did at Laurier where I was before I came here. Where I was teaching in an Indigenous Studies department, which is a totally different project than maybe some of the things we're gonna talk about today.

I just, you know, we're all running in to have our lunch, and like running across, and you know, I flew in my broomstick, too. Or rather, came from the museum where I'm doing a shameless plug for an exhibit

that we're developing for Guelph Civic Museum, myself, and Cara Wehkamp, Brittany Luby, and Chelsea Brant.

And, I put this up here first of all just cause its kind of like, there I am the lonely Indigenous, identified Indigenous faculty member in CSAHS, I think I'm the only one in CSAHS, I was brought in as part of the Indigenous cluster hire where they brought in six Indigenous faculty and deployed us across the colleges.

But it can be a little bit of work being the only Indigenous faculty member in a college and being the one, the go to person for all that kind of stuff. So I welcome and honour that and I also think we need to have like more of a surround to do this kind of thing so.

I also put that up there because I think that once we get into talking about what you can do to bring thing into your courses one of the easiest things is not to have to look in for resources to bring people in or ask people who are constantly being asked for guest lecturing and so on, but to look at what's going on out there in the community that you can kind of like map in with your assignments, map them up with your students get them to use this stuff that's going on because there's actually a lot of stuff that's going on so maybe we can talk about that a bit more.

And I just highlighted up there dialogue in blue because I know a lot of my old friends around here, a lot of you have been thinking and working on this kind of thinking about this Indigenizing curriculum piece for a long time, you're committed, you've spent decades in some cases so I think we could have like a little discussion hopefully we'll have some time, I know that we said we're gonna go to 12:30 so well hopefully I'll go through my stuff fairly quickly we'll have some time to talk and the folks need to scuttle and scurry out at 12:30 we'll do that and if people want to stay and discuss we can probably go until quarter to one before we have to like tidy up and get ready for the next group.

Is that right, the organisers. Okay, so that being said I'm gonna start this this talk with the way in which we start a lot of gatherings and I'm gonna do it by reading the territorial acknowledgment.

So we acknowledge that the University of Guelph resides on the ancestral lands of the Attawandaron people and the treaty lands and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit.

We recognise the significance of the Dish with One Spoon Covenant with this land and offer a respect to our Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and Métis neighbours as we strive to strengthen our relationships with them.

Today, this gathering places home to many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples and acknowledging them reminds us of our important connection to this land where we learn and work.

So I'll ask for an honest show of hands of how many people glazed over while I was doing that.

You don't have to, you can put up like a little secret yeah okay, the territorial acknowledgement you know we've done that piece we're familiar with it, but I was using this in a class I taught in social policy earlier this week in my department because what I realised is that a lot of students are familiar with this already a lot of us are familiar but it doesn't mean anything.

They don't even understand what Haudenosaunee is and so the question is, are we being -- what are we doing with this? How is it that we're engaging this in terms of wanting to move forward on our projects

of Indigenization or of decolonization is which is another way that people are saying is really what we need to do.

And some of you may have seen Hayden King who was on CBC a couple weeks ago or earlier last week I think and he was talking about how he almost regretted writing the one for Ryerson, right.

Did anybody see this or listen to it? Did anybody, so what are some of the thoughts that you might have had when you were listening to Hayden when he was talking about this? Yeah.

Attendee:

Yeah it really resonated because I think that we often don't think what that compels us to do or what obligations we might have as settlers and as people who I guess taken over some of the responsibilities from these early treaties and so I like what he was saying that it's not enough you have to go one step beyond the territorial acknowledgement into what is that, what's the action that accompanies that.

Kim Anderson:

Right and how do you use it as a framework not as something that you wrote that you list off which like Byron and I was just talking about this we've had discussions about mix feelings about it and I'm not like don't ever just get up there read it don't do it because I think it does open up space for discussion it does position Indigenous peoples in a certain place, right.

But I think that we to pay heed to this and particularly in working with students because the students again, they know what it is but they really don't have any idea of what that means for them, and sometimes that can cause kinda backlash and so on right.

And you can, you can feel, you can feel that so he's talking about you know making a commitment and interpreting it, doing your own territorial acknowledgement about this is what it compels me to do, with the lands that we're on.

So I brought this into this classroom I was teaching this class earlier this week on social policy and I started out with the territorial acknowledgement and I said if we're thinking about social policy around children, youth and families, what the heck does that have to do with the territorial acknowledgement and the lands that we're in?

And so I started to go through each piece of the territorial acknowledgement, starting with the Attawandaron and first of all like who were the Attawandaron, the folks that were here you know the neutral people that were here into the 17th century, the people for whom we have all sorts of archaeological evidence in this lay here in these lands, so I was trying to get them to think about that and I said you know, if we think about child, youth and family policy, these are matrilineal people right, where women lived in long house long houses, you know multiple families headed by women, living in long houses and so there was like a certain amount of social capital for women, there was a certain of focus on children in the next seven generations, so I went through this whole thing trying to talk to the students about what does that actually mean for what you are studying as students, in the discipline that we're studying in this particular course.

What does it mean, how do we map on the the first part of the territorial acknowledgement which is about the Attawandaron.

And you know I'm not going to go into a all of my Indigenous, feminist history and positioning around that, but that's the type of stuff that I would use for the particular engagement that I'm doing and what I'm trying to work with that class and trying to get them to think through that right.

Then I said also okay so it talks about the Dish with One spoon, we know that it talks about the Dish with One Spoon, what does that mean for where we are in these lands, what are some of the principles that are coming like some of the ones that Rick Hill who's a Tuscarora from Six Nations, a magnificent educator, many of you are familiar with him I'm sure.

You know what does that mean with how he's interpreted the Dish with One Spoon and again I'm not gonna go through the whole history of this because part of the exercise is if you don't know, Google it right, find out go and find out, go and look, look at what Rick Hill has actually said and written about this.

But again trying to map in on to the context of the class I was teaching, I was saying to them okay this is the principles about how you only take what you need, you always leave something for somebody else and you keep the dish clean.

What does that mean in terms of social policy for children, youth and families. How do we start to interpret that and understand that.

What does it mean for the students, I'm talking to you as a class right what does it mean for you as you go out into the world into some of these professions of helping or education or whatever it is right, for students studying who are studying in my department, Family Relations and Applied Nutrition, what does it mean for where you're going and how do you situate yourself in this Dish with One Spoon that we live in.

What does keeping the dish clean mean for children, youth and families of this territory right. How do we live by that and what does it mean in terms of how we have settler-Indigenous relationships in these lands.

So its like again, placing the net territory and try and understand what that means for where they're going.

And then of course most, I think Brittany Lu- I just came out of a meeting with Brittany Luby, our Anishinaabe professor in the History department she said she was reading something about how the majority of young people, they know what Indigenous or Indian or whatever it is but they don't actually couldn't name one nation of Indigenous peoples.

So I got into that, I'm like okay we're talking about Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples why is that in the territorial acknowledgement well you know we're in treaty lands of the Anishinaabe, we have this history of loyalists coming up after the American revolution and wanting this land, wanting to displace Indigenous from these lands because they wanted these territories that we're standing on working in right now right.

All of our ancestors, so what does that mean how do you understand that. And what does that mean in terms of the local you know where the closest local Indigenous community is.

Or the two reserve communities which are Six Nations and New Credit right. Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe people that are living in those territories in our way. Do you understand what that means?

And what does that mean if you're going to go out and be teacher in this area? Or what does that mean again I'm pitching it you know if you're going to be a policy analyst working with children, youth and families. How does that inform the way that you're the way that you're moving forward.

So at the end I was, I asked them to come up with an exercise of what Hayden King calls us to do which is write our own territorial acknowledgement, and I didn't like teasing these folks in the front row you're the kids that I'm gonna call on to to say it.

But I really encouraged them to think about trying to use that as a way of situating themselves what is it we need to learn, how is it that we're applying to the to the learning that we're doing in this course in this program, in this context of this lands, at this periods in history, and where we're going forward.

And that to me would be a more useful exercise for the students in thinking through you know what does it really mean when we're thinking about Indigenization or decolonizing the curriculum right.

Moving forward, so this is something that I like to promote a lot of Indigenous artists, this is by my friend, Christi Belcourt who's an Indigenous, Métis artist and she did her mapping of these lands that we're in thinking about what it means from different contacts and I think also informing us how we might position ourselves differently around the territories that we're in, and where we come from and where we're going right.

So I'm going to give you like a minute of silence just to think about your discipline, what it is you're teaching, who you are, how you're situated here like how I was asking the students to do, and maybe just jot down like a discussion point or a question that we can get into around how you would do a territorial acknowledgement.

I'm just gonna give you, just a very short period so just ponder on that for a second.

So this probably makes a really boring video for the recording, but I think its good to I mean, of course we all run around like crazy all the time and we don't actually sit, Karen was saying she was enjoying sitting and just staring into space of thinking right.

And I think its important to, to think about just sitting with, sitting with where we are at in these territories and thinking through that with your own particular, personal or professional context right.

Taking the time to be with that and you need, you kinda need more than a minute in a crowded room in the short time that we have, but I think that if we can do that, it will really help us to think through and to get around the fears that we have around Indigenizing our courses and Indigenizing the curriculum right.

So I'm not gonna wave a magic wand and give you a 100 tips cause you can actually find some of those things out there, but rather invite you to sit with some of these things and help, hopefully help us advocate or maybe further discussion through the things that we do as we're going to move along.

So one of the things that's happening right now, first of all we've had Indigenous activity on the campus or organising Indigenous activity on the campus since our beautiful Dr Cara Wehkamp started the Aboriginal Students Association in 2001 and we opened the Aboriginal Resource Centre in 2003.

I've been around all these years mostly because I moved to Guelph to get out of Toronto and I was sitting in the library drinking coffee and hey there's native people on campus and then I end up being a

community, I was a community member, so I've been on all sides of the things, but I was a community member developing the Aboriginal Resource Centre along with Cara who was a student at the time.

Cara's now the Special Advisor to the Provost on Aboriginal Initiatives and probably most of you know who she is because she's everywhere. And I just came out of a meeting with her and I said I'm gonna put your picture up but I think probably everyone knows who you are so if they don't they should because she's pretty central.

So anyway, we had different initiatives coming along and I wanted to draw your attention to a couple of things that are happening right now, one is that of course with CSAHS we do have Indigenous, Indigenous strategy that's part of the strategic, what's it called strategic framework right. Strategic framework.

So there's a commitment that's been made in CSAHS as of 2017, we've been rolling along with activity, starting with a town hall that I hosted in the fall of 2017, and when I say rolling along we haven't, we're gonna get to the strategic part of it, probably in the spring, with a little retreat.

But what's come out of it is we've really been focused on curriculum, just because that's what presented itself and that's what we ended up sort of like starting out on.

So I'll talk a little bit on the curriculum review that we've been doing, they'll be a analysis ready and done by the spring for everybody to read a report about our curriculum review, our college-wide curriculum review.

And just a heads up that the Aboriginal Initiative Strategic Task Force, which is the campus-wide one, is launching right now and there is a curriculum committee that's chaired by Brian Husband at the moment out of the College Biological Sciences and from our College Myrna Dawson and yeah, Myrna's on it, and Robin Roth are on that committee so far, we're working along on it.

So there are, there are those of us who have been working on curriculum issues and there will be more coming up as we go along.

Just so you have an idea of what the strategic, what the initiatives task force is gonna do we have five committees, these committees are populated, haven't met yet but we will be meeting soon.

Its trying to look at, you know more a broader picture of how we can both enhance the experience for Indigenous peoples, students and communities, community members engage with the campus as well as bringing more Indigenous ways of learning and knowing and so on.

So we have governance issues, student support, research and scholarship which I'm chairing campus environment and cultural safety so that's like what does the campus feel like in particular for Indigenous students.

It's kinda hard to read all this stuff because it's not very well, too well lit here but anyway there is a curriculum in pedagogy committee and that the stuff that they'll be looking at is you know inclusion of Indigenous knowledge of ways of knowing the curriculum development and so on right, support for that Indigenous community engagement and experiential learning which includes land-based learning, these are where we're starting out, we don't know what we might come up with as we move along.

We're hoping to have some kind of like midterm reporting by the fall, so there'll be stuff that we'll be coming out with by then, or maybe in a year's time or so on we'll have a more complete picture of where is, where it is we're going as a university.

So on to the CSAHS curriculum review so like I say the CSAHS folk, yay CSAHS we're like sort of moving along I would say further than the other colleges have done in terms of our strategy at the college level.

And, so coming out of the town hall thing that we did and starting to form a committee we realized okay, we need to sort of take a look at the curriculum and see what is going on out there like just to kind of do a scan and see what's happening in terms of the curriculum.

So Olga Smoliak from my department from FRAN bless her soul, reviewed all of the syllabus syllabi that she could access with Chris' help through all of the departments. And I don't know if we have any numbers on what she reviewed but it was, it was

Chris Donaldson:

11 hundred?

Kim Anderson:

It was 11 hundred, it was pretty, it was comprehensive, bless her soul, she went through that and she had keywords and she was looking for like what she could pull out in terms of what's going on to try to see where she would, where she would find it.

We have sent back the results from that to each department to their departmental meeting, so if you haven't, if you missed that meeting or haven't seen it, that came back.

What we thought was okay that's a first step and what we found was that there's probably a whole lot more going on obviously of what we can just see doing, doing searches through the syllabi, so we did then a survey many of you probably participated in cause you're the ones that are committed and you're here, we just finished, we just finished that, we had a tremendous response rate which was really exciting to see.

And right now we have a grad student doing an analysis, or we're hiring a grad student to do an analysis of it that will have you know have the picture come out in the spring.

But one of the things that we found was that people were reporting higher than what we saw on the syllabus about having Indigenous content and pedagogies in your teaching activities with 59 percent reporting that.

If you've engaged to integrate have you previously engaged and some people yes said they had 23 percent said yes they had before and we asked also about research which I'm not gonna focus on particular today, but of course our research does inform our teaching and if we're doing Indigenous research we feel more confident doing that.

So it was, it was interesting to see first of all the tremendous response rate and also there is activity going on out there that we need to have discussion and we'll have more fulsome discussion on that once we have results and the report.

But we asked you know okay how are you integrating things and so people came up with things we might expect we're using readings Indigenous scholarship or readings about Indigenous people in terms of case studies, films, videos all that types of resources.

Bringing in guest speakers, working with Indigenous scholars. Its interesting that people are making use of the TRC a fair bit which I thought was good right cause that's what we're hoping would come out of the TRC and including in that social policy class that I taught in last week, there was an exercise to go with the TRC that was, you know accompany the unit that I was doing.

Working with local community members and some folks are using the Aboriginal Resource Centre which is what I was saying we founded in 2003. If you don't know where it is you can go over it's the old Federal Building, Google it, look it up.

Go over there it's not just an Indigenous student centre it's there as a resource as well. So you can go and pay a visit and meet Cara. Dr Wehkamp's over there.

What we might have expected people feel unsure and that's maybe some of the sentiments of people that are here, they don't maybe some said they didn't feel it was appropriate worried about being inappropriate, worried about teaching.

We've seen backlash across the country with students you know responding to not having indigenous faculty teaching Indigenous course material right there has been backlash about that so we can maybe talk about that if I can stop talking we can have a discussion.

And in particular of course we need resources in order to do this.

We need financial resources you know I used to teach teachers at Laurier and you know of course we're talking to them about how you have to have Indigenous people being the theorists, being the ones who are doing the teaching and the speaking so they'd all come up with their unit plans well I'm gonna have Elders come to my class and I said well, where's the money coming from to pay those Elders cause we ask for a lot right, from those people that are out there to come and do the work of teaching and where's the reciprocity right.

Where is the acknowledgement of what's being given, of course we know that, we know that we need resources for that kind of thing.

In terms of connecting with local community members as well, when we were doing the task force I was like okay if we're gonna have people come to all these meetings are we going to, you know pay them to come to those meetings because our local community members again with the TRC and Indigenization we're stretched pretty far wide and we need to recognize that work right the labour that's being done by Indigenous peoples and the Indigenization and TRC fatigue that many of us are feeling at this point right?

So people also talked about you know therefore having curriculum consultants, curriculum development folks and scholarly resource centres, I thought that was an interesting suggestion so people were saying yes we have used the Aboriginal Resource Centre there are resources there, there's a library there which I always tip off students and I said if you can't find that seminal text at paper writing time that's everyone taken out of the library, go over to the Aboriginal Centre cause it's not on the system and might be it might be there right, you'll find a copy.

But yeah, what about that idea about having some kind of a resource centre that would be more directed at curriculum as opposed to the Aboriginal Resource Centre which is not only for students but primarily a student space.

So, all that being said I don't know how many people here are familiar with this article that's getting a lot of press by Adam Gaudry and Daniel Lawrence. Adam's a Métis scholar at University of Alberta.

And they wrote an article in *Alternative or Alternative* however you pronounce it talking about what's going on, they interviewed Indigenous scholars across the country about their experiences and their thoughts and insights on Indigenization and decolonizing and this is something that you'll see people sort of like talk about how Indigenizing isn't decolonizing and even when I was a Laurier we actually had the t-shirts right, I was trying to dig my t-shirt out this morning but I couldn't find it. Don't Indigenize, decolonize.

So what Gaudry and Lawrence pulled out of these interviews that they did with Indigenous scholars was, they said okay well we think we if go about this Indigenizing project in universities there's kind like three levels of it.

And maybe again it'll be hard to read one of them is like inclusion which is you make space for Indigenous students on the campus, but you don't change any of the structures, you don't change the curriculum, you don't change as Rauna Kuokkanen who's a Sámi scholar wrote, she wrote a whole book about this in 2007 and she said we asked Indigenous students to check their ontological and epistemological positioning at the gates of the university so they come in and they're being just like you gotta, you know assimilate into what's already going on.

That's what Gaudry is saying is inclusion and then they say reconciliation locates Indigenization on a common ground between Indigenous and Canadian ideals.

Again, as I rattle away on this I'm encouraging you to think about your courses, your discipline in particular about how are you or how are you positioning that right.

So are you doing reconciliation, are you doing inclusion, or the decolonization is, there saying an overhaul and addressing those Rauna Kuokkanen has said is like you know she says, Indigenous knowledge is ways of knowing our real gift to the university but perhaps they're an impossible gift, she says. Because of the ways the universities are grounded in enlightenment thinking Western intellectual traditions, rationalism and exclusionary disciplinary boundaries.

Those are the things that I think that merit deeper thinking as we think about our particular disciplines, the classes that we're teaching and the ways in which we're making space for either Indigenization or decolonization in our programs right, in our departments. How are we doing that right?

So I'm gonna ask you to think about that a little bit, but I'll talk very briefly about what we've done in FRAN, so as I said, I came in quickly and got a CRC which means my teaching load I have ten percent teaching load I have 30 percent service because when I came in, I said to the Dean, I know it's gonna happen, I'm gonna be getting like like just everywhere and I do, I do I get calls from all across campus, emails coming in all the time right, I'm kinda like the mascot of the Indigenous scholarly mascot and I also, I said want to do that because I'm the only tenured faculty coming in so I wanna kinda mama bear those younger Indigenous faculty because I don't want them getting totally overwhelmed, and they're

up for tenure and meanwhile they've done 100 guest lectures and things that are just totally useless in their T and P.

So because, I have it, I have a ten percent teaching load, I said well I'm still gonna be teaching my little you know one of course in fourth year that Indigenous families in Canada or something that have whatever, 40, 70 students will take why don't we look at how I can teach units across the curriculum and we'll scaffold it all the way up.

So, you know starting in first year we can do that one on one you know territorial acknowledgement or the residential skill lecture or whatever it is those students are needing and then when you get up into family theory or social policy or whatever in those classes, what how are you scaffolding the learning, so that's what we're up to right now we're still working on it I've done, I started out by just sending out an email to all the faculty in my department and I'm like hey, this is what we can do, so if you want me to do a unit, lets talk about it, knowing of course I do have limited time and resources too.

So I've sort of just responded to the faculty, and working with the faculty that have responded to me.

And instead of doing one off guest lecture I've tried to make like units, I said I will mark the Indigenous content stuff so I can have dialogue with the students directly, I'll take responsibility with the readings you know so I'll have my own little, little piece in that course right.

So I've done some of that, I've also done a lot of guest lecturing, to do that too because the one off guest lecturing is not a bad thing either.

And lots of like people emailing me oh you know I wanna do a case study about you know diabetes research in Indigenous community, and so I get on and I'm googling stuff too, but I do have because I've been around for a long time I know lots of people, I've been, I remember when they started that Kahnawake diabetes project you know in the 90's back and so I have a lot of knowledge because of all the stuff that I've done right. So I have easier access to find that as an Indigenous Scholar in a certain lense.

So I help with that kind of like, helping out identify resources so really like a curriculum consultant and kind of a person that's trying to infuse in a scaffolded way, the learning through the program.

Who knows if this is the best approach but it was one that we thought we would try. That approach does require having an Indigenous Scholar in your department who's able to do that right or a curriculum consultant which some universities have done.

You know I think the faculty of education at Laurier has a, a full time curriculum consultant, some universities have done that and that's their job right.

Or am I decolonizing? Well if I think about my own territorial acknowledgement coming into that space, I often laugh at the irony because some of you have been into my office which is in the back side of the Macdonald Institute.

The Macdonald Institute has particular history around the types of education that happen there and it's interesting to me because I've been reading a lot about the history of home economics and my office was part of the model, model apartment suites on the second floor and the extension they built in the 50's which was like rotating students through to teach some about the duties of the average housewife

and the students would come and they would live there for three weeks at a time, they would rotate through laundress, you know house manager and waitress I don't know they were learning to do duties of the average housewife, which of course ironic because I'm a terrible cook, I don't sew, I haven't done any of that since grade seven, and I started doing family studies because I thought I'm really daunted at this motherhood thing so I should maybe just be a scholar about it maybe I'll be a better mother I studied the things that I'm really terrible at and now I teach about it.

The irony, I'm getting back to that acknowledgement right, so I sit in that space and I think about what was going on here and now here I am with my Métis butt sitting here in the corner of this home management office how am I gonna decolonize and reverse some of the stuff that was part of the project of the particular department program and you know history of where I am.

Which includes, eugenics, teaching about eugenics right, which included sending out matrons, social workers, you know missionaries to Indigenous communities, white women going out in this kind of civilising project which was really about breaking down extending kinship systems that maintained Indigenous people and kept them healthy in their own lands right.

So there's this whole, white supremacist background to where I'm now sitting and I'm now located in these lands.

There's this whole project of like if you think about the Attawandaron and the matrilineal ways they lived, there was a whole project, that my space and the department and everything I'm in was invested in dismantling.

And so as I tried to think about what am I doing I'm thinking about how do I begin to help students understand that, thankfully we're in a time and in a place here that I have a space, like people will allow me to get up and talk about that kind of stuff, I'm very grateful for that, so how do I help students begin to understand that and also understand themselves in the context of like, this kind of like civilization or the white saviour thing for those who are going to go out and work in helping professions right, to think through that in a more critical way and to understand history of what happened in this place right and to position themselves accordingly.

And then I think about okay well you know this is placed-based learning, what about land, how can we work with land, like it's you gotta think about land, its all about land right.

So we're in a land rich university, we are very lucky in this university because we have an arboretum space right on the campus.

We're so lucky compared to other universities so how do we engage with land in terms of the place based learning and so we have like gardens going on with Hannah Tait Neufeld another member in our department, which has to do with Indigenous food security for students on campus, we're working with Elders on land-based learning right here.

We have ceremonial working going on with Indigenous men and masculinities fires that we started as part of our CIHR Grant. And now I have my, my project which we're working on which is to build a grannies cabin in the Arboretum hopefully.

So I think about that because I'm like well if, if it's not about like oh land and where we position ourselves again in this territory, yeah there may be a space for the university to think about like treaty

land entitlement kind of process or giving lands back to the, back to the Anishinaabe that's a project right.

But in the mean time there's all sorts of other stuff that we can do to reengage and reawaken and work with students around land.

So that's what, that's what I'm thinking about right, and as I think about that who are the people who lived here, what kind of traditions did they come from, what's my department doing, what's the College doing, how do we refocus all of that to sort of like decolonize what has gone on in the past right.

So there's like there's a list you can again, google it probably a lot of you have seen it that Shawn and Pete did at the University of Virginia on 100 ways to Indigenize and decolonize academic programs and courses, and she's divided it up for like what Deans can do what faculty can do and so on.

It is contextual, we always have to think about what place we're in, again getting back to the territorial acknowledgement right. Who are we, what are we, what are these lands but what are also is the University of Guelph?

In terms of our strengths and in terms of what we can offer. So this one comes out of University of Regina, which of course is a very different place when you talking about settler Indigenous relations, all sorts of stuff, culturally it's different but she does have, some important ones that I just pulled out because I thought they're good in terms of discussion.

So that's the first one as what I'm thinking about, know the territory that you're in, think about your own territorial acknowledgement and how you might encourage students to do that, not that we want them to do every exercise in every class.

But, you know thinking about that identifying a long term benefits of Indigenization for your students and your profession.

Again, it's the gift right it's a gift, its not it's not, it shouldn't feel like this chore or this heavy handed thing that's coming down and I think that you know, disrupting the dominant idea of deficit thinking is really important.

So that what we're doing is not like teaching our students about the plate of Indigenous people all the time or about how dispossessed and you know poor and beaten up we are because where as those things are true and they need to be told within certain contexts and certain stories.

They tend to have been the dominant story which does nothing for positioning people as theorists as opposed to positioning us as subjects.

And so, you know case studies and all of that kind of stuff are a good thing but what I try to do with the students and its also kind of more fun and more groovy if they can see some of the genius of what Rauna Kuokkanen is saying gets left at the door the ontological and epistemological ways of, those ways of knowing right. The Indigenous ways of knowing.

So if you seek out review scholarship by Indigenous people in your field that's some homework.

I think this is an interesting one, develop a departmental state about why Indigenous content and pedagogies are important to the program and the discipline because I think if students aren't introduced

to this similar to like if aren't introduced to what the heck does a territorial acknowledgement what does it have to do with me?

Then they resist more right because they don't understand, so for us maybe its why are we studying Indigenous ways of knowing in a department of Family Relations and Applied Nutrition.

Well, you know first of all there was this big thing called child welfare which is you know is problematic but also there's all these traditions that we can look at of, non-hetero-patriarchal traditions that can help us to inform and think about how we might envision where we're going right.

So, actually Linda Ashbourne had said this about how we need to think about how we can commit to, why we would do that what's the gift, what do we learn from that and how does it, help to situate our students within where they are and where they might be going after leave here right.

One things that's really important is preparing responses to student questions about the level of Indigenous content and maybe we can have a quick discussion about that too but there is typically not typically, it has been common across the country to have backlash to introducing Indigenous content or why there's too much Indigenous content or why, I didn't think this was gonna be a history class or whatever right.

There's a range of it, some of you who have been doing this know how that works and I think anticipating and preparing responses to racism especially helping your TA's, like work with that I've heard faculty talking about that and about how did they prepare their TA's or help them respond to those types of things because they might not be right.

So considering off campus, land-based learning things, land, language and social relations how do we help to work those things in from a non deficit based approach to be able to give that gift to our students right.

And what I say to the students like when I was teaching in the family theory the social policy, I said okay I'm talking about Indigenous context but it's there for you to think about and perhaps translate it into other types of contexts right.

So it's applicable in a broader scheme and having to talk to them about that has maybe, you know they don't put it together or they feel resistance.

So these folks, some of you probably know they're writing Linda Tuhiwai Smith is of course she wrote the seminal work on decolonizing Indigenous research methodologies and Graham Hingangaroa Smith is her husband, they are Māori and from Aotearoa and they have done a tremendous amount of work and post secondary as well as earlier education around Indigenizing the academy for a lack of a better word.

And I put them up there just because they're kinda like the grandparents of a lot us internationally and I put I wanted to have a picture of Graham when I told his story about how I was in a conference last summer and he was sitting as just uh, he was just listening to the presenter and the subject came up about how people were feeling really, they were really struggling with the resistance they were meeting and in terms of particularly untenured faculty or people that are more worried about course evals because its a real thing that the students were saying, they had negative responses and Graham like I say he's like the granddaddy of us all he says, well the way I see it you know if you're not getting some negative feedback then you're not doing your job right.

He was telling this young scholar that was struggling with it, a settler scholar but I guess we need to think about that not only among our students but within our departments within our College, and within the University in general.

You know there is language out there like let's bring in more of that aboriginal hocus pocus, things like that are said nobody says it to my face but I know that kind of stuff is out there so how do we start to position ourselves around what is it that we're offering as a gift.

And, you know I guess I just I just like to have these two up there because they make me feel strong they make me realize that all sorts of things, are possible right.

So, I wanted to leave just a couple minutes maybe I'll just put these up here and ask people for any questions or any feedback around some of these ideas.

Again, it's not like, I have like 40 minutes and you cram in a pizza, and like okay we got it right. And a couple TimBits and we're ready to go right.

This is a long standing ongoing project and it's also, you know colonization too is a long standing and ongoing project and so, it's something that we I think, need to like continue to to dialogue about and to find ways to do it within the resources that we have and call upon to those that we need.

So I'll just open it up for any comments on any of these or questions or anything you wanted to raise. I guess you have to talk to into the mic because we're recording.

Byron Sheldrick:

Yeah, pass the mic maybe that'll be easier? Pass the mic. So anyone, go first? Great.

Craig Johnson:

Thank you, Kim, for that wonderful talk I think it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that this was one of the best talks I've been to at this or any other university in years.

Kim Anderson:

Oh thank you

Craig Johnson:

And really gotten a lot out of it.

(Group laughing)

I guess my question relates to two parts to it one concerns language and the other concerns study and work with Indigenous communities outside of Canada.

Kim Anderson:

Right.

Craig Johnson:

And with language I really appreciate your comments about thinking critically about the colonial imprint and legacy that still sort of shapes the way in way we think about language and land and social relations.

I'm wondering whether the University or the College even has gotten into discussion incorporating Indigenous languages into the curriculum and if so where that might be going and then second I'm sort of a newcomer to working with Indigenous Scholars mainly in the Andean region, I'm working with a scholar in Ecuador who's Quechua speaking Ecuadorian scholar and I'm wondering too like where do Indigenous peoples outside the North American context fit into this discussion here on campus.

Kim Anderson:

Okay, first the question about language there is an Anishinaabe language course starting I believe through College of Arts in I don't know if anybody knows more next fall I think—

Attendee:

Yeah I went to one of Cara's lunch and learns and she said it was in the works and they were hoping for fall '19.

Kim Anderson:

Fall 2019. And so we decided to start well not we, there's been discussions going on I think because Mohawk is being taught at other local universities so, that's, and maybe that's our bias some of those of us that work around with Anishinaabe.

So there's a language, there's also I have a research project, a SSHRC project some of you have talked going around interviewing people about how do we do extracurricular or everyday language on campus.

So we're starting to do activities like about how that might become part of the everyday living because people talk about how for example like in New Zealand they named buildings it becomes part of the, you know the discourse of the campus.

So we have our first, we have our Mishomis the only fluent language speaker Indigenous Anishinaabe speaker in town that I know of whose name is Chaki and we're gonna do like we're gonna do a live language lived placed based language tour coming up in a few weeks for students.

So there's this stuff, we're trying to figure out how do we start to do that kind of thing.

As far as internationally, we had a lot of debate about that when we were doing this survey because we're, we've had a lot of debate about like are we talking about you know First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people are we talking about internationally and we've kind of aired on the side of local and within the Canadian context.

But I think that doesn't mean that we can't have like discussions about how international things can inform you know what gift do they bring, how do they inform how can we kind of have those types of conversations.

Cause there is of course internationally Indigenous peoples have all sorts of forums and ways in which we engage internationally with each other.

But I'm not sure but I think we thought we really do need to be thinking about this territory and what does it mean right and for the students like whatever in social policy or whatever, okay you know they're going to work with in Canadian context so that's part of it but that's my response, I'm not sure

it's all furry like how we've been talking about it but we have aired on this side of, is that right am I sort of saying it right. I think so.

Gwen Chapman:

I think in some of those discussions too when we're thinking about the context of truth and reconciliation that, that there are sort of special issues that we need to be addressing that are based on the Canadian history and it is land based here too, so there's maybe sort of a continuum too that we recognize that some of commonalities of Indigenous experiences and oppressions across the world.

But as people in this place and in this land with a specific history of this country, there we need to pay a special attention to those I would. I don't know how.

Kim Anderson:

That's right, that's the discussion that we had in our Indigenous Strategy Committee meeting right cause I was looking at Mavis like was that what we were talking about but yeah that was it, the TRC. But I think that there might be opportunities for like more like I say dialogue and engagement internationally so. Other brave souls?

Questioner #2:

As you're talking I keep thinking about the, situating myself as a learner and I'm just wondering in terms of support for your colleagues or the future on the campus how are we going to, or have there been conversations about how we will be co-learners with our students, around this?

Kim Anderson:

Well that's an interesting kinda curriculum question right.

Like I think, one of the things, I advocate if we don't have resources and if we don't wanna burn out those speakers that are around community members, is like I say this is on one of my to-do lists which is way over here but maybe we'll work on that, is coming up with lists of stuff that's coming up.

Like there's an art, there's an art gallery exhibit opening on March 8th, which a bunch of us have curated.

So can you go there with your students is there some way you can think about co-learning and, what I found is that students, you need to build it into their curriculum, of course we can't like mandate them to go to something but you can say, okay you can do this or you can go on your own time to this you know free event or whatever and you write a reflection paper or you can do like I used to do this at Laurier you can do 20 hours of volunteer work with the greenhouse on the reserve which we would do is, we'd have it built into the curriculum and then I give you like a certain percentage of your mark.

So that we build it actually right in and then use what's already going on and maybe there's ways, like creative ways that'd be cool to see about how you can talk about co-learning and I think lots of time people feel insecure and uncomfortable positioning themselves as some kind of expert and I used to tell the teachers when I was teaching, primary school teachers mostly I said well you know you're not gonna position yourself as coming as this some kind of expert or that this is what you know but you can talk about this is what I learned, this is who I am this is what I learned and you know this is what I can kinda try to share with you from what I learned and then you bring in those resources to help with that right.

So, getting out and doing stuff with your students is part of a co-learning exercise I think it could be a really creative thing that students would respond to I think.

Carol Dauda:

So I just had something really to add to last one when Craig was talking one of the things that I have found in teaching students over the years in political science courses is that there is this sense that it's not here, its over there.

And I think that's another reason why the approach that you're taking is so important, really important.

Kim Anderson:

Yeah absolutely, I've actually - I'm trying I'm even getting more and more narrow on my focus now I'm right down to the campus and right down to my office like I've come out from all this stuff that we do out there and I'm trying to figure out how do we zero right in right here, right now and into the future right.

Carol Dauda:

I definitely, I use the Macdonald College example when I'm doing my gender and politics right so I do quite a bit on that and also use the example when we get into the sexuality part of it of the psychologizing the Western way of doing things, compared to Indigenous ideas of spirituality etc.

So, I think it's, it's important for students to really think about that locally and I try to bring that in too.

Kim Anderson:

And it's in their everyday, right? Which is what we're trying to do with the language too, actually the language thing we're doing, we've got a made in Guelph project because what our Elder told us was he said language sits in place, he's from Treaty 3 he's from Northwestern Ontario and he says I can't teach you without being out in that context but what we're gonna do is we're gonna go around the campus and we're gonna make language in this place.

That helps the students to think about it its life, it's futuristic, it's part of who we are and it's like what does Rozanski mean from the interpretation through the language of this Anishinaabe Elder and try to get like that ownership and again it's a living thing right so.

I'm aware that it's after 12:30 so I know people have to scurry to other meetings, but if people want to keep talking maybe we can go for another couple minutes with questions and if you need to leave, please feel free to do so. Or maybe we all want to leave.

Questioner #3:

Thank you again, Kim, I was gonna - this is sort of thinking out loud in this spirit of Googling it ourselves, I'm wondering if we as settler scholars could collaboratively participate in creating some kind of repository or resources, readings, field trip sites etc., and I'm wondering maybe if the Teaching and Learning Excellence Hub would be a good place within CSAHS to house that?

Kim Anderson:

Yeah that's a great idea, there was a community of practice, there had been little like groups along the way who formed around stuff but I think maybe making a larger repository you know things like films showing class or different you know, that's a good idea, so put that one down.

I think Gwen has something to say about that.

Gwen Chapman:

Well I would say I think that's a great idea and but I'm sure Byron can work on that.

I actually had one comment and thought in a bit of a different way, and it goes back to my own experience when I remember teaching a community nutrition course and you know having students reading an article about the Sandy Lake diabetes and health projects and suddenly having this realization that I was teaching this from a perspective that kind of assumed that everybody in the class was a settler and it suddenly occurred to me how would I feel if I was an Indigenous student sitting in this class the way I was framing it.

And, and as you know I guess thinking about it Indigenous strategy for the University and the College one of our goals would be to make this feel like a better home or a safer place for Aboriginal students and if we are successful in that in getting Aboriginal students to come here, how can we in our Indigenization and talking about these issues do it in a way that feels okay to them, I don't know if you have any comments.

Kim Anderson:

Yeah absolutely, that's, like again I remember when I was teaching Laurier Brantford which is right next to Six Nations of course and you had students and its their territory and that's kinda like, you have to find ways of speaking that you are speaking to people and also not assuming that the Indigenous student will be the experts because that's what happens, even though we say it over and over again it happens still.

It just keeps coming up when the Indigenous students get called upon to be the expert in class and it's it can be, first of all, who wants to be, you know, as a student that's not your job to be the expert but also it can be a shaming thing because many of our students are dispossessed over their you know, their epistemologies and ontologies and so we have to be mindful of that in sort of helping them explore and discover and taking ownership while not singling them out.

So, I would never, so in class I would never really acknowledge who was Indigenous and who wasn't, I would speak assuming that I had well I knew I had like always, a portion of Indigenous students in that class, but that's a big question that I think we need to think like we need to flag right and ponder as we go forward.

But when you read all these things about what to do, it's always like on the list never ask an Indigenous student to for their opinion on something or whatever that's the worst thing you can do right. So, yep.

Attendee:

Just thought following up on the comment about resources, I mean strikes me in terms of in light of some of the ways you've been talking about this, Kim, I mean those kind of projects about finding

resources could also be a curriculum based project that happens in our classrooms so that we're learning together we're taking responsibility, we're building it together as a you know, so that can be a very active experiential learning kind of thing to do.

Kim Anderson:

For sure

Attendee:

Which involves everybody, and does it now?

Kim Anderson:

Or get the students to do the homework about what are some of the activities that are going on this semester in town or on campus.

We have Aboriginal Awareness Week every fall so there's a whole week its easy to put one of those things on your syllabus and ask them to go and reflect on it or whatever you wanna do right.

Byron Sheldrick:

We might have time for one more comment or question, if anyone has one?

I don't see one, so Kim I really this has been a fabulous talk, I agree with Craig, its just incredible and I also agree with you that we can't just have few TimBits and talk and it's all solved.

So I'd like to suggest that in fact this is the start, I would hope, of a conversation, about these issues and about how we think about our teaching how we think about our curriculum that the Teaching and Learning Hub, I hope, will help to foster that ongoing conversation discussion over the next, next however long it takes.

Kim Anderson:

500 years.

Byron Sheldrick:

500 years, absolutely.

So I'd just like to thank you Kim and thank everyone in the audience who came and took time in a windy and blustery day to come out and share lunch and listen to the talk and participate in the discussions, its been fabulous.

Thank you.

Kim Anderson:

Thank you.

[End of transcript]