



COLLEGE OF
THE ROCKIES

Pathways into Indigenization

Dana Wesley, MA and Shaun Longstreet, Ph.D

The five points below mark different entry points into Indigenization. Staff are encouraged to start where they are at personally. Fundamentally, we all start from a basis of self-awareness of our own intercultural horizons, a willingness to learn, & openness to engage other perspectives.

1

Cultural Safety & Anti-Racism

To foster a more inclusive and equitable learning environment, all staff must first practice critical self-awareness and progress towards cultural safety. This journey should then extend to the practice of cultural humility, where individuals recognize the value of diverse perspectives and actively seek to learn from different cultures. Additionally, incorporating universal design principles into teaching and student support services will help ensure accessibility, equitable and a more culturally safe college. It is essential to critically examine and challenge the influence of white normativity, privilege, and assumptions in college services, policies and curricula. Antiracism actively seeks to challenge and deconstruct structures and practices that foster discrimination.

2

Decolonization

Decolonization dismantles systems rooted in colonization, which have historically favored the knowledge, practices, and values of settler communities and institutions at the expense of Indigenous Peoples. This requires self-awareness, cultural humility, and an awareness of institutional inequities. Decolonization confronts and decenters Eurocentric and settler practices that shaped and continue to influence the educational system. By undertaking this process, instructors open up curricula to encompass a wider array of perspectives, allowing for a more inclusive and diverse range of viewpoints and values to be incorporated into the educational framework. Every staff person can examine college services, procedures and policies to take action and address inequities within them.

3

Incorporate Indigenous Voices & Content

To foster inclusivity and respect for Indigenous communities, College staff may incorporate Indigenous voices and content within a variety of contexts. This entails actively seeking out and including the perspectives and scholarship of Indigenous Peoples. It is imperative for non-Indigenous staff to approach this entry point with a great deal of respect, humility, and intentionality, remembering the historical marginalization and ongoing struggles faced by Indigenous communities. Non-Indigenous individuals must refrain from speaking about, or on behalf of, Indigenous Peoples, as this perpetuates the erasure of their autonomy and reinforces colonial power dynamics. It is also essential for the college to create spaces that amplify and uplift Indigenous voices, without overburdening Indigenous colleagues. The College honours the diversity and individuality of Indigenous cultures and knowledge systems.

4

Integrate Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing

Meaningfully incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing in services, procedures and curricula is an opportunity for deeper learning for all students' educational experiences. Instructional staff may contribute to this by intentionally designing activities and assessments, that not only accommodate but also encourage Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing. Non-instructional staff can add to and/or rethink services, processes and policies that encourage more holistic and land-based ways of thinking and doing. A deeper appreciation for diverse worldviews and cultural traditions is gained by incorporating and/or highlighting Indigenous perspectives, knowledge, and practices. Engaging in activities that encourage multiple touch points, such as participating in Dialogues with Indigenous Peoples, creates valuable opportunities for the college to directly interact and learn from Indigenous communities.

5

Indigenous Pedagogy

Indigenous pedagogy encompasses a variety of approaches. For example, the use of narrative practice or story work, as described by Q'um Q'um Xiiem (Dr. Jo-ann Archibald, Stó:lo). Indigenous pedagogies emphasize a more holistic approach to learning by integrating oral traditions, stories, and land-based teaching methods. They highlight the importance of understanding and respecting the relationality between people, plants, animals, and the environment. All college staff have a role in education. Supporting Indigenous pedagogy can nurture a deeper appreciation for diverse knowledge systems and foster a more comprehensive understanding of the world.