

RUNNING HEAD: Power, Discipline, and Dis/comfort

Power, Discipline, and Dis/comfort:

Indigenizing University Curricula

by

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the degree of Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Social Anthropology

at Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia

April 2017

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**Abstract**

Since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission issued its Calls to Action in 2015, Canadian universities have emphasized the importance of inclusivity and diversity and set strategic goals to incorporate Indigenous perspectives into their curricula. In this thesis, I explore how different academic disciplinary areas perceive the facilitators and barriers of integrating diverse perspectives into undergraduate and professional curricula. Specifically, I focus on Dalhousie University as a case study. Situated on unceded Mi'kmaq territory, the university is working to create a more inclusive and diverse learning environment by developing an Indigenous Studies minor, creating a certificate program, and increasing Indigenous student and faculty recruitment. Basing my approach on the literatures of institutional ethnography, sociology of higher education, organizational anthropology, and decolonial education studies, I conducted a textual analysis of university policy documents to explore the framing of diversity and inclusivity issues. I also conducted semi-structured interviews with professors to understand disciplinary differences in approaches to the incorporation of Indigenous perspectives. My research offers insight into the gaps between strategic priorities and academic policy, and between different practices within universities.

**Acknowledgements**

First and foremost, I would like to thank my participants for taking the time to participate in this project as it truly would not have been possible without you. I would like to thank all of those who encouraged and supported me in this academic endeavor. Martha Radice, thank you for guidance and insight. Additionally, thank you to my professors that I've had over my undergraduate career informing who I am today, including Dr. Gambold and Professor Lewis. Thank you to my parents and grandparents for pushing me to question taken-for-granted assumptions from an early age. Kyle, thank you for your unrelenting willingness, laughter, and support. Parker, Molly, and Brooke, thank you for your comedic relief and keeping it all in perspective; and Parker, thank you for the countless days at the public library.

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## Introduction

In Canada, diversity and inclusivity are central to our national identity. Canadians have often characterized themselves as being part of a multi-cultural society with diverse needs, values and realities (Battiste, 2013; Battiste, Bell & Findlay, 2002). However, the Indigenous populations of Canada and their colonial history are often left out of this characterization. In recent years, the general population's awareness of Indigenous perspectives has been increasing, but overall awareness is still low. In efforts to help change that, The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, TRC, (2015) exposed the history of residential schools. The TRC's *Calls to Action*<sup>1</sup> stressed the need for educators to respectfully integrate Indigenous perspectives into curricula. Decolonizing education is fundamental to this respectful integration of perspectives as universities are embedded in processes of "ongoing coloniality" (Aikman, 1997; Battiste, 2013; Battiste, Bell & Findlay, 2002). By ongoing coloniality, I am referring to the patterns of inequality in power, recognition and respect in Settler-Indigenous relations in modern structures such as universities (Aikman, 1997; Battiste, 2013; Mignolo, 2012; Quijano, 2002).

Since 2013, Dalhousie University has been working towards "fostering a collegial culture grounded in diversity and inclusiveness" (Strategic Direction of 2014-2018). The university raised the Mi'kmaq Grand Council flag, officially acknowledged that Dalhousie is on unceded Mi'kmaq territory, and created the Elders-In-Residence and the Indigenous Studies programs. However, the university has yet to move beyond these steps to incorporate Indigenous perspectives more widely into the curricula of various disciplines.

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<sup>1</sup> <sup>1</sup> The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report documented the history and dark legacy of Canada's residential school system (TRC, 2016). The summary of the report lists 94 "Calls to Action" and urges all levels of government and citizens to work together to move towards reconciliation

Before going further, I would like to acknowledge my positionality within this research. Although this project deals with the integration of Indigenous perspectives into curricula, as the researcher, I do not operate from an Indigenous worldview, but rather from a white, settler perspective. Throughout the entire research process, I have tried to bear this in mind.

Situated in the literatures of institutional ethnography, organizational anthropology, sociology of higher education, and decolonial education studies, my research focuses on how professors in different disciplinary areas perceive the facilitators and barriers to incorporating Indigenous perspectives in professional and undergraduate curricula. For the purposes of my research, I use Hall, Die and Rosenberg's (2000) definition of Indigenous perspectives: "the sum of the experience and knowledge of a given social group, [which] form the basis of decision making in the face of challenges both familiar and unfamiliar. This body of knowledge is diverse and complex given the histories, cultures, and lived realities of peoples" (p. 6). The process of infusing Indigenous perspectives into the structural layers of an institution is referred to as "Indigenizing curricula." The practical implications of this research focus on increasing awareness of the facilitators and barriers of Indigenizing university curricula. By cultivating awareness, I hope that various bodies within the university develop ways to enhance the facilitators of these processes and mitigate the barriers. In the following, I will begin with a review of the literatures, followed by a description of methods employed in this project, continue to an analysis of the key findings, and conclude with limitations and contributions.

### **Literatures of the Academy within the Academy**

In this project, I employ the literatures of institutional ethnography, organizational anthropology, sociology of higher education, and decolonial education to frame my research. As institutional ethnography is a theoretical and methodological approach, I will discuss it in my

methods section. I begin with a review of organizational anthropology and delve into the sociology of higher education. Next, I apply these literatures to decolonizing education with Indigenous perspectives at Dalhousie University. Lastly, I identify gaps and debates in the literature and how my research can contribute to future work.

### ***The Academy as a Heterogeneous Organization***

The literatures of organization studies and organizational anthropology inform my interpretation of the academy as an organization. In these literatures, there is much debate about the notion of organizational cultures. Some scholars view culture as a tool by management to create consensus (Fairclough, 1985), while others believe culture to be embedded in various processes and contexts within an organization (Cullen, 1992; Geertz, 1973; Morgan, 1986). Within this debate, there is also discussion about how organizational culture is reinforced and divided including formal and informal systems of division (Cullen, 1992; Fairclough, 1985; Geertz, 1973; Morgan, 1986). Formal systems of division, such as that between management and the workforce, define the subcultures within the organization (Fairclough, 1985; Morgan, 1986). In contrast, organizational anthropologists emphasize the informal systems in which subcultures are reinforced through negotiations and re-negotiations of meaning (Cullen, 1992; Geertz, 1973).

In understanding the academy as a heterogeneous organization, I will explore the use of the formal and informal divisions of organizational culture within the university. First, I will discuss the formal divisions of the university between managerial and collegial cultures through policy documents; and second, within the collegial culture with disciplinary subcultures. Then, I will examine the informal divisions that exist within the academy.

*Formal Systems of Divisions*

The first formal system of division within the university is between the managerial and the collegial culture. The managerial culture aims to be an efficient manager of resources (Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008). It uses strategic plans and policies to engage the workforce, the collegial culture, in its vision and to maximize performance (Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008). Managerial cultures tend to under-acknowledge the cultural heterogeneity within academic institutions (Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008). Although policy claims to be an objective method, it is a cultural product that manifests specific societal, cultural and moral values affecting how individuals within organizations construct their identity (Shore & Wright, 1997; Stewart, 2009; Wright, 2004). Policy aims to produce an ideal position from which goals can be achieved, and alliances and engagements can be fostered, and can serve to protect the status quo (Ahmed, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2012; Iverson, 2007, 2012; Shore & Wright, 1997; Stewart, 2009).

The emphasis on diversity over the past several decades in North American universities stems from the establishment of the university as a place of learning for all. Almost every major university has institutional discourse devoted to “Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity” and purports to have a long history of devotion to these issues (Archer, 2007). ‘Being diverse’ is a central goal of many North American universities (Ahmed, 2006; Archer, 2007). The moral value of the university is deployed through concern for social justice (Ahmed, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2012). Some scholars suggest that ‘diversity’ is merely replacing past words of social justice such as ‘equity’ and ‘equality’ (Ahmed, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2012). Yet ‘diversity’ does not necessarily lead to the critical examination as involved with words of social justice (Ahmed, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2012).



Strategies to diversify typically stabilize the existing notions of power within the academy rather than challenging those that the managerial culture purports (Ahmed, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2012; Battiste, 2013; Iverson, 2007; Stewart, 2009). In addition, these solutions emphasize the market value of diversity while degrading its moral value (Ahmed, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2012; Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008). The marketization of diversity involves strategizing how to increase the universities' presence in the global marketplace and the global workforce (Iverson, 2007). Further, some scholars suggest that these solutions focus on tokenistic gestures that create a façade of change and enable bureaucratic inertia (Ahmed, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2012; Stewart, 2009). They call for individuals to assimilate to the academy's culture rather than being accepted on their own cultural terms (Ahmed, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2012; Doyle-Bedwell, 2013; Iverson, 2007). One example of the marketization of diversity is through the growing use of 'diversity' as a blanket term which lumps minority groups together without recognizing the diversity that exists within 'diversity' (Ahmed, 2006, 2007a, 2007b; Iverson, 2007, 2012).

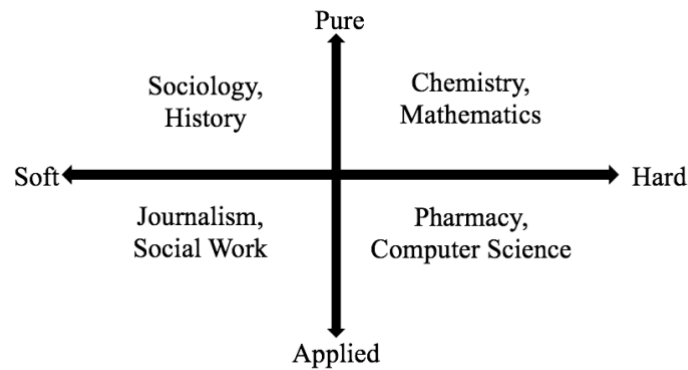
The second formal division within the university is that of academic disciplinary subcultures. These are created and reinforced by professors and students. Most scholars agree that the homogeneity within disciplinary cultures is due to a combination of selection and socialization (Becher, 1989, 1994; Elchardus, et al., 2009; Kolb, 1981; Neumann, 2001). Homogeneous disciplinary cultures also often create boundaries of membership, have idols, territorial divides, beliefs, morals, rules of conduct, and transmitted knowledge that form 'academic tribes and territories' (Becher, 1989, p. 106,).

Studies of disciplinary cultures have defined and described disciplinary areas in various ways. Some scholars focus on differences in approaches to intellectual enquiry; Kolb (1981), for

example, considered concrete versus abstract, and active versus reflective. Others delve into the different modes of processing knowledge (Biglan, 1973).

For my research, I will use the Biglan-Becher<sup>2</sup> typology because it is one of the most prominent in the field and it aligns with universities' departmental landscape. The typology distinguishes disciplines along two axes and four quadrants: soft-pure, hard-pure, soft-applied, hard-applied (see in Figure 1 below). In Figure 1: Disciplinary Areas, examples of disciplines within each disciplinary area are provided.

Figure 1: Disciplinary Areas



Soft-pure is characterized by complexity, personal reflection and interpretation and encompasses disciplines (Becher, 1989, 1994; Biglan, 1973). In contrast, hard-pure denotes disciplines with quantifiable, impersonal, and universal truths (Becher, 1989, 1994; Biglan, 1973). Soft-applied incorporates the application of soft knowledge for pragmatic ends in fields (Becher, 1989, 1994; Biglan, 1973). Lastly, hard-applied focuses on the application of sciences on functional goals (Becher, 1989, 1994; Biglan, 1973).

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<sup>2</sup> I do not consider the third dimension of the original Biglan scheme, “life/non-life” for the purposes of this study.

While academic disciplines change overtime and interdisciplinary education is steadily on the rise research continues to emphasize the importance of academic disciplines. Studies highlight that the differences between groups are much greater than those within them (Becher, 1989, 1994; Kolb, 1981; Neumann, 2001), demonstrate the importance of disciplines for university organization and social interaction (Jessop & Maleckar, 2016; Kirshnan, 2009; Neumann, 2001), and suggest academic disciplines contribute to the retention of distinct cultural identities (Kirshnan, 2009). The commonalities and resource needs shared among disciplinary cultures combined with day-to-day intellectual and social practices strengthen both disciplinary community and culture (Becher, 1989; Jessop & Maleckar, 2016; Kirshnan, 2009).

### *Informal Systems of Divisions*

Informal systems of divisions also exist within the collegial culture. I will emphasize the advocacy and development cultures. The culture of advocacy arose in response to the managerial culture failing to meet certain needs, whereas the developmental culture is a response to the lack of organization within the collegial culture. The latter centers on teaching, and student and faculty development rather than scholarly or research pursuits (Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008). Individuals who engage with diversity using developmental culture and a culture of advocacy adopt coping strategies (Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008; James, 2012). These coping strategies include compliance, pragmatism, and critical participation (James, 2012). Those who engage in compliance subscribe to the ideological principles and practices of the university (James, 2012). Pragmatists focus on succeeding in the current structure of the university and engaging in informal networks of power to foster structural change (James, 2012). Critical participation involves a more steadfast approach challenging the system from within (James, 2012). In the two

latter strategies, champions suffer personal, professional and psychological consequences (James, 2012).

Through the lens of organizational anthropology and the sociology of higher education, we can understand the academy as a heterogeneous organization facilitating insight into the formal and informal divisions of the university. The first formal division concentrates on the divisions between the managerial and collegial cultures and the use of policy documents to create a cohesive organizational culture. The second formal division centers on academic disciplines. The informal divisions are used to resist and cultivate change within the formal divisions of the university. Considering both types of divisions creates a greater comprehension of the university's workings.

### ***The Academy as Embedded in Ongoing Coloniality***

In analyzing the process of Indigenizing university curricula, decolonial education studies is an imperative literature, shaped by post-structuralist and postcolonial scholars. Decolonial education studies go beyond inclusivity to challenge the colonial interests embedded in the dominant hegemonic power (Aikman, 1997; Battiste, 2013; Bhattacharya, 2015; Gorski, 2008; Wane et al, 2011). As currently, the Western colonial power reinforces a relationship characterized by racist, ethnocentric, and imperial power through culturalism, and mis- and non-recognition (Couthard, 2014; Rata, 2013; Said, 1978; Smith, 1999). Culturalism embraces a strategy of *othering* that moves to lessen the legitimacy of diverse thoughts, values, knowledge, and culture, while assuming a homogeneity of the Other (Battiste, 2013). Further, scholars argue that Western knowledge systems eliminate the space for alternatives to the hegemonic discourse by “white-washing the mind as a result of forced assimilation, English education, Eurocentric humanities and sciences, and living in a Eurocentric context complete with media, books, laws

and values” (Battiste, 2013, p. 26;). Due to this, scholars argue that our current form of ongoing coloniality in education acts as a threat to the identity of the other (RCAP, 1996, p. 423).

Moving towards a solution, decolonial education studies emphasize the importance of acknowledging the complexity of knowledge production and the potential for knowledge production to be a landscape where colonial and colonized cultures can co-exist in a blended form (Dei, 2000). Scholars suggest that the process of incorporation of Indigenous knowledge should be understood as an uncomfortable and transformational power shift (Dreise, 2007). A few recommendations for this transformation have emerged. For example, one approach is to provide equity supports for cultural differences for students, professors and staff (Doyle-Bedwell, 2013). A second approach involves recreating academic disciplines and agendas (Smith, 2017). A third approach recommends using Critical Race Theory as a tool to acknowledge the structural powers and control relations in these processes (Nakata, 2007; Iverson, 2012). These techniques advocate for methods that assume that everyone as a potential ally rather than an opponent (Smith, 1999), and that “unlearning one’s learning” is essential (Kuokkanen, 2007).

Other, more critically based approaches tend to urge the creation of an ethical space involving the understanding of the limits and boundaries of individuals’ and groups’ assumptions, values and interests, and the ways in which they conflict with and infringes on others’ spaces (Battiste, 2013). Alternatively, a “cultural interface” approach could signify a process that uses a stakeholder-inclusive method to negotiate pedagogical practices (Nakata, 2007; Williamson & Dalal, 2007). Through these processes, scholars hope to avoid the re-creation of colonial norms that entail injecting Indigenous knowledges in simplistic, tokenistic, and self-serving ways. Instead, they aspire to embed Indigenous knowledges into all structural

layers of the academy from administration to teaching and research (Battiste, 2013; Nakata, 2007; Williamson & Dalal, 2007).

### ***Further Research***

Grounded in literatures spanning organizational anthropology, the sociology of higher education, and decolonial education studies, I began by discussing competing views on organizational cultures, and the role of formal and informal divisions in their creation and maintenance. Then, I demonstrated how the university can be viewed as a heterogeneous combination of academic disciplinary subcultures. In the second section, I discussed the rise of coloniality in the academy and the potential for Indigenizing curricula to be a decolonizing force. Although these literatures exist separately and in some isolation, my research aims to fuse them in an effort to better understand how these divisions shape the facilitators and barriers of incorporating Indigenous perspectives into the curricula at Dalhousie. My research also aims to increase the literature available on settler attitudes about Indigenizing university curricula.

### **Methods: Climbing the Ivory Tower**

Across all of the literature considered, a range of diverse methods have been employed. In my methodology, I rely on institutional ethnography, and Nader's (1972) notion of 'studying up.' First, I discuss the theoretical and methodological approach of institutional ethnography. Next, I describe my textual analysis of university policy documents. Third, I explain my use of qualitative interviews and sampling. Finally, I explain the ethical considerations I took during the research process.

Institutional ethnography is a theoretical framework and a methodological approach to expose how larger relations shape local experiences (Smith 2005, 2006). Developed by Canadian sociologist Dorothy Smith, institutional ethnography is often used for understanding social

organization and how social change occurs (Smith 2005, 2006). Using both qualitative interviews and textual analysis is a common methodological approach in institutional ethnography (Smith 2005, 2006). By using a case study, I aim to gain a deeper understanding of the local workings to analyze how it is shaped by social relations.

I employ the concept of studying up to situate my research within the power structures of the academy. Studying up is the process of studying to the powerful, the wealth, or the colonizers to examine the power structures (Nader, 1972). First, by analyzing policy documents produced by the university, I explore the aims of the managerial culture of the university, who hold the ability and power to determine what values the university prioritizes, and how they chose to do so. Second, by interviewing settler tenured professors, I study professors with a secured employment status, and those who experience settler privilege within the institution.

My case study is Dalhousie University. Dalhousie University is the largest research university in Atlantic Canada with 180 degree programs and twelve faculties that offer undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs (Murchland & Kernaghan, 2006). Dalhousie, like 97 other universities across the country (Universities Canada, 2015), committed to implementing the 2015 TRC's Calls to Action which highlights the need for educators to respectfully integrate Indigenous perspectives into their curricula (Aikman, 1997; Battiste, 2013). As discussed in the introduction, the university has been working towards greater inclusivity and diversity through the development of an Indigenous Studies minor, creation of a certificate program, and an increase in Indigenous human capital (Dalhousie University, 2012; "Indigenous Studies (Minor)", n.d.). That being said, Dalhousie University has yet to explore integration into various disciplines' undergraduate and professional curricula. For these reasons along with feasibility, Dalhousie University is my case study for this project.

The first phase of my research methods involves qualitative and quantitative content analyses of university policy documents. Through analyzing the documents that govern the academy, I delved into university-wide policies relevant to strategic directions and visions for Indigenous-Settler relations. I accessed and examined university documents through the Dalhousie University website, the university secretariat, and reaching out to authors of documents. They were harvested from November 2016 to January 2017. I identified nine diversity documents, dated from 1989 to 2016, as pertinent to Indigenous relations (see Appendix A for a detailed list). Each document was downloaded from the website or via email correspondence. I read all documents to familiarize myself with their contents. Then I coded the documents for characteristics such as disciplinary difference, liberty values, justice climate, and Indigenous plus<sup>3</sup>. These characteristics were created, both inductively and deductively, through multiple readings and a comprehensive literature review (Ahmed, 2006, 2007a, 2007b; Iverson, 2007, 2012). I used two coding guides: one for my qualitative analysis (see Appendix B), and one for my quantitative analysis (see Appendix C). I discuss my findings in Appendix D.

The second phase involved conducting semi-structured interviews with tenured, settler professors who have been involved in general curriculum development. I defined general curriculum development as a variety of activities including core and elective course material development, committee involvement, and program design. I interviewed two professors from each disciplinary area specified in Figure 1 (soft-pure, hard-pure, soft-applied, and hard-applied). That allowed me to see commonalities and differences between and within disciplinary areas. To garner my sample, I used purposive sampling aided by my thesis supervisor, Professor Martha

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<sup>3</sup> Indigenous plus explores the ambiguous use of diversity through seeing the mentions of African Nova Scotians, disability status, gender, sexual orientation, racially visible, and other groups mentioned with Indigenous populations.



Radice, and SOSA faculty member, Diana Lewis. I contacted potential participants primarily through email outreach and asked interviewees to suggest other possible participants.

My interview guide focuses on topics related to experiences with diversity and inclusivity, changes in the curricula generally, and more specially, integrating Indigenous perspectives and future visions of inclusivity. I employed a multi-level approach examining this phenomenon at personal, departmental and university levels. Semi-structured interviews provided the opportunity both to confirm and explore particular attitudes and experiences brought up by the participants (Bryman, 2015).

In my qualitative analysis of my semi-structured interviews, I coded deductively and inductively. First, I transcribed all of my interviews and read them over twice to familiarize myself with the data. Next, I imported my transcripts into a mixed methods coding software, *Dedoose*. When coding, I began with deductively generated codes focused on themes in my literature review. These included power, formal and informal divisions, and coloniality. Next, I took a grounded theory approach and generated inductive codes (Bryman, 2015). As I discovered new codes, I went back and re-coded all other transcripts to check for the new codes. From this process, three themes emerged which form the basis for my analysis section: recognizing power and the roles of each scale; disciplinary difference in motivations for incorporating Indigenous perspectives into curricula and the tensions in doing so; and getting comfortable with discomfort. I grouped codes within these themes and generated a memo for each where I compared the findings across pure and applied disciplinary areas and hard and soft areas. These groupings fostered analysis of similarities and differences between the interviews.

In any research project, the researcher must consider ethical considerations. My research project involved minimal risk. However, I still acted in ways to mitigate the risk as much as

possible. The solicitation emails sent by Professor Radice and Diana Lewis described my research project. I also obtained verbal or written consent from my participants depending on the platform on which the interview was conducted. I had six in-person interviews and two over Skype. To minimize potential harms, in each interview, I created a safe space and provided the opportunity to withdraw or skip questions. I ensured that participants were aware of the provisions for and limitations on confidentiality. To ensure privacy, I stored all of my transcriptions, research notes, and other documents on my password-locked laptop. In my report, I do not include any personally identifying information of the participants, such as their names, positions, and disciplines. However, it is possible that people who have detailed knowledge of the workings of the university will be able to identify participants in the research results.

### **Analysis: Power, Discipline and Dis/comfort**

The goal of institutional ethnography is to explore how the power relations shape the local experience. In my research, three themes emerged: recognizing power, acknowledging disciplinary difference, and becoming comfortable with discomfort. In this section, I offer an analysis of each of the following themes and their sub-themes. First, recognizing power involves the political climate, managerial culture, and collegial culture as well as the varying levels within it. Second, acknowledging disciplinary difference focuses on the disciplinary tensions involved in incorporating Indigenous perspectives into curricula. Third, becoming comfortable with discomfort explores the need for comfort in the incorporation of Indigenous perspectives.

### ***Recognizing Power***

Within the university, there are distinct scales with different aims, powers, and responsibilities involving the political climate, managerial culture, collegial culture, and different disciplinary obligations. The political climate and disciplinary obligations exist both within and

beyond the institution. The political climate encompasses the current political situation in the United States of America with President Trump, and the federal government of Canada with Prime Minister Trudeau. The managerial culture values efficiency, accountability and top-down management and includes university administration. The collegial culture represents the faculties, departments, professoriate, and student bodies within the university. The collegial culture aims to fulfill the goals of the managerial culture while also retaining their autonomy and academic freedom. The collegial culture embodies the aims, assumptions, and epistemologies of different overarching academic disciplines disciplinary obligations, and the developmental culture (Berquist & Pawlak, 2008).

Within the university structure, the power dynamics seem clear. The managerial culture holds the most power, followed by faculties, departments, professors, and students. Yet, all of the professors interviewed emphasized the roles that each of these scales play in creating change within the university. One professor stated that individuals tend not to recognize the power they hold. She explained:

“One of things that I think is trickiest is as people are promoted and get into positions of more and more power, they still feel powerless--even though that’s not actually true. I mean, no one is ultimately powerful... Everyone’s power is mitigated by their circumstances.”

All eight professors discussed the normative roles that individuals at different scales should play in incorporating Indigenous perspectives into the curricula. The challenge becomes identifying the roles and responsibilities of each scale, and the incompatibilities between scales.

*Political Climate*

According to all eight professors, the political climate penetrates all scales and cultures. The role of government, according to three pure-discipline professors, was to identify important matters to the general population. One hard-pure professor emphasized that the government can increase “the level of awareness, the level of discussion, the level of knowledge for many people, and thus, the more they hear about it and the more they understand the challenges and issues and inequalities that currently exist, the more they want to do to try and change that...” For example, all eight professors mentioned the TRC’s *Calls to Action* (2015) as having the potential to empower action within both managerial and collegial cultures. Two soft-discipline professors described this empowerment as “policy windows” where individuals can mobilize, gain momentum, and be heard by the institution with the promise of making a lasting change.

While the *TRC* seemed to have universal appeal, other policy initiatives also came up in specific disciplinary areas. For example, only the hard-pure professors mentioned the role of the Species at Risk Act<sup>4</sup>. This act aligns with this area’s interest in quantifiable, impersonal knowledge. Similarly, only the soft-applied professors discussed the role of the Marshall Inquiry<sup>5</sup>. Likewise, the inquiry aligned with the social justice orientation in the application of soft knowledge.

At the same time, six professors also recognized the potential influence of the current American administration. All hard professors stated that the political climate in the United States

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<sup>4</sup> The Species at Risk Act was passed in 2009 by the Canadian federal government. It acknowledges and validates the use of Indigenous traditional knowledge in determining the status of species at risk of extinction.

<sup>5</sup> The Marshall Inquiry was released in December of 1989. It describes the structural injustices and racism suffered by an Indigenous man, Donald Marshall Jr., and demonstrated the need for Indigenous law.

would not negatively affect the managerial culture at Dalhousie. Hard professors had faith in the university structure and believed that the managerial culture would do the “right thing.” Taking a more complex position, two soft-pure professors suggested that the managerial culture would want to create a strong distinction between the policies of President Trump in the United States and those of the Canadian liberal government and stress the inclusive and diverse environment of Dalhousie. These soft-pure professors also worried about the possibility of the American political climate affecting the collegial culture and generating opposition to diversity and inclusivity initiatives.

In sum, with respect to the political climate, the professors described how one scale can affect other levels of scales. Disciplinary differences emerged around the extent to which the managerial culture was accepted, the extent to which professors were concerned about the potential impact on Dalhousie of Trump in power in the United States, and the extent to which policy documents were most relevant in cultivating awareness and validating Indigenous perspectives in their disciplines.

In considering the effect of political climate, the professors described how the atmosphere of one scale and influence and affect others. Three clear disciplinary differences emerged in this respect: the extent to which managerial culture was accepted, whether or not professors expressed concern about the potential impact of the Trump administration on Dalhousie, and the degree to which policy documents were considered relevant in cultivating awareness around and validating Indigenous perspectives in their disciplines.

EXAMPLES COULD BE USEFUL IN ABOVE PARAGRAPH

*Managerial Culture*

This section delves into professors' perceptions of good and bad managerial culture and how they varied across disciplines. As mentioned earlier with the work of Bergquist and Pawlak (2008), the managerial culture of the university values efficiency, accountability and the use of strategic plans and policy documents. Administrators are accustomed to a strong, top-down style of management. Although the latent managerial purpose of policy documents is to create a coherent, organizational culture, only one of the professors interviewed mentioned a university policy document when asked about any diversity or inclusivity steps taken by the university. This raises questions about the efficacy of university policy documents.

As noted above in the professors' opinions about the role of federal policy documents, the other latent function of policy documents is to create awareness and ultimately, action across the different scales of the university. In my analysis of policy documents dated between 1989 and 2016, only nine concerned Indigenous issues. Only two of them focused exclusively on Indigenous issues. Two others discussed Indigenous issues in tandem with those of African-Canadian students. This demonstrates that the overall number of policy documents aimed at cultivating awareness was limited, offering few possibilities for policy windows to emerge.

While the university policy documents were not viewed as a step in creating a more diverse environment, the scholarly concerns about university policy documents arose in the professors' idea of good/bad managerial culture. The professors worried about the use of 'diversity' as a blanket term, the illusion of change, and superficial motives. Following scholars across all disciplinary areas, three professors worry about how the use of blanket term manifested in the recognition and action of 'diversity' issues. One professor discussed how diversity issues that begin with a specific aim can "fall to the way side" as specific issues

become replaced by other issues grouped in the blanket term ‘diversity.’ For example, in reference to the 2014 Dalhousie Dentistry scandal<sup>6</sup>, the professor noted how “quite quickly you saw the concern about sexual violence against women and sexual discrimination against women expand to equity, diversity issues more generally.” Two other professors were confused and concerned about how diversity lumps different equity issues together for recruitment and support purposes. One professor said: “why disabled people and Indigenous people are the same faculty hire? I have no idea... But, I think it’s a shame that we have to pool both in the same category. They’re different experiences.” These examples illustrate of how issues become amalgamated under the title of diversity or diversity initiatives and the problematic and confusing consequences

University policy documents can also give the illusion of change while protecting the status quo (Ahmed, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2012; Iverson, 2007, 2012). At Dalhousie, the latest strategic direction policy document of 2014-2018 included the strategic priority of “foster[ing] a collegial culture grounded in diversity and inclusiveness.” However, even with the recent publication of such documents, all four hard professors emphasized the ambiguity within this goal. One hard-pure professor explained:

“The university has to come up with an idea of what it is they want to achieve. Is it from the perspective of trying to recruit young Indigenous peoples into different disciplines in the university? Is that the goal? Is the goal to try to educate different

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<sup>6</sup> Dalhousie’s dentistry scandal occurred in December 2014 when it came to light that a significant number of male fourth-year students in the Faculty of Dentistry had created an exclusive Facebook group that posted sexist, misogynistic, and homophobic posts.

professions on Indigenous perspectives? Is the goal to try to increase the hiring among faculty and staff from Indigenous backgrounds?”

Although creating a diverse and inclusive environment is fundamental to a university, there are different processes to achieving this, and without further specificity, these goals seem ambiguous and aspirational rather than guiding principles.

In addition to these concerns, all eight professors worried about the “superficial” nature of diversity initiatives given the current marketization of diversity and the positive impact it has on the political image of the university. Two applied-discipline professors mentioned the marketability of diversified education, and how some facilities or schools may falsely advertise the degree to which their programs incorporate other perspectives. A soft-pure professor explained:

“The university will be keen to be seen as caring about that. Do I think the members of the board of governors, or the president, genuinely care and believe this is important, not just because of political reasons, but because it’s important to the production of knowledge and education of students? No, I don’t believe they think that. But that won’t stop them from claiming to be doing that.”

Through these instances, the problematic intentions of the managerial culture in their diversity initiatives becomes evident. Interestingly, all the professors implied that professors could distinguish between authentic or superficial motivations of the managerial culture. Six noted that their evaluation of the managerial culture’s motives would factor into their cooperation of the proposed initiatives and goals.

Although the literature emphasizes tokenistic gestures as a key element of the university’s marketization of diversity, six professors noted that a good managerial culture



involved the use of symbolic gestures. They discussed how making symbolic gestures, such as creating an email signature about the unceded land that Dalhousie sits on, or flying the Mi'kmaq Grand Council flag, matters as it encourages behaviour consistent with larger goals of inclusivity and diversity. Indeed, these comments were also closely tied to their discussions about retaining academic freedom and autonomy which I will elaborate on in the next section. Still, with these symbolic gestures, four professors from pure and hard-applied disciplinary areas underlined the importance of paying attention to the processes involved in the creation and impacts of these gestures to ensure sincerity.

All eight professors emphasized how a good managerial culture revolved around the central values of the collegial culture (autonomy and academic freedom) through a combination of bottom-up and top-down approaches. Six professors explained that if an authority figure is too heavy-handed in their position, people tend to respond with resistance. A hard-pure professor proposed that the university should identify the strategy, while faculties, departments, and individuals identify the ways in making that change at different levels. He felt that this would allow individuals “who are being asked to change to see the merits in it.” Six of the eight professors asserted that a good managerial culture would provide adequate resources to support the work involved in fulfilling managerial strategies, such as researching scholars, topics, and methods of incorporation.

Skepticism of the extent to which the university is truly committed to Indigenizing curricula was a theme in interviews that spanned all disciplines. All eight professors questioned whether diversity and inclusivity were used too broadly, and whether related goals were superficial. In summary, professors desired greater input and inclusion in translating high level

policy into action and seemed to have even generated insightful suggestions for how to propel further action.

### *Collegial Culture*

In the pursuit of the profess' desire for greater input, I investigated the normative roles of the department, professoriate and students. According to all eight professors, communication is necessary for creating a deeper understanding of how diverse perspectives are relevant to various disciplines and faculties. They felt that there is an extremely low awareness in their departments of how faculty members are currently incorporating Indigenous perspectives and the possible ways for others to do so. When probed on how awareness might be accomplished, professors underscored the role of the department. Within this general sentiment, hard-discipline professors, in particular, saw the department as a focal point of power in cultivating communication between and within the different scales.

Departmental leadership strongly impacts communication within the department. Three professors across different disciplines felt that departmental events created a platform on which issues concerning Indigenous perspectives incorporation could be discussed. One professor described how with technology, their department handles most matters over email. Even though it is efficient, the professor noted that it does not allow for discussion of unprompted issues, which does occur in face-to-face meetings.

All eight professors discussed how communication within departments fostered informal and formal departmental support of diversity issues. Seven professors felt informal support from their colleagues on these issues, while the four soft professors also noted formal departmental support. Two professors described a committee dedicated to inclusivity and diversity issues, while another two professors voiced the creation of a committee specifically charged with the

incorporation of Indigenous perspectives. In the hard departments, which lacked formal support of diversity and inclusivity issues, all four professors became involved in Indigenous perspectives outside of the university in formal ways, such as individual research projects.

Following the advocacy culture, three professors across disciplinary areas also felt that as the faculty or department fails, individual professors must take the initiative and engage others. All professors discussed the duty of the professor to increase their own awareness of Indigenous perspectives and issues. Self-education and educating of others is consistent with the developmental culture goal of continuous faculty development. Professors achieved this by attending local events, research, and/or going to university orchestrated events. One hard-pure professor justified professors' lack of awareness as due to "being busy with students and research" and leveled the excuse, "it's not my responsibility." In contrast, three soft professors explicitly opposed the "busy" excuse and stressed that it is "core work."

With respect to developmental culture, interviewees in all disciplinary areas recognized autonomy and academic freedom as both facilitators and barriers. On one hand, professorial freedom was considered as enabling individuals who face opposition to incorporation of Indigenous perspectives. On the other hand, it also posed a defense for individuals who did not diversify their syllabi.

Champions are necessary in all scales and across different disciplinary areas to engage others. A hard-pure professor explained: "You often need a champion. Sometimes, if you have that champion then things do get done. It's hard enough for champions to change any aspect of curricula, but I think if you're resolute enough, you can make change..." A soft-pure professor stressed the difficulty in playing the role of champion. A soft-pure professor spoke about how getting tenure created a higher level of comfort in becoming an advocate for such issues. At the

same time, she also felt the need for psychological and coping strategies in her role within the developmental culture. This professor explained her critical participation approach:

“So you’re constantly trying to navigate that rhetoric and sometimes where I have been very vocal, I’ve experienced some professional backlash from colleagues, but not too much and not anything that, has ever been, you know, it’s had more a psychological toll on me than it has in any realistic way in my career. But you worry that it will have an impact on your career... I have come to figure out that you have to speak when you’re most likely to have an impact. The problem is when you speak all the time, if you’re always bringing it up, then people stop even hearing you...”

This professor emphasized how departmental support is essential as “you are working with your immediate colleagues for the rest of your career so the stakes are actually very high...”. These comments illustrate the importance of departmental support whether informal or formal.

The role of the student was discussed by five professors. This role manifested itself in two ways. First, two hard professors felt the presence of a diverse student body alone made diversity and inclusivity priorities for the institution. Second, three professors from soft disciplinary areas emphasized the role of students in showing the interest and demand for incorporating Indigenous perspectives in the curricula to further the process along.

In conclusion, between and within the managerial culture and the collegial culture, communication was viewed as a necessary way to cultivate understanding. Collegial culture has a potent impact on the incorporation of Indigenous perspectives at Dalhousie. The department was seen as a powerful vehicle for mobilizing action. Forms of action ranged from informal support to personal initiatives. The professors’ role involves increasing their own awareness of

Indigenous issues and helping to raise others'. All recognized the tension between academic freedom and mandating content in syllabi. Surprisingly, interviewees viewed student interest and demand as a significant source of power and momentum for greater incorporation of Indigenous perspectives.

### **Acknowledging Disciplinary Difference**

Disciplinary differences became most evident in professors' discussions of the motivations for incorporating Indigenous perspectives into the curricula. Disciplinary obligations centered on fulfilling the aims of the discipline and ensuring that the canon of the discipline remained intact as well as their own moral obligations. These ideas followed the values of developmental culture that feature professional and moral development of students and faculty members.

The four pure-discipline professors stated that the "more diverse perspectives you have on a specific question or issue, the better [it is] the knowledge that you will produce as a result." Indeed, these four professors felt that with a multiplicity of diverse perspectives, they get closer to the truth—a central aim of their disciplines. Yet, in the hard-pure disciplinary area, both professors noted a difference between their ideals and practice. The four applied professors focused primarily on their functional and pragmatic aims to create competent professionals in their respective fields. Student professional development and preparation was also strong across hard professors. Soft-pure professors predominantly concentrated on character development over professional development.

Disciplinary obligations also manifested in the professors' felt need to teach "well-established," "fundamental," or "prescribed" knowledge, or as what I will refer to as their disciplinary canon. All eight professors felt a tension between incorporating

Indigenous perspectives to further the breadth of knowledge, fostering effective students, and retaining the canon. This was illustrated through a hard-applied professor:

In [my hard-applied discipline], it is somewhat difficult. It's sort of like when you become a doctor, you have to know how to treat the foot, the leg, and the arm, and [the application of hard-applied disciplines] is a lot of the same. We have a very prescribed program. However, there is flexibility when needed to introduce components...

Contrastingly, he later emphasized the need for Indigenous perspectives to be taught to create effective professionals in his field. This view parallels that of soft-applied professors who emphasized the necessity of Indigenous knowledge to create competent professionals.

A soft-pure professor contemplated her feelings about this tension. She observed that in her soft-pure disciplinary area, they constantly question what constitutes the discipline in and of itself. She worried that adding diverse perspectives could cause the discipline to stretch beyond what they consider the disciplinary core. The solution to these tensions centered on the incorporation of material that is "logical" and "naturally" fits within the disciplines.

Another concern about not incorporating Indigenous perspectives raised by four soft professors was the moral obligation to not participate in injustice. However, only soft-discipline professors mentioned an obligation specific to Indigenous perspectives. One soft-professor discussed how TRC report created a moral imperative as it specifically called out to educators to do a better job of engaging with Indigenous perspectives and the history of residential schools particularly. And being an educator herself, she felt an obligation to respond to that specific request.

In summary, all professors felt the responsibility to promoting the aims and canon of their discipline, but they differed in how Indigenous perspectives are compatible or create tension with these obligations. They also differed in their sense of moral obligation to include Indigenous perspectives.

### **Becoming Comfortable with Discomfort**

As seen in the decolonial literature, incorporating Indigenous perspectives involves a power shift and with it, a need for discomfort (Dreise, 2007; Phillips, 2005). In my interviews, ideas of proper and improper incorporation also related to comfort. Six professors, excluding the two in soft-applied disciplines (who have already worked on incorporating Indigenous perspectives into their curricula), were concerned about expertise. These professors noted that they had extensive training in their respective areas, but this training has not been in Indigenous perspectives; it is in “Euro-centric expert knowledge.”

All eight professors recognized their positionality as settlers--and even often ignorant or uninformed settlers at that. They feared their ignorance would cause improper incorporation of Indigenous perspectives. The examples of improper incorporation they provided were similar to themes of good/bad managerial culture. These examples included: focusing on only negative or historical experiences of Indigenous communities, speaking for communities, “fetishizing,” and incorporation that was superficial. Following decolonial literature and the concept of developmental culture, the four soft professors highlighted the duty of professors to recognize their own “colonial mindsets” and “implicit biases” and to work on them (Kuokkanen, 2007; Spivak, 1995). The professors suggested that proper incorporation would involve integrating scholarship not only on Indigenous issues, but also on other issues, and how someone with an Indigenous worldview might teach the same material. The material or content cited ranged from

how colonial systems have affected, and currently affect Indigenous communities to Indigenous practices in different fields.

The professors' preferred method for how to become more comfortable with the incorporation of Indigenous perspectives and avoid improper incorporation was to call on "experts." "Experts" would be Indigenous scholars and elders and other scholars identified by the standards of the disciplines. In the hard disciplinary areas, the professors advocated looking for experts both across universities and within Dalhousie. A soft-applied professor explained that his discipline is further along than the university's managerial culture, which makes such experts less useful.

All eight professors stressed the importance of scanning for disciplinary models that might offer best practice models across universities. A hard-pure professor the comfort in working in their own discipline: "It's important that if people are asked to do something new or different that they are comfortable with it and the greatest level of comfort will be in their own areas of knowledge and experience."

All professors emphasized the need for Indigenous scholars and elders to communicate where Indigenous perspectives fit within curricula. Although the professors advocated for the inclusion of Indigenous scholars, they also emphasized the lack of Indigenous representation in their disciplines. All eight professors blamed structural barriers. One professor described it as a "pipeline problem," and all professors reinforced the need for resources and support to change this. Given the current lack of Indigenous scholars with training recognized by managerial bodies, two professors (one soft-pure, one hard-applied) were concerned about what kind of training would become accepted. One professor elaborated:



...having an elder or someone who's had experiences. Perhaps not a technical level, but at a level as this is our perspectives and these are what we need, would certainly help combine technical experience with personal experience. And obviously, the ultimate goal would be just having one person who has the appropriate technical training and the appropriate personal experience as well.

The other professor questioned "when and where it would be inappropriate to bring them in as experts in their own personal life experience." Four professors across disciplinary areas offered the solution of having an Indigenous scholar, or elder and a settler scholar jointly teach a class.

Dis/comfort manifested in different forms across both professors and disciplines.

Professors who had been working on incorporating Indigenous perspectives into their courses had stronger feelings of comfort. Others were concerned about where to acquire the necessary expertise. Possibilities included Indigenous scholars, elders and progressive disciplines in other universities as well as within the university. The ideal solution would be a combination of these possibilities.

Ultimately, across all disciplinary areas, the perceived willingness that exists in the collegial culture has not translated into action. In the market of knowledge production, universities are in a position of distinct power, and in turn, comfort. As a result, they have the choice of whether or not to acknowledge, validate, or incorporate Indigenous perspectives. In fact, six professors from varied disciplinary areas believed that if a professor in a given field said that the material did not fit, they would accept that. Collegial principles of autonomy and freedom were cited as a rationale.

## **Conclusion**

While this research provides rich insights and findings on the integration of Indigenous perspectives within the university, there are limitations that are important to address as they offer directions for future research. This was a case study of one university, so findings may not be generalizable. Future research could examine multiple universities and compare these. A second limitation is that the sample employed consisted exclusively of tenured faculty. Triangulating these findings with interviews with other key stakeholders such as untenured faculty, students, staff, alumni, and administrators would allow for a more comprehensive understanding of the university landscape. A third limitation is that this study was conducted over two terms and with single interviews. Longitudinal tracking of changes in policy, managerial culture, and actions by different stakeholder groups, and analysis of their interactions, offer additional avenues for research. From these studies, deeper insights and understanding of the evolution of decolonizing forces and possible interventions for how to propel better, future incorporation of Indigenous perspectives could be gained. A fourth limitation was that I was positioned as a student research in this research. As a student, the openness of professors could have been limited due to doubts concerning my knowledge and competency in these topics.

Grounded in institutional ethnography, this research employed semi-structured interviews with tenured, settler professors, along with textual analysis, to explore how power relations shape the local perceptions and experience of incorporating Indigenous perspectives into undergraduate and professional curricula. This study offers important contributions to research on organizational anthropology, sociology of higher education, and decolonial education. First, I explored tenured, settler professors, and offered a detailed analysis of professors' perceptions of the tensions and compatibilities of the different scales in the process of incorporating Indigenous perspectives. In my findings, I discovered that while the political climate was seen as infiltrating

all scales of the university, university policy documents did not have the same effect. I found that the collegial culture contains underutilized avenues for change. Further, this study identified cross-disciplinary facilitators and barriers in creating this change within the university.

Despite the power they perceived in managerial forces, these professors felt a perceived willingness in the university to change and believed that better incorporation of Indigenous perspectives was important. The professors also had creative and innovative ideas and suggestions for how to propel movement in the future through greater support and access to resources. Their ideas directly demonstrate the possible implications of this research. Specific recommendations across all scales included face-to-face conversations, consultation, looking for best practices in disciplines within and across universities, workshops and events to aid in the self-education of professors, recognizing the power one has to create change, and calling on decolonizing education experts to facilitate this transition.

Beyond general recommendations, culture and identity-specific recommendations also emerged. For the managerial culture, they included a combination of top-down and bottom-up management with an emphasis on bottom-up consultation for symbolic gestures, creating authentic incorporation, providing sufficient resources including experts, increasing reasoned communication, and acknowledging and benefitting from the variation within the university with respect to disciplinary differences and the unique challenges that each will face in this incorporation. For individual professors, recommendations included self-education, raising awareness in others, avoiding inauthentic incorporation, and encouraging students to explore Indigenous perspectives. Students were encouraged to communicate with professors their interest in Indigenous perspectives and their views about how they relate to various courses. All of these

measures could lead to a cascading process for the incorporation of Indigenous perspectives in university curricula.

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### Appendix A: List of Analyzed Policy Documents

- 1) Dalhousie University, Task Force on Access for Black and Native People. (1989). *Breaking Barriers: Report of the Task Force on Access for Black and Native People*. Retrieved from email correspondence.
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- 8) Dalhousie University, Task Force on Misogyny, Sexism, and Homophobia. (2015). *Interim Report of the Task Force on Misogyny, Sexism, and Homophobia in Dalhousie University Faculty of Dentistry Report*. Retrieved from:  
<https://www.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/dentistry/7b.April2016-Update-response-to-Task-Force.pdf>
- 9) Dalhousie University. Committee on Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian Student Access and Retention. (2015). *A Report from the Committee on Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian Student Access and Retention*. Retrieved from email correspondence.

### **Appendix B: Qualitative Policy Coding Guide**

1. How is diversity and inclusivity framed in the institution, generally, and more specifically with Indigenous peoples and perspectives?
2. What is missing from the current framing?
  - a. Do these documents account for disciplinary differences?
  - b. Do they voice Indigenous perspectives to be integrated into the curricula?

### **Appendix C: Quantitative Policy Coding Guide**

1) Identifier (PD, year, [month, day if any], assign a letter if there is more than one article on the same day. Start with “b” and c, d, and so forth)

2) Year

3) Month

4) Day

5) Are one of the authors from an administrative body?

0) No

1) Yes

6) Are one of the authors from an academic body?

0) No

1) Yes

#### *Indigenous Plus*

6) Are Indigenous/Aboriginal/Native mentioned?

0) No

1) Yes

7) Is another group mentioned with Indigenous/Aboriginal/Native?

0) No

1) Yes

#### *Liberty Values*

8) Is inclusivity mentioned?

0) No

1) Yes

9) Is diversity mentioned?

0) No

1) Yes

10) Is respect mentioned? (e.g. culture of respect)

0) No

1) Yes

*Injustices*

11) Is societal events mentioned? (e.g. Truth & Reconciliation Commission)

0) No

1) Yes

12) Is university issues mentioned? (e.g. Dentistry scandal)

0) No

1) Yes

13) Are provincial levels issues mentioned? (e.g. Marshall Inquiry, Cole Harbour High School racial incidents)

0) No

1) Yes

*Justice Climate*

14) Is equality/equal opportunity/equity mentioned?

0) No

1) Yes

15) Is justice or responsibility mentioned?

16) Is discrimination mentioned? (e.g. harassment)

0) No

1) Yes

17) Is racism mentioned?

0) No

1) Yes

*Disciplinary Differences*

18) Is a faculty unit mentioned? (in the same sentence with a recognition of difference)

0) No

1) Yes

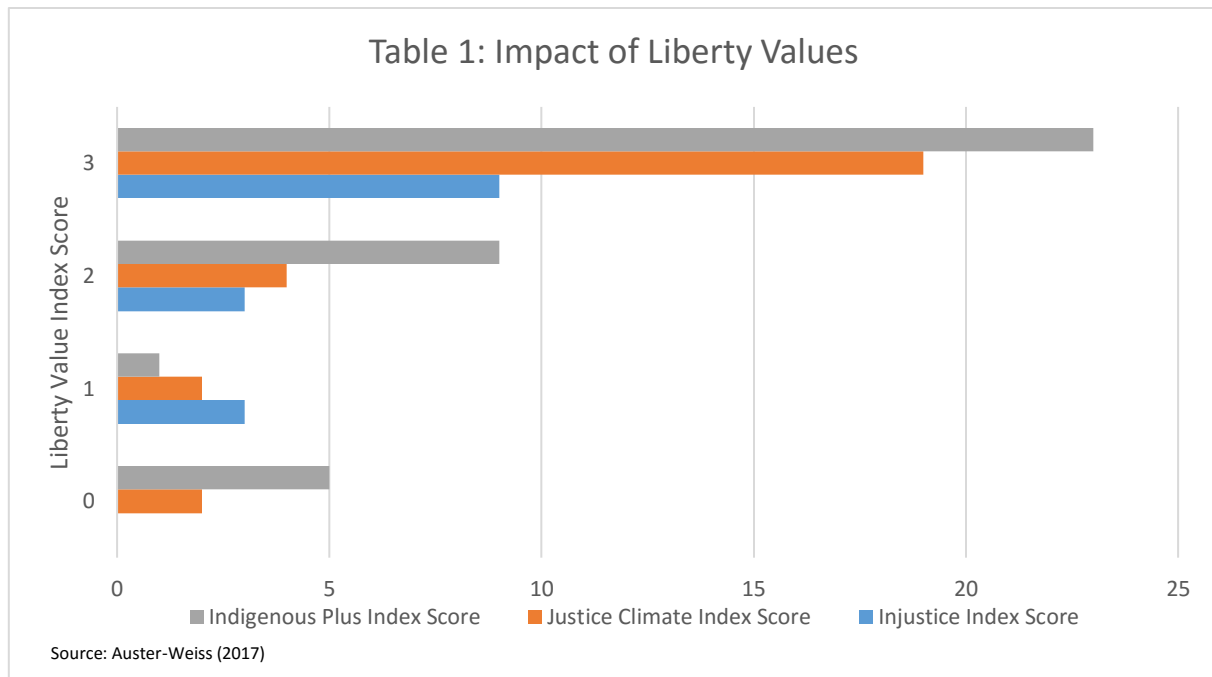


### **Appendix D: Textual Analysis**

In this appendix, I will elaborate on my methodological approach and findings of my textual analysis of university policy documents. I used one guide (see Appendix B) in qualitative analysis which fostered a deeper understanding of the localized policy documents, while the second guide (see Appendix C) for my quantitative analysis enabled me to more deductive themes.

In quantitative analysis, I analyzed liberty values, justice climate, injustices, and Indigenous plus. I operationalized liberty values (X1) by ‘inclusivity,’ and ‘diversity’ as these words tend to be concomitant with docile attempts to redistribute that power involved in the politics and production of knowledge (Ahmed, 2007a, 2007b; Dua & Bhanji, 2016; Fraser, 2008; Gorski, 2008; Joshee & Johnson, 2011; Stewart, 2009). Following literatures by Ahmed (2007a, 2007b) and Dua and Bhanji (2017a, 2017b), justice climate (Y1) is operationalized through mentions of ‘equity,’ ‘equality,’ ‘responsibility,’ ‘discrimination,’ ‘racism’ and ‘social justice.’ Although other authors (Iverson, 2007, 2012; Tator & Henry, 2009) include these notions in their conceptualization of liberty values, I have followed Ahmed (2007a, 2007b) as she identifies differences in function of the two types of terms. Notions of social and moral justice become absent as liberty values that are more celebratory in nature increase (Ahmed, 2007a, 2007b). I operationalized injustices (Y2) through specific issues or events at the local, provincial, and nation levels. Instances of this included the Dalhousie Dentistry Scandal, Marshall Inquiry, and others. Following the literatures idea of the marketization of diversity (Ahmed, 2006, 2007a, 2007b; Deem & Ogza, 1997; Iverson, 2007, 2012), my next variable of interest is Indigenous plus (Y3), which is operationalized through the mentions of African Nova Scotians, disability

status, gender, sexual orientation, racially visible, and other groups mentioned with Indigenous populations of Canada.



In Table 1: Impact of Liberty Values, I looked at how mentions of liberty values affected mentions of Indigenous plus, justice climate, and injustices. In contrast to the literature put forth by Ahmed (2007) suggested that liberty value notions replaced notions of justice climate. In Table 1: Impact of Liberty Values, I found that mentions of liberty values did not mean that notions of justice climate, or injustices decreased. It seemed as though issues that shined a negative light on society using words such as “racism,” “harassment,” “injustice” or through the mention of situations that involved injustices, such as the Marshall Inquiry. It indicated that there was also higher mention of liberty values with positive connotations such as “respect,” “diversity,” and “inclusivity.” While, mentions of Indigenous plus increased with those of liberty values.

However, one of the main limitations of my quantitative analysis is that it quantified whether a variable of interest was mentioned, not how many times. In these policy documents,

the one-off mention of an issue, solution, or situation was common. This failed to highlight the quality in which policy documents addressed these issues. So, I will continue to explore these themes through my qualitative findings.

The comparison of liberty values and justice climate can be seen through two documents: *Breaking Barriers* and *Belong Report*. These documents were produced nearly thirty years apart. *Breaking Barriers* evoked notions of justice throughout the document. It began with poems and passages to cultivate empathy, and recognized the implicit biases of the Task Force members. In this document, the detailed accounts of structural racism, and situations of injustice. *Breaking Barriers* goes as far to university acknowledge the role of the university in past injustices and emphasize their responsibility to prevent future injustices. See excerpt below: “A trip to a university campus must no longer feel like a journey to another planet for minority communities in Nova Scotia. The challenge presented to Dalhousie is to make the university a more familiar place for Indigenous Blacks and Micmacs. In order to achieve this goal, the university community must reach out to the Black and Micmac communities. By doing so, the university will become a richer place. By allowing these people to claim what is rightfully theirs, we can strike a small blow against racism in Nova Scotia. Dalhousie can make the dream about university education for Micmac and Black Nova Scotians a reality in the 1980s.” (p. iii).

In the *Belong Report*, the authors acknowledge the lack of belonging felt by parts of the university population, and asks “What would Dalhousie look like if all of us felt we truly belonged?” (p. 6). Following this question, the document emphasizes how exclusion and marginalization are unintentional in most cases. The university commits to acknowledging the broader social context in which it exists, and emphasizes responding to that broader context and disavows their power in creating change by highlighting how racism, colonialism, ableism, and

other discrimination are social forces beyond the university. Although this is fair claim, after this statement, they do not recognize the role that Dalhousie plays in reinforcing these powers, nor a mission to do their best to eliminate these forces on campus. The document focuses on celebrating its diversity, rather than acknowledging the pain and ways to mitigate that.

Another example is illustrated in the document 100 Days of Listening. The authors mention that "...Dalhousie can and should do better in employing individuals from designating groups including the Mi'kmaq First Nation and the African Nova Scotian community" (p. 14-15). However, in more recent documents, the descriptions offered in these policy documents of the current justice climate at the university, and the future seemed overall aspirational. They also do not offer specific ways in which to achieve these goals. This notion of ambiguity within policy documents and the university's goals was mentioned in the interviews with the professors.

In my qualitative analysis, I further explored notions of Indigenous plus and the connection to diversity and inclusivity issues. I found that the idea of diversity and inclusivity issues amalgamated varied issues that were seemed only related under the same umbrella of injustice. These issues can be seen in the Belong Report, where issues of disrespect, isolation and marginalized were mentioned, as well as other challenges caused "by systemic misogyny, sexism, racism, ethnocentrism, heterosexism, colonialism, socio-economic disadvantage, ableism, ageism, sexualized violence, harassment and discrimination" (p. 6). The individual issues lost in the laundry list of injustice create a superficial acknowledgement. Detailed discussions of harassment and racism were only found in Task Force on Misogyny, Sexism and Homophobia reports detailing the Dentistry Scandal, *Promoting Success for Aboriginal Students*, and *Breaking Barriers*. Only one policy document, *Aboriginal and African Canadian Students Access and Retention*, noted the constant grouping together of Indigenous and Black Canadian

students, faculties, staff, and supports. *Aboriginal and African Canadian Students Access and Retention* was also the only document to call for this grouping to be replaced with programming and policies that consider the large variation both between, and within, these two diverse cultural groups. The only documents addressing exclusively Indigenous issues were *Promoting Success for Aboriginal Students* and *Joining the Conversation*. This finding followed that of Ahmed (2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2012) as she worries about the use of diversity as blanket term. This worry is highlighted by the findings of policy documents at Dalhousie. “Diversity issues” become combined in a long list of issues, which reduce the amount of adequate attention and resources dedicated to each issue.

The second key question I asked in my qualitative analysis centered on whether disciplinary difference was acknowledged, and if content solutions were proposed in these policy documents. All of these documents encouraged interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary collaboration, but failed to address the conflicts and differences that are inherent in this collaboration as each disciplinary area has its own specific aims. The documents in which disciplinary difference was most recognized was within the Task Force on Misogyny, Sexism and Homophobia reports. They stressed how disciplines need to cultivate a diverse and inclusive environment. These documents also emphasize the unique quality of Dentistry in its involvement with racist, homophobic, sexist, and misogynist attitudes and acts. The acknowledgement of disciplinary difference was mentioned, but there was little elaboration on the barriers that disciplinary difference cause, nor way to create individualized tactics to create the managerial changes within these disciplines.

With respect to solutions, following the literatures, recruitment, retention, and content were mentioned. But, the documents focused predominantly on recruitment and retention. In

Breaking Barriers, one of the recommendations involved offering “credit courses in the history and culture in the history and culture of Black and Mi’kmaq people.” It is important to note that it was not until the fall of 2015 in which an Indigenous Studies program was established. More recently, in 2016, the Belong Report recommended adding a course in Mi’kmaq language was recommended. In addition to providing an Indigenous learning center with appropriate scholarly resources, and support for Indigenous elders. Here, I would like to stress that Indigenous Studies exists due to the exclusion by other disciplines to incorporate Indigenous perspectives with Western knowledges. So, it is important to be cautious in furthering the vacuum that Indigenous perspectives exist, and focus solutions that involve working across and within disciplinary areas and embedding Indigenous perspectives with other Western knowledge. The idea of these perspectives co-existing also needs to continue to recognize the difference between them and within the solutions of creating a blended landscape for knowledge production.

In close, I have briefly discussed my findings from the textual analysis of Dalhousie University’s policy documents. These policy documents currently vocalize liberty values, justice climate, and the use of diversity as a blanket term. The documents tend to be ambitious in the goals they aim to achieve, while being ambiguous towards the issues they are addressing, and the solutions they propose to achieve these goals. In this discussion, it is important to keep in mind that these policy documents were not seen as a step towards achieving inclusivity and diversity goals by all but one professor. However, if more policy documents focused on a specific issue and provided a synthesized report on best practice models across universities to highlight ways to achieve their goals, such as Promoting Success for Aboriginal Students, perhaps, professors would find them of greater use.

**Appendix E: Table 2: Participant Characteristics**

Participant	Gender	Years at Dalhousie	Disciplinary Area
1	Female	14	Soft-Pure
2	Female	13	Soft-Pure
3	Male	30	Soft-Applied
4	Female	14	Soft-Applied
5	Male	22	Hard-Pure
6	Female	24	Hard-Pure
7	Male	17	Hard-Applied
8	Male	15	Hard-Applied

### Appendix F: Recruitment Email

Information sent by email from Dr. Radice's address, and Dr. Lewis' address to specific faculty members will be as follows:

*Dear (insert professor's name here),*

*I am currently supervising a Social Anthropology Honours student, Shannon Auster-Weiss, who is exploring whether and how Indigenous perspectives are integrated into undergraduate and professional curricula at Dalhousie. She is looking to speak with professors in various disciplines who have been involved in developing their undergraduate or professional curriculum in some way. I thought [insert academic unit] would be a very interesting case to look at. Would you be interested in participating in this research, or could you suggest someone who might be? I've copied a message from Shannon below. Please let me and/or her know if you are willing and able to participate in the research, or if you have any suggestions of who we should approach.*

*Thank you very much for your time.*

*Best regards,*

*Dr. Martha Radice*

*Associate Professor, Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, Dalhousie University.*

*Dear (insert professor's name here),*

*I am a Social Anthropology student from Dalhousie University, and I am conducting a study to explore whether and how Indigenous perspectives are integrated into undergraduate and professional curricula, and what the barriers to or facilitators of this process might be. I am looking for tenured or tenure-track professors who have had a hand in developing curricula to participate in this research. I would very much appreciate the opportunity to hear from you (or a suitable colleague) on this topic! Participation consists of a single interview lasting up to an hour, and all information you provide will be secure and confidential unless you wish to be identified.*

*For more information, please contact me by email at [sh280802@dal.ca](mailto:sh280802@dal.ca) or phone (647-300-7426).*

*I would appreciate your input!*

*Sincerely,*

*Shannon Auster-Weiss*



### Appendix G: Interview Guide

1. Can you tell me about your experience at Dalhousie University? Perhaps, the positions you've had and your involvement with designing the undergrad/professional curricula?
2. Can you tell about your experience with diversity issues at the university? Possibly, involvement inclusivity initiatives in your department, or higher levels of the university?
3. Have you ever tried to implement something new in the undergrad/professional curricula?
  - a. If yes, what was it, and what challenges did you and your department face in that process?
    - i. At the departmental level?
      1. How did you handle those challenges?
    - ii. At the higher levels of the University? (e.g. in this Faculty or in the University)?
      1. How did you handle those challenges?
    - iii. Personal?
      1. How did you handle those challenges?
  - b. If no, why do you think that is?
4. Are you aware of any steps the university has taken towards including Indigenous peoples and perspectives?
  - a. Can you offer any examples of these steps taken toward inclusion?
  - b. What do you make of them? (beneficial, useful, useless, disadvantageous)
    - i. Why?
5. Do you think Indigenous perspectives or Indigenous content are relevant to your discipline?
  - a. What kind of material are you thinking of?
  - b. Would you consider it core or elective material?
    - i. Why?
6. How do you envision the process of integration of that material?
  - a. For your department?
    - i. What steps are being taken to do this?
  - b. For the university?
    - i. What steps are being taken to do this?
  - c. For you personally?
    - i. What steps are being taken to do this?
7. Some people think that it is necessary to integrate Indigenous content into the curricula of all disciplines. Other people believe that Indigenous content does not always belong in academic content.
  - a. What would you say your department's position would be, and why?
  - b. What do you think the university's position is?
8. What is your take on this debate? What would your views be, and why? Looking forward, what do you believe is the potential for Indigenous perspectives being integrated into undergrad/professional curricula?
  - a. For the department?
    - i. Why?
    - ii. Can you give me three examples of what this might look like?
  - b. For the university?
    - i. Why?

- c. Can you give me three examples of what this might look like? For you personally?  
(e.g. course content, teaching styles)
      - i. Why?
      - ii. Can you give me three examples of what this might look like?
9. Do you have any other comments, insights, or questions you want to share, before we finish the interview?

## Appendix H: Consent Form

### CONSENT FORM

#### ACADEMIC DISCIPLINARY AREAS' PERCEPTIONS OF INTEGRATING INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES

You are invited to take part in research being conducted by me, Shannon Auster-Weiss, an undergraduate student in Social Anthropology, as part of my honours degree at Dalhousie University. The purpose of this research is to understand whether and how Indigenous perspectives are integrated into undergraduate and professional curricula, and what the barriers to or facilitators of this process might be. I will write up the results of this research in a paper for my class, called the honours thesis.

As a participant in the research you will be asked to answer a number of interview questions about your involvement in curriculum development and your views on integrating Indigenous perspectives into university programs. The interview should take about an hour and will be conducted in a quiet location of your choice. With your permission, the interview will be audio-recorded. If I quote any part of it in my honours thesis, I will use a pseudonym, not your real name, and I will remove any other details that could identify you from the quote. Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You do not have to answer questions that you do not want to answer, and you are welcome to stop the interview at any time if you no longer want to participate. If you decide to stop participating after the interview is over, you can do so until March 15. I will not be able to remove the information you provided after that date, because I will have completed my analysis, but the information will not be used in any other research.

Information that you provide to me will be kept private and will be anonymized, which means any identifying details such as your name and academic unit will be removed from it. Only the honours class supervisor and I will have access to the unprocessed information you offer. I will describe and share general findings in a presentation to the Sociology and Social Anthropology Department and in my honours thesis. I will do my best to include nothing that could identify you in the presentation or the thesis. That said, it may be necessary for me to discuss the specifics of certain academic programs, which means that people who have in-depth knowledge of the University's programs and curriculum development processes may be able to use that knowledge to identify your academic unit, you, or other participants in the research results. I will destroy all information ten years after submitting my honours thesis.

The risks associated with this study are no greater than those you encounter in your everyday professional life.

There will be no direct benefit to you in participating in this research and you will not receive compensation. The research, however, will contribute to new knowledge on integrating Indigenous perspectives in university curricula. If you would like to see how your information is used, please feel free to contact me and I will send you a copy of my honours thesis after April 30.

If you have questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me or the honours class supervisor. My contact information is Shannon Auster-Weiss, [sh280802@dal.ca](mailto:sh280802@dal.ca). You can contact the honours class supervisor, Dr Martha Radice, at the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, Dalhousie University on (902) 494-6747, or email [martha.radice@dal.ca](mailto:martha.radice@dal.ca).

If you have any ethical concerns about your participation in this research, you may contact Catherine Connors, Director, Research Ethics, Dalhousie University at (902) 494-1462, or email [ethics@dal.ca](mailto:ethics@dal.ca).

**Participant's consent:**

I have read the above information and I agree to participate in this study.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I agree for the interview to be audio-recorded.

I wish to be identified by name in research reports and presentations.

Researcher's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology • Dalhousie University • 6135 University Ave • PO Box 15000 • Halifax NS B3H 4R2 • Canada**  
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## Appendix I: REB Final Report



## ANNUAL/FINAL REPORT

Annual report to the Research Ethics Board for the continuing ethical review of research involving humans and final report to conclude REB Approval

## A. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

A1. Lead researcher contact	
Name:	Shannon Auster-Weiss
Email address:	sh280802@dal.ca
For student research:	
Supervisor at Dal:	Martha Radice
Supervisor email:	martha.radice@dal.ca

A2. Lead Researcher Status
Please indicate your current status with Dalhousie University:
<input type="checkbox"/> Employee/Academic Appointment <input type="checkbox"/> Current student <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):

A3. Project Information	
REB file #:	REB # 2016-4040
Project title:	Academic Disciplinary Areas' Perceptions of Integrating Indigenous Perspectives
Sample size (or number of cases) approved by REB:	8

**B. STUDY STATUS**

B1. Study progress (check all that apply)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Participant recruitment not yet begun Reason (please explain):		
	During past year	Total since study start
<input type="checkbox"/> Secondary data use (no recruitment) Number of records used:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Participant recruitment on-going Number of participants recruited (by group):		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Participant recruitment complete Total number of participants/records:	8	8
<input type="checkbox"/> Data collection on-going		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Study complete. Data collection complete. No further involvement of participants. Approved data analysis and writing may be ongoing. This report is the final report to close the REB file for this project.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe):		

B2. Study Changes
Have you made any changes to the approved research project (that have not been documented with an amendment request)? This includes changes to the research methods, recruitment material, consent documents and/or study instruments or research team. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, please explain: I made small adjustments to my interview guide as many participants mentioned the involvement of the current political climate in Canada being a facilitator and a barrier in integrating Indigenous perspectives into undergraduate and professional curricula. Due to this, I included the following question to my interview guide: Do you think the political climate will affect this process? If so, how?

**C. PROJECT HISTORY**

Since your initial REB submission or last annual report:	
C1. Have you experienced any challenges or delays recruiting or retaining participants or accessing records or biological materials? If yes, please describe:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
C2. Have you experienced any problems in carrying out this project? If yes, please describe:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
C3. Have participants experienced any harm as a result of their participation in the study?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

C4. Has any study participant expressed complaints, or experienced any difficulties in relation to their participation in the study? If yes, please describe:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
C5. Since the original approval, have there been any new reports in the literature that would suggest a change in the nature or likelihood of risks or benefits resulting from participation in this study? If yes, please describe:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

**D. ATTESTATION (this box *must be checked* for the report to be accepted by the REB)**

- I agree that the information provided in this report accurately portrays the status of this project and describes to the Research Ethics Board any new developments related to the study since initial approval or the latest report.

**E. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Submit this completed form to Research Ethics, Dalhousie University, by email at [ethics@dal.ca](mailto:ethics@dal.ca) at least 21 days prior to the expiry date of your current Research Ethics Board approval.
2. Enter subject line: REB# (8-digit number), Last name, Annual (or Final) Report.
3. Student researchers must copy their supervisor(s) in the cc. line of the Annual / Final Report email.

**F. RESPONSE FROM THE REB**

Your report will be reviewed and any follow-up inquiries will be directed to you. You must respond to inquiries as part of the continuing review process.

Annual reports will be reviewed and may be approved for up to an additional 12 months; you will receive an annual renewal letter of approval from the Board that will include your new expiry date.

Final reports will be reviewed and acknowledged in writing.

**CONTACT RESEARCH ETHICS**

- Phone: 902.494.3423
- Email: [ethics@dal.ca](mailto:ethics@dal.ca)
- In person: Hicks Academic Administration Building, 6299 South Street, Suite 231
- By mail: PO Box 15000, Halifax, NS B3H 4R2

### **Appendix J: Suggestions from the Interview Findings**

In sum, facilitators identified by the professors included:

- A mix of top-down and bottom-up, emphasis on bottom-up
- Acknowledging disciplinary differences in mandates and their unique challenges (e.g. representation)
- Authentic, well-thought symbolic gestures from managerial culture that involved a process of consultation
- In-person departmental meetings to facilitate awareness and support
- Increased “honest and open” communication at all levels
- Looking at other disciplinary areas’ schools for best practices
- Provide resources to enable the work and time needed to authentically fulfill managerial priorities
- A committee across the university with individuals from different disciplinary areas to discuss multiple forms
- Workshops and events to aid the self-education of professors
- Bringing in individuals who can help facilitate this incorporation

Specific examples of incorporation included:

- Pervasive method (incorporating a certain degree of Indigenous perspectives in all courses)
- Focusing on being technically right or focusing on the facts (e.g. facts pertaining to Indigenous rights, histories, and current issues)
- Write research papers on some aspect of Indigenous perspectives that is relevant to the course



- Provide readings by Indigenous scholars, or on Indigenous perspectives
- Incorporate research involved with Indigenous communities in class once receiving consent
- Modules in courses, but avoiding the “one-off lecture”