

Indigenous Knowledge & Methods
Indigenous Ways of Knowing - Health, Wellness & Environment
McMaster University
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Office Hours :

Indigenization is defined as collaborative process of naturalizing Indigenous intent, interactions, and processes and making them evident to transform spaces, places, and hearts. In the context of post-secondary education, this involves including Indigenous perspectives and approaches. Indigenization benefits not only Indigenous researchers, students, teachers, staff members, and community members involved or impacted by knowledge production and dissemination. The goal is not to replace Western knowledge with Indigenous knowledge or to merge the two distinct systems into one. Rather, 'Indigenization can be understood as weaving or braiding together two distinct knowledge systems.' (Antonie et al, 2019). In research contexts, Indigenization is critical because scientific research privileges the dominant Euro-centric perspective, thereby excluding indigenous sciences, knowledges, experiences and worldviews. Indigenous peoples were excluded from research, representation and production; colonial discourse misrepresented, appropriated, exploited and diminished Indigenous knowledge "sciences." Indigenous Knowledge (IK) is invested in reclaiming, restoring and rebuilding not Indigenizing the academy – both will be explored in class readings.

Decolonization refers to the processes of "process of deconstructing colonial ideologies of the superiority and privilege of Western thought and approaches. On the one hand, decolonization involves dismantling structures that perpetuate the status quo, problematizing dominant discourses, and addressing unbalanced power dynamics. On the other hand, decolonization involves valuing and revitalizing Indigenous knowledge and approaches and weeding out settler biases or assumptions that have impacted Indigenous ways of being. (Antonie et al, 2019. For a general discussion, see Smith, 2018, 2008)."

We will explore research issues such as: increasingly numbers of scholars are implementing Indigenous research knowledge and methodology into their research proposals; will the mainstreaming of IK simply become co-opted and assimilated into mainstream or remain distinct and effective in decolonizing? Indigenous research methodology is usually defined as "relational accountability" As a researcher you are answering to all your relations when you are doing research" (Wilson, 2001). What of "insider outsider" research? How can IK methodologies be used by all researchers or only in some cases or are all only relevant to Indigenous researchers? What can be uniquely conducted by Indigenous scholars if anything? ((Weber-Pillwax, 1999). For general surveys of Indigenous research methodology, see Kovach (2009) Dawson et al. (2017) Easby, (2016). For applications, see Alfred (2005 and 2009), Martin-Hill (2008), McCarthy (2016)

The objective of the course is to provide students with an overview of the current literature and issues related to Indigenous people's ways of knowing. Developing an Indigenous discourse and framework includes understanding the core values, Indigenous people hold common and distinct diversity of their belief systems. "*Decolonizing Education*", is a reminder of the way Indigenous peoples everywhere experienced what Kincheloe and Steinberg (1999, p. 82) refer to as *subjugated knowledges*. These are the excluded, silenced, or marginalized histories,

memories and experiences of sub-ordinated populations. Deconstructing the colonial discourse Indigenous peoples were subjugated by will be explored through Indigenous knowledges' critical pedagogy. A pedagogy for learners that requires active participants in the reconstruction of Indigenous knowledge. Indigenous people's knowledge construction emerges from origin stories, cosmology and relationships to natural environment. The methodologies IK facilitates self-determination, equity, anti-racism and community control from inception to dissemination.

The class will facilitate experiential learning practices to explore contemporary Indigenous issues that are embedded in Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing. Exploring resistance to environmental racism, cultural genocide, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) and health and healing through developing simulated projects with Six Nations' existing research'. With consideration to Indigenous ethical principles; do no harm, reciprocity and 'nothing about us without us.' A primary question in all IK research is, "who benefits?" Language arts and the spoken word are effective tools for Indigenizing any research project, including the arts, creativity is essential elements for Indigenous pedagogies and knowledge dissemination.

In addition, there will be the development of a research project examining the stated topics exploring the contemporary realities of Indigenous people's grassroots movements to reclaim ancient wisdoms informing contemporary positions on a myriad of issues. Your project will include creation of a digital story drawn from Indigenous stories in public domain of YouTube, Indigenous media outlets and social media supported by academic literature.

Classes consist of self-directed learning and consist of seminars, Indigenous film, social media, digital stories, guest lectures, oral tradition guest researchers from community. Primary information, experiential virtual activities, open class discussions will be encouraged as a means of sharing an understanding the Indigenous lens human experiences and ways of knowing. The goal of the course is to learn outside of the classroom through engaging in participatory research; learning with artist, elders and youth to create equity in knowledge production.

Required Reading:

Ahenakew, C. (2016). Grafting Indigenous Ways of Knowing onto Non-Indigenous Ways of Being: The (Underestimated) Challenges of a Decolonial Imagination. *International Review of Qualitative Research*, 9(3), 323–340.

on-line: <https://indiancountrymedianetwork.com/news/opinions/two-spirits-one-heart-five-genders/on-line>:

The Value of Traditional Ecological Knowledge for the Environmental Health Sciences and Biomedical Research Symma Finn, Mose Herne, and Dorothy Castille (4/2017)

Allen & Smylie, First People's Second Class Treatment; The role of racism in the health and well-being of Indigenous peoples in Canada

Akena, F. A. (2012). Critical Analysis of the Production of Western Knowledge and Its Implications for Indigenous Knowledge and Decolonization. *Journal of Black Studies*, 43(6), 599–619. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021934712440448>

Little Bear, Leroy. Jagged worldviews colliding;

https://www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/worldviews/documents/jagged_worldviews_colliding.pdf

Annita Hetoevèhotohke'e Lucchesi, Spirit-Based Research: A Tactic for Surviving Trauma in Decolonizing Research, MMIW Special Issue, Journal of Indigenous research
<https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/kicjir/vol7/iss1/4/>

Whyte, Kyle. "Indigenous Climate Change Studies : Indigenizing Futures, Decolonizing the Anthropocene." *English Language Notes*, vol. 55 no. 1, 2017, p. 153-162. *Project MUSE* muse.jhu.edu/article/711473.

Sefa Dei, George J. Indigenous Knowledge Studies and the Next Generation: Pedagogical Possibilities for Anti-colonial Education [online]. Australian Journal of Indigenous Education, The, Vol. 37, Supplementary, 2008: 5-13. Available at
: <<https://search.informit.com.au/documentSummary;dn=656204016604184;res=IELIND>> ISSN: 1326-0111. [cited 14 Jul 20].

Required Text:

Deloria, Vine. (1997) Red Earth, White Lies, Native Americans and the Myth of Scientific Fact, Fulcrum publishing.

Estes, Nick. (2019) Our History Is the Future, *Standing Rock Versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance*, Verso.

Kovach, Margaret. 201 Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Contexts,

Evaluation:

Research Project	40%
Student reading list	10%
Presentation	25%
Digital story	25%

Week 1: Defining Indigenous Knowledge and applying ways of knowing to research

Renaissance sensitizing the Eurocentric consciousness, (Europeans) to acknowledge the unique knowledge and relationships that Indigenous people derive from place and from their homeland. Working towards reclamation is the basis of resistance.

Each week a student is assigned one article to discuss choose one per student to lead discussions

Week 2: Doctrine of discovery – religious politics.

***Students Personnel Reading List Submitted - approved.*

Bering Strait... DNA and the debate. Origins of colonial science. read Deloria, Vine

Newcomb, Steven. Five hundred years of injustice: the legacy of fifteenth century religious prejudice

Kari B. Schroeder, Mattias Jakobsson, Michael H. Crawford, Theodore G. Schurr, Simina M. Boca, Donald F. Conrad, Raul Y. Tito, Ludmilla P. Osipova, Larissa A. Tarskaia, Sergey I. Zhadanov, Jeffrey D. Wall, Jonathan K. Pritchard, Ripan S. Malhi, David G. Smith, and Noah A. Rosenberg Haplotypic Background of a Private Allele at High Frequency in the America, Molecular Biology and Evolution 26(5):995-1016 · March 2009

Week 3: Resistance, redefining the problem - origins

Caroline Roullier, Laure Benoit, Doyle B. McKey, and Vincent Lebot, Historical collections reveal patterns of diffusion of sweet potato in Oceania obscured by modern plant movements and recombination in PNAS February 5, 2013 110 (6) 2205-2210; <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1211049110>

Ioannidis, A.G., Blanco-Portillo, J., Sandoval, K. *et al.* Native American gene flow into Polynesia predating Easter Island settlement. *Nature* (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-020-2487-2>

Seminar – Healing in Racism, Resistance and Reconcile What?

Read: Kovach – prepare for discussion

Choose one chapter to lead

- Digital stories, GWF Ohneganos – pick your topic

Week 4: Gender constructions reclaimed and why it matters

Decolonial love: These Indigenous artists are taking back the self-love that colonialism stole | CBC Art

Stote – choose a chapter

Student led discussions finalize your collective readings list

Week 5: Educating or propaganda, research is objective?

Wade Davis lecture, TEDX, Plotkin TEDX, Nick Estes TEDX

Submit - present summary of your readings list

Stote, Estes – wrap up

Confirm class reading list related to projects and digital story and from a shared list.

WEEK 6-12: Summary of each Reading chose, D.S. Projects

PRESENTING YOUR READINGS, OUTLINE YOUR PROJECTS, PREPARE FOR STUDENT LED THEME DISCUSSIONS USE:

GWF Decolonizing Indigenous research by Fabra, Martin-Hill and Kreps:

- Absolon, Kathleen E. (2011) *Kaandossiwin: How We Come to Know*. Black Point, NS: Fernwood Publishing.
- Alfred, Taiaiake (2005) *Wasáse: Indigenous Pathways of Action and Freedom*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Alfred, Taiaiake. (2009) *Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto*, 2nd Edition. Toronto: Oxford University Press.
- Antoine, Asma-na-hi et al (2019) *Pulling Together: A Guide for Indigenization of Post-Secondary Institutions*, University of British Columbia, available at: <https://opentextbc.ca/indigenizationcurriculumdevelopers/>
- Brown, Leslie and Strega, Susan, eds. (2015) *Research as Resistance: Revisiting Critical, Indigenous and Anti-Oppressive Approaches*, 2nd Edition, Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press.
- Cochran, P. A. L., Marshall, C. A., Garcia-Downing, C., Kendall, E., Cook, D., McCubbin, L., & Gover, R. M. S. (2008). "Indigenous ways of knowing: Implications for participatory research and community." *American Journal of Public Health*, 98(1), 22-27. Available at <http://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2006.093641>
- Datta, Ranjan (2017) "Decolonizing both researcher and research and its effectiveness in Indigenous research" *Research Ethics*, 14(2): pp. 1-24.
- Dawson, Alexandra; Toombs, Elaine and Mushquash, Christopher (2017) "Indigenous Research Methods: A Systematic Review" *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, 8(2)
- Easby, Angela (2016) *Indigenous Research Methodologies: Final Report*, PRIA and University of Victoria, available at http://unescochair-cbrsr.org/pdf/resource/kp/UVic_IRM.pdf
- Ekberzade, Bikiem (2018) *Standing Rock: Greed, Oil and the Lakota's Struggle for Justice*, London: Zed Books.
- Estes, Nick and Dhillon, Jaskiran, eds. (2019) *Standing with Standing Rock: Voices from the #NoDAPL Movement*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Grenier, L. (1998). *Working with Indigenous Knowledge: A Guide for Researchers*. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre. Available at www.idrc.ca/openebooks/847-3/
- Hameed, Shahul; El-Kafafi, Siham and Waretini-Karena, Rawiri (2019) *Handbook of Research on Indigenous Knowledge and Bi-Culturalism in a Global Context*, Hershey, PA: USA.
- Hill, Sue (2007) *The Clay We Are Made of Haudenosaunee Land Tenure on the Grand River*, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press.
- Kaplan-Myrth, Nili and Smyle, Janet (2006) *Sharing What We Know About Living a Good Life*, Summit Report, Indigenous Knowledge Translation Summy, First Nations University of Canada, available at <http://www.welllivinghouse.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Sharing-what-we-know-Summit-Report.pdf>

- Kovach, Margaret Elizabeth (2009) *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations and Contexts*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Kuokkanen, Rauna. (2019) *Restructuring Relations: Indigenous Self-Determination, Governance, and Gender*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.
- Martin-Hill, Dawn (2008) *The Lubicon Lake Nation: Indigenous Knowledge and Power*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- McCarthy, Theresa (2016) *In Divided Unity: Haudenosaunee Reclamation at Grand River*, Tucson: University of Arizona Press.
- Simpson, Audra (2014) *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States*, Durham: Duke University Press.
- Smith, Linda Tuhiwai (2008) "On tricky ground: Researching the native in the age of uncertainty.: in Denzin NK and Lincoln YS (eds) *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Smith, Linda Tuhiwai (2012) *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 2nd Edition, London: Zed Books.
- Weber-Pillwax, Cora (1999) "Indigenous Research Methodology: Exploratory Discussion of an Elusive Subject," *The Journal of Educational Thought*, 33(1). Available at: <https://journalhosting.ucalgary.ca/index.php/jet/article/view/52552>
- Wilson, Shawn (2001) "What is Indigenous Research Methodology?" *Canadian Journal of Native Education*; 2001; 25, available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234754037_What_Is_an_Indigenous_Research_Methodology
- Wilson, Shawn (2008) *Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*, Black Point, NS: Fernwood Publishing.
- Zavala, Miguel (2013) "What do we mean by decolonizing research strategies? Lessons from decolonizing Indigenous research projects in New Zealand and Latin America" *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, 2(1): 55–71 available at www.decolonization.org/index.php/des/article/view/19113
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Traditional Ecological Knowledge

Key Concepts:

Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), is part of Indigenous knowledge (IK). Indigenous Knowledge can be defined as "Indigenous knowledge is a complete knowledge system with its own epistemology, philosophy, and scientific and logical validity... which can only be understood by means of pedagogy traditionally employed by the people themselves." (Daes, Report on the Protection of Heritage of Indigenous People). Indigenous Knowledge is slowly being recognized by mainstream science. (Hamacher, 2018 and Bartels, 2019, on Navajo Astronomical Knowledge, Brender, 2017). In turn, TEK reflects "a body of information about the interconnected elements of the natural environment traditional Indigenous people have been taught, from generation to generation, to respect and give thanks for" (Brant J., cited in NAFA, 1996). IK has been recognizing as science and has been started to become incorporated mainstream science. Moreover, IK in general, and TEK in particular, are increasingly recognized

as a fundamental resource for adaptation, resilience-building in the face of impending environmental change and water security (UNFCCC, 2016; UNESCO, 2018). Similarly, the UN Sustainable Development Goals call to “support and strengthen the participation of local and Indigenous communities in improving water and sanitation management. (UN, 2016).

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- Dentzau, Michael W. (2018) “The tensions between indigenous knowledge and western science,” *Cultural Studies of Science Education*, available at <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11422-018-9903-z>
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- Fox, C.A., N.J. Reo, D.A. Turner, et al. (2017) “The river is us; the river is in our veins”: re-defining river restoration in three Indigenous communities” *Sustainability Science*. doi:10.1007/s11625-016-0421-1, available at http://sites.dartmouth.edu/reo/files/2012/10/Fox_etal_Rivers2017.pdf
- Gómez-Baggethun, Erik *et al.* (2013) “Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Global Environmental Change: Research findings and policy implications.” *Ecology and society: a journal of integrative science for resilience and sustainability*, 18(4) available at <https://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol18/iss4/art72/>
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Ethics:

- Assembly of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador. (2005). *First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Research Protocol*. Quebec: First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Sustainable Development Institute and the Commission on Human Resources Development for the First Nations of Quebec, available at <http://www.cssspnql.com/docs/centre-de-documentation/research-protocol---synthesis.pdf?sfvrsn=2>.
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- Aurora Research Institute (2011) *Doing Research in the Northwest Territories: A guide for Researchers Applying for Scientific Research Licence* available at <https://nwtresearch.com/sites/default/files/doing-research-in-the-northwest-territories.pdf>
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