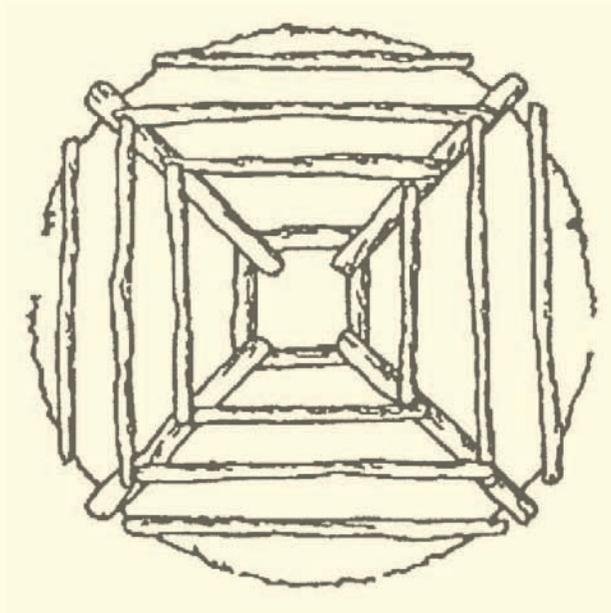


A Handbook for
Educators of Aboriginal Students



A Handbook for Educators of Aboriginal Students



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This handbook is an initiative of the “A Learning Bridge for Aboriginal Adults” (ALBAA) Research Team, Thompson Rivers University, Kamloops, British Columbia.

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Cover image: The pithouse has been chosen as a representation of Aboriginal cosmology, and by extension, of holistic learning. The pithouse is known as a *kekuli* in Chinook jargon trade language or *c7istkten* in the Secwepemc language. The ancient semi-subterranean winter house of the Secwepemc people was divided by four main posts which held up the roof and created four rooms. There were cosmological aspects to the house, regarded as the world, with each compartment associated with one of the cardinal directions. Pithouses varied in size, accommodating 15 to 30 people. (For a description of the Secwepemc pithouse, see Teit, 1909).

Previous page: The pithouse sketch is from “Native American Architecture” by Peter Nabokov and Robert Easton (1989) and is used by permission of Oxford University Press www.oup.com

Cover photo: Pithouse by Ken Favrholt

Select pictograph images were taken from two books by James Alexander Teit: “The Thompson Indians of British Columbia” (1900, reprint 1997), which is used by permission of (and copies are available from) the Nicola Valley Museum Archives Association, Merritt, British Columbia; and “The Shuswap” (1909, reprint 1975).

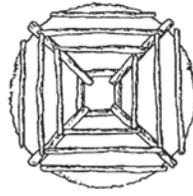
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Thompson Rivers University has chosen to use the term **Aboriginal**, which is inclusive of First Nations, Inuit and Métis, for its programs and services in keeping with the Canadian government definition of the term and while respecting individual preference in language.

Design and Layout: Mairi Budreau, Comprehensive Designer, Creative Services, Thompson Rivers University

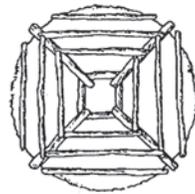
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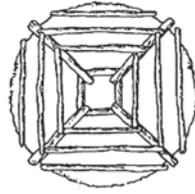


**Weyt-kp! Welcome Everyone!
Welcome to Secwepemcúlecw
– Secwepemc Territory –**

We acknowledge and give honour to the Secwepemc—the ancestral peoples who have lived here for thousands of years—upon whose traditional and unceded land Thompson Rivers University is located. The Secwepemc maintain a spiritual and practical relationship to the land, water, air, animals, plants and all things needed for life on Mother Earth. It is with that in mind that we owe this debt of gratitude.

ALBAA Research Team

To hear a welcome song in Secwepemctsin visit:
<http://www.landoftheshuswap.com/msite/Welcome.mp3>



The bands that comprise the Secwepemc Nation

Sexqeltqín – Adams Lake

St'uxwtéws – Bonaparte

Tsq'éscen – Canim Lake

Stswécem'c/Xgét'tem' – Canoe/Dog Creek

Esk'ét – Alkali Lake

Llenlénéy'ten – High Bar

Tk'emlúps – Kamloops

Qw7ewt – Little Shuswap

Sk'atsin – Neskonlith

Simpcw – North Thompson

Tsk'wéylecw – Pavilion

Kenpésq't – Shuswap

Skítsesten – Skeetchestn

Xats'úll – Soda Creek

Splatsín – Spallumcheen

T'éxel'c – Williams Lake

Stil'qw/Pelltíq't – Whispering Pines/Clinton

Source: Shuswap Nation Tribal Council, 2010

Message from

Dr. Nathan Matthew
Executive Director of Aboriginal Education
Thompson Rivers University



In becoming the University of Choice for Aboriginal people, it is important that Thompson Rivers University (TRU) provides programs relevant and supportive of Aboriginal aspirations of self-governing, healthy communities. In order to attract and retain Aboriginal students, it is essential that TRU provides an inviting learning environment for Aboriginal learners. A key aspect to such an environment is establishing a respectful, positive relationship between the faculty at TRU and Aboriginal students. This handbook is intended to foster such a relationship. Information provided here should assist faculty in gaining a better understanding of the unique social, political and cultural context from which Aboriginal students come. I encourage faculty at TRU to use this handbook to contribute to the University's goal of increasing educational success for Aboriginal students.



Dr. Nathan Matthew
Source: Aboriginal Education Centre, TRU

Message from

Mike Arnouse
Secwepemc Elder
Sexqeltqín

I come to the university as an Elder in the hopes that I can help bring people together, to help people understand, and to show how everyone contributes to future generations and to the whole.

We need to know more about each other through a process of mutual respect and sharing. Not knowing each other breeds racism and judgement. Students come to tell me that many educators do not know about the Residential School and the history from the native point of view. Since I've been here, people have been asking questions about our ways of life and history and we are sharing that. The mistakes that were made in the colonial period, forcing religion and forcing new European ways of doing things, weren't compatible to our spiritual way of teaching. Holistic ways of teaching look at the whole student. We don't put them in boxes; instead, we use the circle where everything is included.

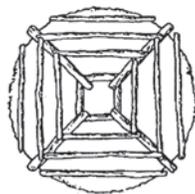
We've got to walk together and learn not only our history and our ways, but each others', so that we get to know each other and the mistakes will slowly heal without harm, without repeat. Some of our stories about instructions to the human being were the same, how to treat each other and other living things respectfully on our Mother Earth. My vision is to go back to that beautiful time where we can make that true and I don't think that's very hard to understand. Now that we're living side-by-side, it almost has to take place. The things that happen on our Mother Earth will help or harm everyone the same.



Mike Arnouse
Source: Aboriginal Education Centre, TRU

Special thanks to:

Dr. Marianne Ignace and Dr. Ron Ignace
of Simon Fraser University
for their translation assistance



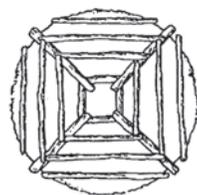
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This handbook is the result of the collective efforts of many people who have contributed their time and skills to its development. We have made every effort to acknowledge individuals who have contributed to this project. Apologies to anyone we may have missed.

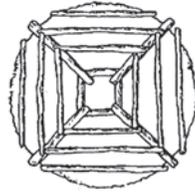
Kukwstép-kucw! Thank you!

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THE ALBAA PROJECT

A Learning Bridge for Aboriginal Adults (ALBAA) is in Phase II of its research at Thompson Rivers University. The goal of the ALBAA project is to identify and develop strategies and support systems that will result in increased student success and retention among Aboriginal adults transitioning into post-secondary education institutions from community-based Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs. One of the initiatives of the ALBAA Project is to provide hands-on tools for faculty to increase their understanding of the needs of Aboriginal learners. After consulting with numerous individuals with Aboriginal education backgrounds, the product of these combined efforts is this handbook.

ALBAA Community Partners

Neskonlith Indian Band www.neskonlith.org

Nuxalk Nation www.nuxalknation.org

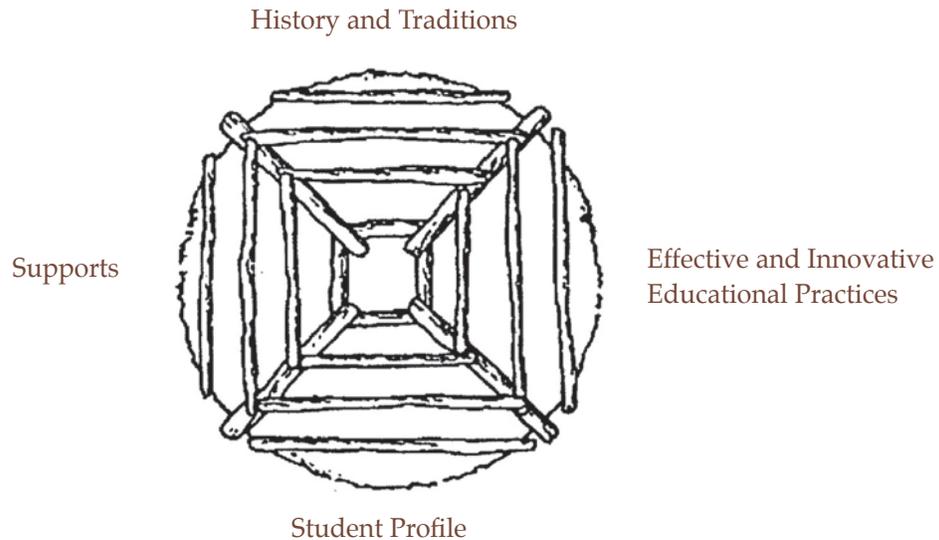
Secwepemc Cultural Education Society (SCES) www.secwepemc.org

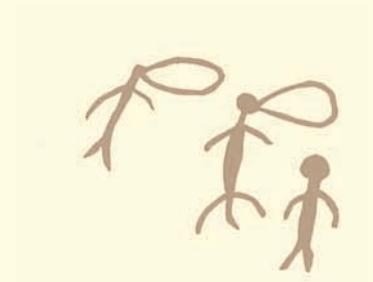
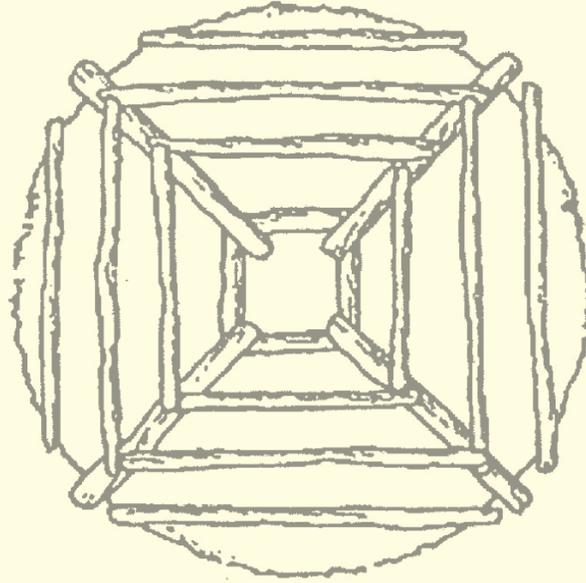
Skeetchestn Indian Band www.skeetchestn.ca

INTRODUCTION

As Thompson Rivers University embarks on its goal to become the University of Choice for Aboriginal students, it may be helpful for educators to have a tool-kit to assist with engaging and interacting with Aboriginal students. This handbook is intended to be a start in that direction.

The handbook uses a holistic approach to provide tools to address these four aspects of education:





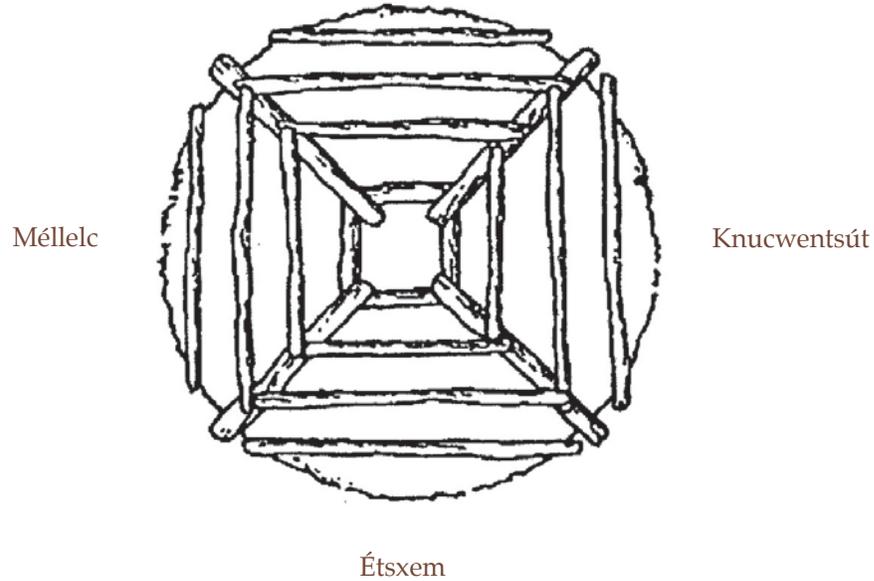
Le q'7es te tsúwet.s ell re sw7ecs re qelmúcw

'long-ago customs and activities of Aboriginal people'

– History and Traditions –



Kw'seltktenéws



Kw'seltktenéws – being relatives to one another

Knucwentsút – help yourself

Étsxem – practise for strength, power and self sufficiency

Méllelc – have a rest

Sources: Dr. Marianne Ignace and *Journey Through Secwepemcúlew* – Secwepemc Values
www.spiritmap.ca





What Educators Need to Know:

- An understanding of the history of the education of Aboriginal peoples explains the present and provides direction for the future.
- Aboriginal prehistory dates back thousands of years—“since time immemorial.”
- The maintenance of oral traditions is critical to Aboriginal peoples.
- Colonization has tried to systemically destroy Aboriginal cultures, languages, and traditions.
- Colonization is often found embedded in texts and pedagogy in the mainstream educational system, sometimes referred to as the “hidden curriculum”, creating a legacy of colonial constructs that includes stereotypes and racist attitudes.
- The legacy of the Residential School experience is multi-generational and survivors still suffer traumatic effects. There are several films documenting the Residential School experience. Students should not be required to view these films.
- The “Sixties Scoop” has compounded the effects of separation of children from families with consequences still felt today.
- Although decolonization is challenging deep-rooted Eurocentric attitudes and practices, the process is not complete.



“We need to know more about each other. It is a process of mutual respect and sharing. We need to learn from past mistakes so not to repeat them. If there is to be any forward movement in the classroom, the awareness of colonialism can’t be overlooked.”

Mike Arnouse

The Educational Context

An understanding and appreciation of the history of the education of Aboriginal peoples in Canada is fundamental to the success of Aboriginal students attending post-secondary today. The diversity of Aboriginal peoples requires an awareness of the connection between the past and the present.

The history of the education of Aboriginal peoples in British Columbia (BC), as elsewhere in Canada, can be viewed in stages within the background of the larger history of colonization and decolonization, from the time of first contact with Europeans in the 18th century to the present day. According to Jo-ann Archibald, there are “...four phases (or eras) of First Nations education...:

1. Traditional First Nations education
2. Missionary influence: 1850’s – 1900’s
3. Federal and Provincial Governments’ influences: 1900’s – mid 70’s
4. Indian control of Indian education policy: mid-70’s to present”
(Friesen et al., 1992, p. 57).

The history of this transformation for Aboriginal peoples has been painful and difficult, but ultimately there is movement towards acknowledgement and respect for their knowledge, culture and traditions.

The History and Traditions of First Nations in British Columbia

Before Contact

The history of Aboriginal peoples in BC – including that of the **Secwepemc** people in BC’s Interior – is two-fold; before European contact spans 10,000 years, but after contact spans less than 250 years since the first Europeans came to what is now BC. Estimates of the pre-contact Aboriginal population in BC range as high as 250,000 in the mid 1700s, but by 1929 the population was down to 23,000 (Muckle, 2007).

Before the introduction of European languages, oral histories and traditions connected the Secwepemc people to their past; however, their stories have survived to the present with an added layer of language—a Secwepemctsin orthography (the spelling of a language, representing the sounds of a language by written symbols) which allows the language to be written and taught.

Note: **Bold words** can be found in the glossary (see page 67)



All First Nations including the Secwepemc have a cultural and social organization, including governance, spirituality, and cross-cultural protocol in their relations with others. Stewardship of the land—the care and management of resources—is a central belief among all First Nations. This is reflected in their strong connection to place and relationship to the natural world, including an intimate awareness of the annual cycle which formed their seasonal round in the past (Matthew, 1986).

The Secwepemc **traditional territory** covers a large region from west of the Fraser River to east of the Rocky Mountains crest, and from its northern limit above the upper Fraser River to south of the Arrow Lakes. Borders between territories were not hard, definite lines in the way that national boundaries are today. Areas were often shared by neighbouring nations and trade extended across long distances. The customs and dialects in villages in the heart of a nation's territory and those at its border were sometimes quite different because people at the borders usually showed the influence of their neighbours.

The vast area of **Secwepemcúíecw** provided a great variety of resources. Traditional activities included gathering plants, fishing, hunting, preserving food, tanning hides for clothing and footwear, and using tree roots and fibre for making textiles, baskets, and shelters. The traditional winter home or pithouse of **Interior Salish** peoples like the Secwepemc—the cover symbol for this handbook—was made of logs and earth, dug partly underground, and ideally suited to the cold winters. In the summer, they lived in portable mat lodges, sometimes made of hides that were traded from nations east of the Rockies.



Traditional winter home or pithouse
Source: Ken Favrholt



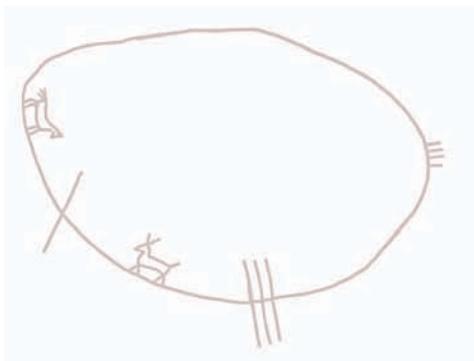
“Newcomers are more incorporated in the Indian’s way of life than they know—who civilized who? If newcomers would listen to Aboriginals about the land... we are the ones that need the trees, the animals, the fish. Human beings are not the centre of creation—just a small part of it.”

Mike Arnouse

For many generations the Aboriginal peoples of Canada have taught Europeans how to survive our geography. Examples of this abound including the huge amount of agricultural products and medicines that have been given to the world: snowshoes, canoes, and even the first oil wells—oil was used for covering canoes to make them waterproof! There are also examples of models of governance and relationships between peoples including the equality of men and women that are said to have influenced European thought (P. Tamburro, personal communication, April 6, 2010). Aboriginal peoples have made a great contribution to science including **traditional knowledge** of **indigenous** plants and wildlife that have provided sustenance and materials for day-to-day needs. Advanced scientific research on nutritional and medicinal uses of native plants is included in the collaborative ethnobotanical work of Dr. Nancy Turner (Turner, 1997, 1998), her colleagues and Secwepemc Elders (Ignace, 1996).

Gathering plants and other resources involved a seasonal round by which the Secwepemc people travelled from one place to another over the course of a year. Their traditional transportation included walking and travelling by canoes made of bark or dugouts cut from a single tree. When the horse was introduced to the Secwepemc, this facilitated their travel over greater distances to trade (Teit, 1909).

Trade was a way to obtain goods and resources not available in one’s own territory and to create alliances. People travelled to central locations to trade for resources, socialization, and intermarriage. Gatherings often included games and competitions; gambling was a popular pastime. The stick or bone game also known as *lahal* is still played today (Campbell et al., 2003).





Powwow drummers
Source: Mairi Budreau

Powwows are a common event at many First Nations reserves in British Columbia including Kamloops. The traditional powwow had its origins among the Plains people in the 19th century. Gradually, the styles of dances and regalia diffused to other First Nations. Today, many modern elements have been incorporated in the **regalia** and

dances, revealing that culture is not static and yet is still based on strong traditions. The *Kamloopa Pow Wow* held every August incorporates both local and traditional aspects as well as contemporary elements. Another annual event that includes the powwow ceremony in its celebration is National Aboriginal Day in June.

After Contact

The lives of Aboriginal peoples across North America were irreversibly changed with the arrival of Europeans. By the 18th century in British North America, the advance of colonization and the relationship between Europeans and First Nations was formalized by the creation of treaties. The Royal Proclamation of 1763, made by Great Britain, was based on the premise of a nation-to-nation relationship between First Nations and newcomers who were instructed not to settle on Indian lands until an agreement had been made in the form of treaties (Dickason, 2009). The early treaty process, however, did not extend to BC (except for Treaty 8 in 1899).

The beginning of sustained exploration of BC first proceeded along the coast in the late 18th century and then across the Interior. The first Europeans to come into contact with the Secwepemc were Alexander Mackenzie's party in 1793, followed by David Thompson's, on the eastern flanks of the territory in 1807, and then Simon Fraser's in 1808. A period commonly referred to as the fur



trade followed these explorations. When forts were established at *Tk'emlúps* in 1812, called Kamloops by the fur traders, European goods were transported along the Aboriginal trails, which crossed the BC Interior, bringing dramatic changes to the Secwepemc culture (Crop Eared Wolf, 1996).

The relationship between the Interior peoples of BC and the Hudson's Bay Company was relatively peaceful but led to the gradual **detrterritorialization** of their culture. The fur trade was the beginning of intercultural relationships between Aboriginal peoples and Europeans, often through intermarriage. The Métis represent the union of Europeans and First Nations, resulting in a new Aboriginal group within BC since the late 1700s when many accompanied the early explorers and fur traders. It was during the fur trade period in the early 1800s that Métis came to Kamloops and other parts of the Interior. Jean-Baptiste Lolo, a Métis employee of the Hudson's Bay Company, was an interpreter for the Company who through marriage acted as a go-between with the Secwepemc (Balf, 1976). Chief Louis, a *Tk'emlúps* hereditary chief, witnessed and experienced the dramatic changes among his people and First Nations in BC, including the formation of Indian reserves and loss of traditional lands, the creation of Canada and the Indian Act, the banning of the traditional **potlatch** in 1884, and rise of activism and resistance by many First Nations (Thomson, 2000.)

Colonization

Colonization is the way in which European cultures used a variety of methods to control Indigenous peoples and dismantle their cultures through war, missionization, disease, treaties, the Indian Act, forced schooling, suppression of Aboriginal cultures and languages, and the creation of Indian Agent positions (for a comprehensive Shuswap history see: Coffey et al., 1990).

Contact refers to the period of time when Europeans came in touch with Aboriginal peoples and when the process of colonization began. That period varied across Canada and, in British Columbia, first contact did not occur until the late 18th century. Aboriginal peoples had flourishing cultures until their disintegration through European contact. Colonization, as a process of pacifying and assimilating Aboriginal peoples, has continued to the present, both overtly and covertly, through means such as **institutional racism** (Satzewich,

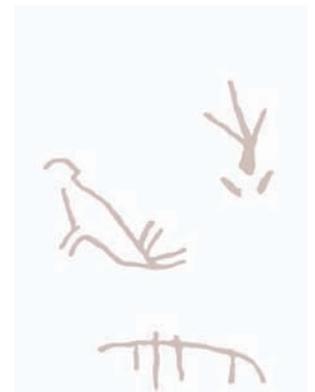


1998). The federal government's **White Paper** of 1969 was a further attempt to assimilate First Nations by dismantling the Indian Act, which resulted in widespread opposition. Colonization is a historical process that is still being felt in Canada and being addressed by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples and institutions.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), established in 2008 by the federal government, is part of the Residential School Settlement. It provides an "overall holistic and comprehensive response" to the legacy of the colonial policy of aggressive assimilation (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, n.d.). Based on the principles of restorative justice, the process acknowledges the trauma and harm experienced by the children residing in those schools. Scheduled to complete its work in five years, the Commission has begun collecting statements from former residential school students across the country at national and community events. TRC representatives have already attended a gathering of former students formed by the Indian Residential School Survivors Society in Kamloops.

After the Fur Trade

The Fraser River Gold Rush of 1858, followed by the Cariboo Gold Rush and the devastating smallpox epidemic of 1862, dramatically altered the symbiotic relationship between First Nations and fur traders. One-third of BC's Aboriginal population perished from the smallpox epidemic (Coffey et al., 1990). After the gold rushes, First Nations in BC were contained on small reserves. A litany of petitions and complaints resulted in delegations of First Nations protesting their lack of land and the intrusions of newcomers on their traditional hunting and fishing grounds. The famous **Memorial to Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier** in 1910 is an eloquent description of the altered relationship between the Interior First Nations and Euro-Canadians. Gradually, a period of activism followed although it was made illegal for First Nations to petition the government between 1927 and 1951. Since the 1960s, there has been a growing era of self-determination and ground-breaking legal changes that have given Aboriginal peoples greater independence and pride (Campbell et al., 2003).

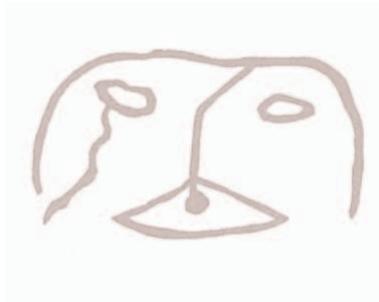




The Indian Act

When Canada became a country in 1867, the Department of Indian Affairs was created to administer policy regarding Aboriginal peoples. The Indian Act was an act of Parliament implemented in 1876 which gave legal authority to the government to control the everyday lives of First Nations, including the reserve system, band councils, band membership, and education. The Indian Act defined who was a Status Indian and treated them as wards of the state. Reserves, much smaller than their original communities, segregated individuals into groups which were defined by the government. The Act set up authority within these reserves and created hierarchy and decision-making authorities through churches and agents that did not reflect traditional Aboriginal values and practices (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Vol. 3, Ch. 5, 1996).

Status Indians were denied the rights of Canadian citizens to vote and own property; they could become “enfranchised” by voluntarily relinquishing their Indian status. Until 1949, provincially and 1960, federally, First Nations people did not have the right to vote (Moss & Gardner-O’Toole, 1991).

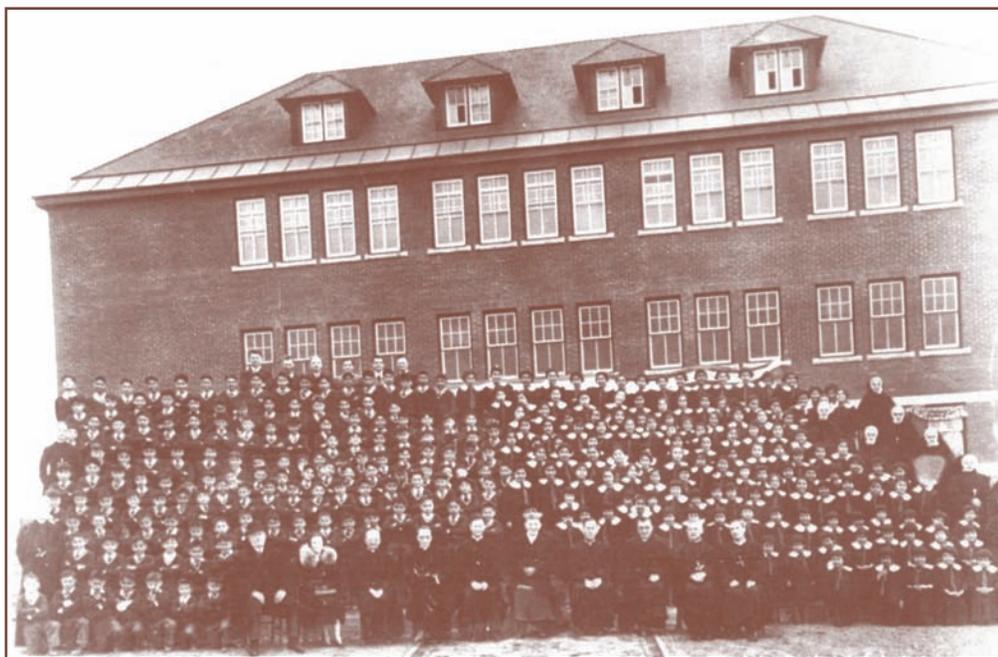




The Indian Residential School Experience

One of the main tools of colonialism in Canada was the educational system imposed on Aboriginal peoples. In Canada, the education system involved a partnership between the Department of Indian Affairs and the Christian churches.

According to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, between 1879 and 1996, over 150,000 school age Aboriginal children were forcibly removed and placed into Indian industrial residential schools across Canada. Much has been written about the history of these schools and the legacy of mistreatment, including mental, physical, and sexual abuse that resulted. Students were forcibly taken away from their families, sometimes hundreds of kilometres, forced to speak only English, and forced to forgo cultural practices. By 1931, there were 80 such schools operating in Canada (Dickason, 2009). Survivors of the system, including the children and grandchildren of survivors, have suffered intergenerational impacts of the experience.



The Kamloops Indian Residential School, constructed in 1923, replaced an earlier school built in 1890.

Source: Secwepemc Museum



The Government of Canada finally acknowledged the role it played in the development of these schools and apologized to survivors in 2008. *Fallen Feather*, filmed in Kamloops, provides a comprehensive overview of the residential school experience (Bezeau, 2007).

At the beginning of the school year, children were transported to the residential school from various reserves. Source: Secwepemc Museum



Decolonization

Decolonization is the opposite process from colonization and refers to the shedding of the colonial legacy by Aboriginal peoples. In the late twentieth century, Aboriginal peoples finally regained rights and the ability to resurrect and preserve their cultures and languages. By no means is the process complete and there are many underlying colonial structures, especially in the realm of law (Indian Act), and education (curricula) that are difficult to change.

The decolonization of existing Eurocentric thought is already underway in the works of many scholars. States professor Marie Battiste, “Eurocentric thought asserts that only Europeans can progress and that Indigenous peoples are frozen in time, guided by knowledge systems that reinforce the past and do not look into the future” (Battiste, 2002, p. 4).

Gradually, universities are becoming sites of decolonization, although the process is slow and challenging. Battiste further says, “Education as a humanistic endeavour must then recognize and reconcile the dehumanizing history that Indigenous peoples have lived” (Battiste, 2004, p. 11).



The BC Treaty Process

Another legacy of the colonial period is the slow but gradual resolution of land claims. The work of treaty-making across Canada was never completed in British Columbia, with the exception of 14 small treaties on Vancouver Island in the 1850s and Treaty 8 in northeastern BC (in 1899). The BC Treaty Process, created in 1990, is currently underway, although only about 2/3 of First Nations are presently involved in these negotiations (Muckle, 2007).

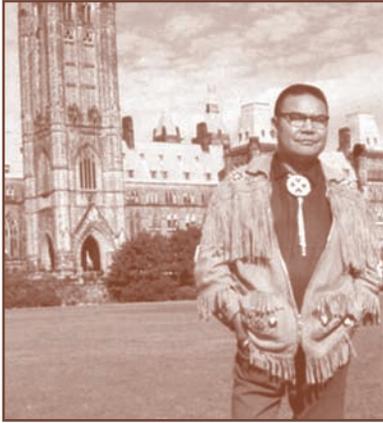
Some First Nations have not joined the BC Treaty Process for various reasons. Bands of the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council are not part of the treaty process. The Nuxalk Nation, on BC's central coast, is another tribal group that has resisted outside pressures:

We, the Nuxalk, maintain our rights and title to our entire traditional territory and continue to strive to maintain our traditional systems of governance and powers, citing a long and rich cultural history as evidence of our continued use and occupation. Despite the devastation of the small pox epidemic and the relocation of the survivors from certain villages to Bella Coola, the Nuxalk Nation has long asserted our rights and obligations to our ancestral territory and has never ceded, sold, surrendered, nor lost our traditional lands through act of war or treaty. The Nuxalk remain strongly against entering any treaty process as we know that our ancestral lands have never been surrendered and remain legally ours, in both our tradition and under Canadian law (Nuxalk Nation, n.d.).



Leaders and Teachers

All Aboriginal nations have leaders and teachers who are role models. Two notable members of the Secwepemc Nation who have left their mark on the rejuvenation of their people's culture include George Manuel and Mary Thomas.



George Manuel in Ottawa
Source: George Manuel Institute
Collection, courtesy Doreen Manuel

George Manuel (1921–1989) was a dynamic leader born in the village of Neskonlith who went to the Kamloops Indian Residential School, later became chief of his band, and grew to believe First Nations of British Columbia needed a provincial organization to present a united front. In 1970, he was elected President of the National Indian Brotherhood, the forerunner of today's Assembly of First Nations. In his role, he travelled outside of Canada and met with Indigenous peoples around the world. Manuel helped to form the World Council of Indigenous Peoples and in 1974 coined the term 'Fourth World' to refer to nations forcibly incorporated into states which maintain a distinct political culture but are internationally unrecognized. In the late 1970s, he was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize and received the Order of Canada in 1986 (Campbell et al., 2003).

In the words of George Manuel,

At this point in our struggle for survival, the Indian peoples of North America are entitled to declare a victory. We have survived. If others have also prospered on our land, let it stand as a sign between us that the Mother Earth can be good to all her children without confusing one with another. It is a myth of European warfare that one man's victory requires another's defeat (Manuel and Posluns, 1974, p. 4).



Dr. Mary Thomas (1918–2007), a Secwepemc Elder, worked tirelessly to preserve Secwepemc culture and language for most of her life; she acquired numerous accolades and awards for her efforts. In 1970, she helped create the Central Okanagan Interior Friendship Society, as a result of her interest in First Nations cultural preservation. Thomas received the Governor General's Award in 1992. In 1997, Thomas received the Indigenous Conservationist of the year award from the Seacology Foundation and, in 2001, she received the Canadian National Aboriginal Achievement Award for Environment. Over the years, she also received three honorary degrees from Thompson Rivers University, BC, University of Victoria, BC and University of North Carolina, NC (Buffalo Spirit, 2000).



Mary Thomas
Source: Ducks Unlimited

Mary Thomas described the life of her people in many interviews:

...there came a time when our whole life system changed...Our family units were like a big circle, just the way we were treated as children—the mothers and fathers, the aunts and uncles, the grandparents, the cousins. We were all on the outside of that circle. In the middle was the little ones, and each one of them had the responsibility to help those little ones become a part of the outer circle. And that builds the families really strong...I guess that whole issue broke when they took us away from our families and put us into the residential schools...

So when we went to the school, we didn't know what was happening. Nobody told us what was going to happen...

Then, right away, we were told we were not allowed to speak our language. We had to forget about our language. And we were told, never to practice, not to



believe, the spirituality of our people. It was taboo. 'Never believe it. It's the work of the devil.' And every morning we would get up at five o'clock in the morning—perfect silence. We couldn't speak a word. If you were caught, you were strapped... We were in the chapel. And every morning was mass. And the priest there would pound the altar rail about our people [being] savages... we began to get confused. We loved our mother and father. We loved our grandparents... and what we were told is that they are the ones that were carrying the work of the devil. It gets you so mixed up (Buffalo Spirit online, 2000).

The Sixties Scoop

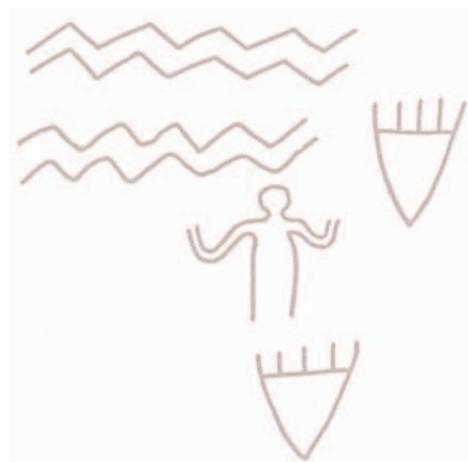
The term "Sixties Scoop" was coined by Patrick Johnston (1983) to identify the thousands of First Nations children in Canada who were removed from their families and communities between the 1960s to 1980s by provincial child welfare authorities and transracially adopted or placed into foster care into non-Aboriginal families in Canada, the USA and overseas. Children were separated from their families and cultural roots, breaking the support networks of the extended families found in First Nations communities. Between the 1960s and 1980s, thousands of Aboriginal children were removed from their families and communities by the Canadian provincial child welfare authorities. This was a continuation of the Government's stated assimilation policy of the Residential School project and provided an avenue to assist the government to further reduce their fiscal responsibility for First Nations children (S. Johnson, personal communication, April 15, 2010).

As told in the book, *Stolen From Our Embrace* (Fournier and Crey, 1997), on one weekend in the 1960s, a social worker chartered a bus to scoop up 38 children from the *Splatsin* (Spallumcheen) reserve. Each of them was placed in a foster home, many outside of the province. The Spallumcheen band eventually turned the situation around by calling for the right to retain custody of their children within the community and eventually gained control over their own child welfare program (Campbell et al., 2003).



In 1985, Justice Kimmelman of Manitoba reviewed adoption and foster care policies and practices and commented that with respect to Aboriginal children and families, they were substandard and appalling. Many children have come forward as adults to recount horrific abuses in poorly screened adoptive homes. The removal of Aboriginal children from their families by the child welfare system continues to today and is now known as the 'Millennium Scoop'. In BC, currently 54.4% of all children in the child welfare system are of Aboriginal descent. Many of our Indigenous students may be affected by intergenerational trauma, grief and loss of identity as a result of the massive and deliberate assault weapons of assimilation and genocide practiced against generations of their families.

Shelly Johnson, School of Social Work, TRU





Timeline

10,000 B.C.	“Since time immemorial”—the longevity of Aboriginal peoples in British Columbia
1000 A.D.	First contact between Europeans and Aboriginal peoples in Canada, on the east coast
1763	Royal Proclamation which established British policy that treaties needed to be settled before settlement could proceed.
Late 1700s	First contact between Aboriginal peoples and Europeans in British Columbia
1812	Fur trade started at Kamloops, with the establishment of small forts
1821	Hudson’s Bay Company establishes itself in Secwepemc territory
1858	Fraser River gold rush results in a wave of thousands of newcomers
1862–1863	A smallpox epidemic devastates Interior First Nations
1876	Formation of Federal Indian Act
1890	The first Indian Industrial School in Kamloops was established in 1890
1910	Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier passes through Kamloops—Chiefs of the Interior gave him a petition outlining their grievances. Laurier promised help but was defeated in the 1911 election
1912–1916	McKenna-McBride Commission established to consult with First Nations about the amount of land they required; many reserves were reduced in size, known as cut-offs
1913	Duncan Campbell Scott becomes head of the Department of Indian Affairs
1915	Allied Indian Tribes of British Columbia formed in response to McKenna-McBride Commission
1927	Federal legislation prohibits formation of Indian organizations that pursue land claims; Allied Indian Tribes disbanded
1931	Native Brotherhood of British Columbia formed which later lobbied to change the BC School Act to permit First Nations children to attend public schools
1969	White Paper outlined government policy promoting assimilation followed by the Red Paper in response; Union of BC Indian Chiefs formed in Kamloops
1977	The Kamloops Indian Residential School closed
1993	BC Treaty Commission begins negotiations with First Nations
1997	Supreme Court of Canada tables decision in the Delgamuukw case that Aboriginal title has never been extinguished, and accepts oral evidence as valid
1998	\$350 million Healing Fund established to address legacy of Residential Schools
2008	Prime Minister Harper offers full apology on behalf of Canadians for the Indian Residential School system



First Nations Peoples of BC



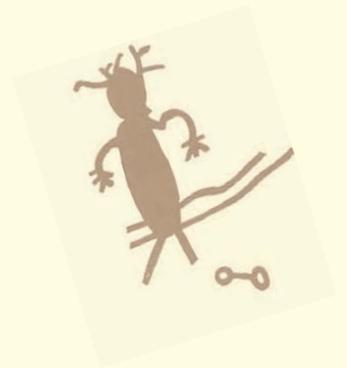
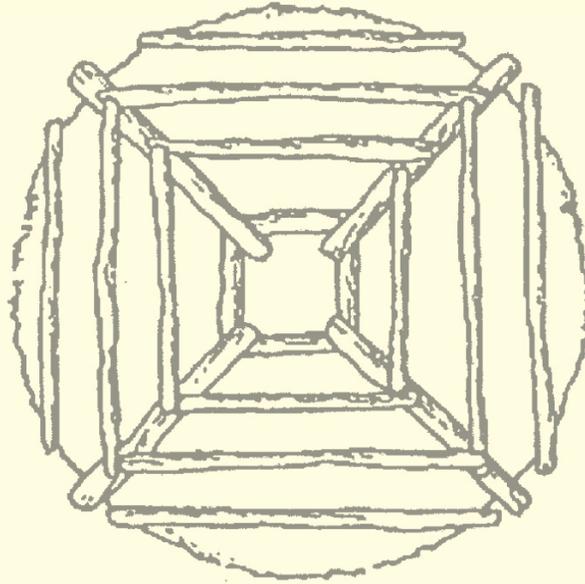
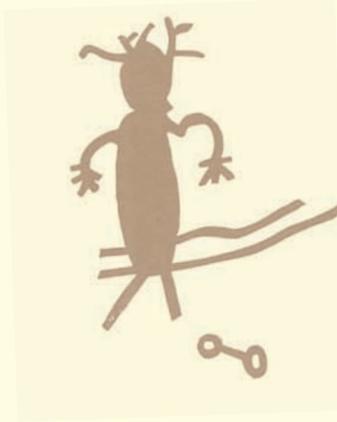
“There is a great deal of diversity here in British Columbia; in fact, there is more linguistic diversity here than in all of Europe. And if one compares maps, one will find that the Secwepemc Nation's territory is the size of many countries in Europe.”

Paul Tamburro, School of Social Work, TRU



What Educators Can Do:

- Acknowledge Aboriginal history and culture in the classroom.
- Focus on experiential learning rather than exclusive reliance on teacher-led discussions focusing on texts.
- Take guided fieldtrips by members of the Aboriginal community to important local cultural sites:
 - the Secwepemc Museum and Heritage Park on the *Tk'emlúps* Indian Reserve offers opportunities to combine traditional aspects of ecological knowledge and culture
 - the hoodoos at Tranquille
 - the balancing rock near Savona
- Acknowledge the contributions of Aboriginal peoples to various university disciplines.
- Indigenize the curriculum and infuse course content with traditional knowledge.
- Become familiar with commonly-used terms (see Glossary).
- Encourage students to share with you what they would like to learn about their history.
- Identify resource people and guest speakers, such as Elders, to share their wisdom.
- Include storytelling and traditional practices in your teaching plan.
- Arrange to visit local Aboriginal dance or ceremonial performances including powwows.
- Include works in the humanities curriculum by Aboriginal authors and artists.
- Become familiar with the Henry Grube Centre library (School District 73)—it has many resources (for loan to teachers) related to Aboriginal peoples.
- Become familiar with TRU's Aboriginal website



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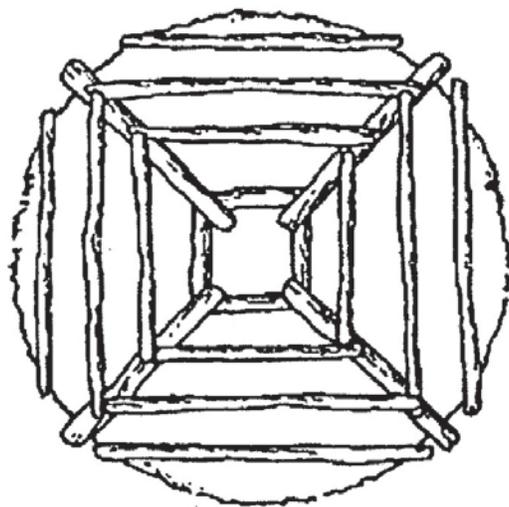
'may we teach strongly'

– Effective and Innovative Educational Practices –



Mental

Emotional



Physical

Spiritual





Effective and Innovative Educational Practices

It is important to note that the Aboriginal people of Canada and other parts of North America have as much of a tradition of education as do many of the peoples of the world. The education they received over the past 150 years through the poorly funded and abusive residential schools was a step back for the education of the past. It is now important that educational institutions start correcting this.

Paul Tamburro, School of Social Work, TRU

First Nations education has traditionally been part of the fabric of their societies through which morals and beliefs, history and culture, and values and skills for using and preserving the land and its resources are passed along. **Elders** are regarded as keepers of the culture who have the communal responsibility to convey this collective knowledge to children. Before the imposition of European laws and culture, education among Aboriginal peoples was an informal part of the daily life of families and their children. In the past, among Interior Salish peoples, long winter nights in the pithouses brought kinship groups close together where stories, songs, and skills were shared. Teaching and learning, thus, were intergenerational and holistic practices; that philosophy continues to this day.



Elders Luncheon
Source: TRU Welcome Centre



From the scant knowledge that survived the many years of colonialism, we do know that our ancestors had evolved their own form of education. It was an education in which the community and the natural environment were the classroom, and the land was regarded as the mother of the people. Members of the community were the teachers, and each adult was responsible for ensuring that each child learned how to live a good life. Central to the teaching was the belief in the sacred, the Great Spirit.

This [learning how to live a good life] was expressed in their daily living, in relationship of one to another, in humility, in sharing, in cooperating, in relationship to nature—the land, the animals, in recognition of the Great Spirit, in the way our people thought, felt and perceived their world. Traditionally, our people's teaching addressed the total being, the whole community, in the context of a viable living culture (Kirkness, 1999).





What Educators Need to Know:

- Holistic education is a model of education based on the theory that education should involve the “whole” person. The holistic model, thus, pays attention to the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of the student. Holism is an important concept for integrating and balancing the needs of students (see “The Holistic Approach in Education” p. 29).
- Loss of language is a prominent concern among Aboriginal peoples whose culture and language were systematically destroyed in residential schools. As a result, few younger Aboriginal students are fluent in their native tongue.
- There are traditions that are more universal and will resonate with a wide range of people. For example, the Seven Grandfather Teaching—love, bravery, respect, honesty, humility, truth and wisdom—are subscribed to by a range of Aboriginal groups, e.g. Anishinaabe, Cree (Crooks et al., 2009).
- Other traditions recently adopted by First Nations in BC include the Medicine Wheel (Brendtro et al., 2002), the Sacred Hoop (Neihardt, 1972), the Sacred Tree (Lane et al., 1984), and the Sacred Circle (Regnier, 1995).



Education Today

For Aboriginal people, learning is still viewed as cyclical and a life-long endeavour. Learning goes on throughout the life cycle, from infancy and early childhood to old age.

“In Aboriginal communities, relationship is a key element that brings a sense of connection and belonging. We may hear community members, especially elders ask when they are first getting introduced to someone new, ‘Who are your people—who are your family and community?’

Individual recognition is greatly valued and appreciated. It is important when working with Aboriginal learners that we build positive, consistent working relationships as soon as possible and for students to feel that they are appreciated and valued for who they are”

(Draney, 2009).

Aboriginal people see education as a process that begins before birth and continues long after formal education is over. Learning at an early age has implications for subsequent stages. An adult who has not had the opportunity to develop fully may have to address growth needs later in life. As individuals mature and perhaps attain the status of elder, they are able to transmit to younger generations the knowledge and wisdom acquired through a lifetime of learning (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996, Vol 3. Ch. 5, p. 445).

For generations after the Indian Act, control of education was removed from the hands of First Nations people. In 1972, the National Indian Brotherhood produced a policy paper, *Indian Control of Indian Education*, that outlined the philosophy, goals, principles, and directions which would form the foundation of a new educational program for First Nations (Friesen et al., 1992). Among its recommendations were two key principles: local control of education and parental responsibility in setting educational goals for their children. Since the 1970s, some bands have taken control of education in their own communities and through federal funding operate their own schools. Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT) in Merritt, for example, was formed as a private institute in 1983 by a number of local bands seeking to address Aboriginal community needs (www.nvit.ca).



Profile of a School in the Secwepemc Nation —Chief Atahm School

The loss of Aboriginal languages in British Columbia is of growing concern to First Nations leaders and communities. Although languages have been preserved through recordings and dictionaries, language renewal is difficult without a large number of speakers and community involvement.

In 1987, a small group of parents of the Adams Lake Band worked together to stem the loss of the Secwepemc language in their community by starting a “language nest.” The model was borrowed from the Maori Te Kohanga Reo (language nest) early childhood immersion program. The early success of the program led to the creation of Chief Atahm School in 1991.

Chief Atahm School is a success story that offers hope in the renewal of language. The school, located on the Adams Lake Band reserve in Chase, offers immersion in *Secwepemcstin*, the Secwepemc language. According to Robert Matthew, the school’s principal:

Chief Atahm School is founded on the belief that teachers can integrate culture and language with academic skills. The school has actively sought and include[d] the knowledge and skill of local First Nations. Over the years, parents and teachers have been open to new ideas and methods. We have looked for successful practices in [A]boriginal education nationally and internationally. We have found that when culture knowledge is treated with respect it is accepted by the students and parents. The key is not to lap into stereotyping or trivializing. The continuous professional development has enabled the school to change with the times and meet new challenges. A teacher is [a] self directed professional and needs to have a personal plan for continuous growth.



“I realize how seriously endangered many of the languages are surrounding Thompson Rivers University. I’ve sat in classes in the community listening to Elders trying to teach their language to small groups of people realizing how jealous many PhD’s and linguistics students across the world would be—just to hear the voices of these Elders combining sounds in such a way that has been studied by academics and students at major universities worldwide is an invaluable experience. Many from other universities wish they could even hear one elder that actually speaks these languages. Our languages are a global treasure with few speakers. We have so many resources surrounding us.”

Paul Tamburro, School of Social Work, TRU

Today, hundreds of children have benefited from being immersed in their ancestral language surrounded by a nurturing circle of elders and teachers. Chief Atham School seeks to continually improve their program with the development of an educational framework that privileges Secwepemc knowledge, language and culture (Chief Atham School, n.d.).



Chief Atham School
Source: Ken Favrholt

The Chief Atham School has searched for and found a balance between teaching traditional skills and knowledge as well as Secwepemc language and mainstream academic subjects. This is accomplished by integrating the two concepts in a classroom setting as well as outdoor experiences. The school has demonstrated by focusing on language and connection to the land that a strong self-identity is fostered; one that can carry the students through high school and post secondary.

Robert Matthew, Principal



The University Environment

For Aboriginal students who come from small rural communities to the large city, the university environment is often an alien place. Although Thompson Rivers University is moving forward to create a campus that is multicultural and inclusive, students need to feel secure and have a sense of belonging. **The Gathering Place (Cplūl'kw'ten)** and the **Aboriginal Education Centre** are two venues that represent the beginnings of the process of **Indigenization** of the campus to make students feel a familiarity akin to home (see the Support Section for location and contact information).

The new **House of Learning** on campus is one more step towards indigenizing the university. It will be the home of a new library, learning commons and space for Aboriginal programs and services. It will feature an assembly hall inspired by the Secwepemc pithouse.

The Holistic Approach in Education

Holistic education is a model of education based on the theory that education should involve the “whole” person. Therefore, the holistic model pays attention to the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of the student. Too often, educators forget the relationship between these human qualities—how the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual domains connect to each other. A complete person reveals a balance between these parts. Aboriginal students tend to be holistic in their thinking and understanding of the world. Dr. Lee Brown writes, “...colonization for Aboriginal peoples is founded on a colonization of emotions that ultimately defined Aboriginal values as unacceptable in the classroom” (Brown, 2005, p. 2). Thus, values are tied to emotions.

The four aspects of our nature (the physical, the mental, the emotional, and the spiritual) can be developed when we have a vision of what is possible and when we use our volition to change our actions and our attitudes... (Bopp et al., 1984, p. 16).

As the 1996 Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples stated:

“In Aboriginal educational tradition, the individual is viewed as a whole person with intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical dimensions. Each of these aspects must be addressed in the learning process. Holistic education is the term used to describe the kind of education traditionally used by Aboriginal peoples” (Vol. 3, Ch. 5, p. 445).



Fyre Jean Graveline, author of *Circle Works: Transforming Eurocentric Consciousness* (1998), asserts that the role of teacher is healer and reminds us that healing means to restore wholeness.

The word 'heal' has the same roots as the words 'whole' and 'holiness'. The interdependence of holiness and wholeness are integral to healing and teaching in Aboriginal Tradition...According to Ed Conners, a Mohawk educator, 'The healing system accepted that maintaining health and effecting healing required a knowledge of the interaction between the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual' (1994: 2) ...The holistic perspective promoted by the use of the Medicine Wheel permits one to see the entire educational process as a complex, integrated whole; psychological, spiritual, emotional and physical are all part of the human consciousness and are inseparable. Using Traditional methods, 'one would never think of, nor attempt to practice healing in any one of these areas separate from the others' (Conners, 1994: 2). Nor should Traditional educators fall prey to the division of these domains, which is currently required in Eurocentric pedagogical paradigms (Graveline, 1998, p. 76).





Examples of Holistic Models:

Canadian Council on Learning (CCL)

The Canadian Council on Learning is a national organization instrumental in developing interactive lifelong learning models for First Nations, Métis and Inuit.

The First Nations model and Métis model are represented by illustrations of living trees, to convey the regenerative nature of learning and its relationship to community well-being.

The Inuit model uses an image of an Inuit blanket toss (a game often played at Inuit celebrations) and a circular path of lifelong learning to depict learning as an individual and collective journey (CCL, 2010).

Native Indian Teacher Education Program (NITEP)

The Native Indian Teacher Education Program is a UBC Bachelor of Education Elementary and Secondary Program that has adopted the holistic model described in its philosophy. NITEP has a presence at Thompson Rivers University and an office in the Aboriginal Education Centre.

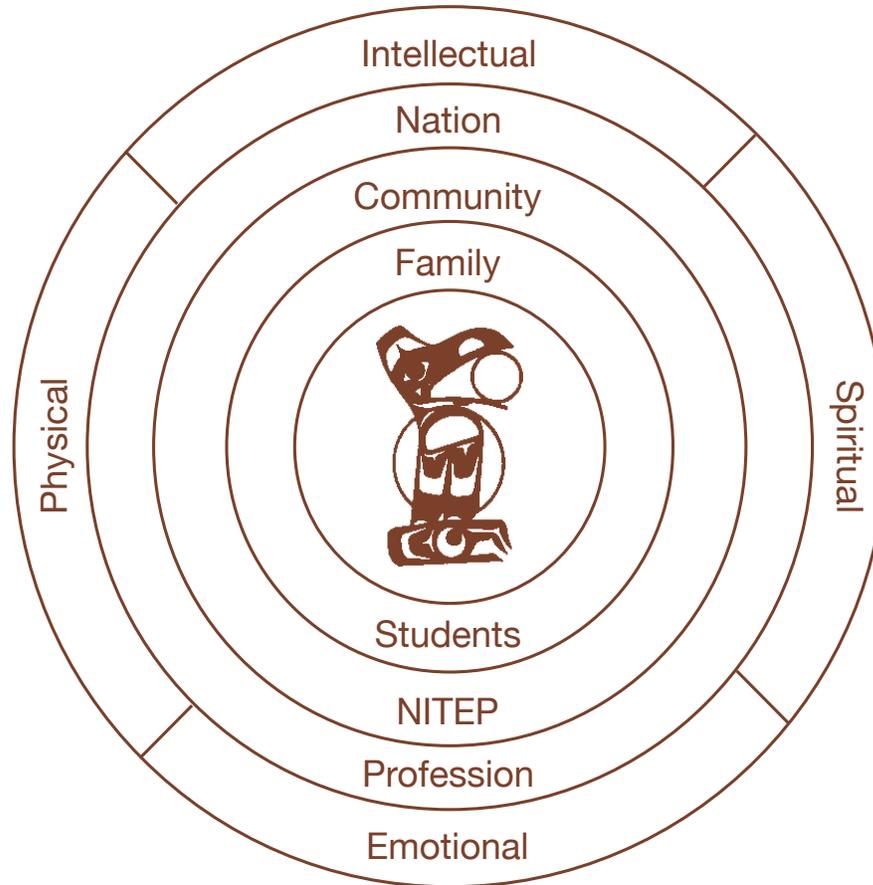
The NITEP model is used to guide our thoughts and our work throughout the five years of our program. Each academic year we work from a “theme” that is interwoven throughout our courses. During the 2009/2010 academic year our theme was ‘Culturally Based Education.’ During this year, NITEP incorporated activities and materials designed around this theme. Holistic education consists of incorporating all aspects of the persons’ well being. Within our holistic model spiritual, emotional, physical, and intellectual aspects of our students are kept in mind.



We are a family/home away from home and support each other throughout our academic endeavors. It is important to have a strong sense of where we have been, where are we now, where are we going, and how are we going to get there.

Karen Blain, NITEP Program, UBC, TRU

For more information see NITEP www.teach.educ.ubc.ca/bachelor/nitep



Source: NITEP, UBC



Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT)

Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (located in Merritt and Burnaby) has developed a holistic model of Aboriginal education using “[t]he Medicine Wheel, principal Indigenous values and virtues, a set of circular streams grounded in the notion of Aboriginal community and the revitalization of Aboriginal languages...” (Ostrowidzki et al., 2009, p. 4).

...the concept of a holistic model of education springs from the fertile soil of Aboriginal world-views that perceive Nature in a continual state of flux suggestive of a holistic and cyclical view of the Natural world... One of the most spiritual yet practical approaches to Aboriginal education can be found in the teachings of the Medicine Wheel. Given its relevance to education, the Medicine Wheel has been adopted by Aboriginal educators as a pedagogical model...Integral to these teachings of the Medicine Wheel is the sacred concept — ‘the circle of life’ — that perceives life as cyclical. Representing the related terms wholeness, interconnectedness, and harmony, the symbol of the Medicine Wheel teaches that the ‘natural world was created in groups of four, all things are connected and harmony and balance are preeminent in every Aboriginal culture’ (Ostrowidzki et al., 2009, p. 15).



The Four “Rs”

For First Nations communities and students, a university education reflects a greater purpose than simply obtaining a degree to get a better job. They are seeking an education that will address their communal need for “capacity-building” to advance themselves as a distinct and self-determining society, not just as individuals.

“The death of someone in [the student’s] community is a very important part of their culture. Recognize that when someone passes, the student may not be able to attend class for up to two weeks. Send them an email acknowledging the death and ask them to let you know when they will be coming back to class. Provide them with some things to work on if they have time and want to redirect their focus.”

Lisa Sorensen,
Neskonlith Education
Centre

The university must be able to present itself in ways that have instrumental value to First Nations students; that is, the programs and services that are offered must connect with the students’ own aspirations and cultural predispositions sufficiently to achieve a comfort level that will make the experience worth enduring (Kirkness and Barnhardt, 2001, p. 3).

The four guiding principles described by Kirkness and Barnhardt (2001) are meant to contribute toward increasing success for First Nations students in the classroom. They include:

- **Respect of First Nations Cultural Integrity**
 - cultural knowledge, traditions and values should be recognized and respected
- **Relevance to First Nations Perspectives and Experience**
 - the legitimization of Indigenous knowledge and skills including an oral perspective
- **Reciprocal Relationships**
 - making teaching and learning a two-way process with give and take between faculty and students, building on the cultural background of students
- **Responsibility Through Participation**
 - the need for transformation of the university to better serve Aboriginal students, requiring a commitment by all



Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education

The well-known and accepted **Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education** (Chickering and Gamson, 1987; Chickering and Ehrmann, 1996)—it will be noticed—reveal close ties to the four guiding principles by Kirkness and Barnhardt, as shown on page 34. These principles include:

1. Encourages contact between students and faculty
Frequent student-faculty interaction is a critical factor in student engagement in learning. Knowing a few faculty members can reinforce the intellectual commitment to learning.
2. Develops reciprocity and cooperation among students
Learning is improved when students work in cooperative teams rather than alone. Effective learning is collaborative and social rather than competitive.
3. Uses active learning techniques
Students do not learn much by listening to teachers talk and memorizing pre-packaged assignments. Learning is enhanced when students talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate it to past experiences, and apply it to their daily lives.
4. Gives prompt feedback
Learning is improved when students receive constructive feedback on their performance from their teachers and peers. Through sharing learned knowledge and receiving feedback, students can best assess their level of competence. Students need chances to reflect on what they have learned, what they still need to know, and how to assess themselves.
5. Emphasizes time on task
There is no substitute for effective use of time on the learning task. Students need help to master effective time management. Students benefit when learning tasks respect different ways of knowing and learning that reflect cultural differences. Allocating course time realistically means effective learning for students and effective teaching for faculty.



6. Communicates high expectations

High expectations are important for everyone. When good teachers expect more, students will give more. Expecting students to perform well becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy when teachers and institutions hold high expectations for themselves and set good examples.

7. Respects diverse talents and ways of learning

There are many paths to successful learning. People bring different skills, backgrounds and perspectives into their post-secondary experience. Students need a chance to learn in ways that work for them. This allows them to be encouraged to learn in challenging new ways.

Acknowledge First Nations students in your class.

Just because they are quiet it doesn't mean that they don't want to be included. Trust must be established before you can expect feedback from them. They may be nervous to talk in front of their peers so they may need some extra time before active participation can be established. Let them add input when they feel comfortable. Teacher directed input may cause them to retract and they may not come back to class.

First Nations students are often very shy and quiet until you build trust with them. You can work on building trust by talking with them one-on-one—not in front of other students while class is in session. Small talk and joking around is a way to establish communication. They often have a great sense of humour and enjoy jokes and entertaining stories about your personal life. Once trust is established, they are more willing to provide feedback and participate in class discussion.

Lisa Sorensen, Neskonlith Education Centre



What Educators Can Do:

- Invest time outside the classroom in building relationships with Aboriginal students.
- Infuse Aboriginal content into university disciplines. Indigenous teaching should not be viewed as supplementary but an equal and vital way of knowing.
- Incorporate a holistic approach to encourage interdisciplinary approaches:
 - Aboriginal stories as part of English courses
 - ethnobotany and ethnozoology as part of biology
 - Aboriginal world views as part of psychology
- Connect education with community resources:
 - invite a First Nations Chief to speak on governance to a Sociology or Political Science class
 - invite an Elder to speak to a Nursing class on Aboriginal medicines
 - invite an Aboriginal resource person to speak to a Natural Resources Management class about fisheries or forestry
- Limit and provide explanation for academic language and jargon.
- Use the 'talking circle' by organizing the classroom for seating in a circle to facilitate better communication.
- Try collaborative learning:
 - introduce group work and presentations progressively
 - allow for free and open discussion on a voluntary basis, starting with small group discussions until the confidence of students develops (Weimer, n.d.)
 - be patient and listen; be sure to give all students time to reflect prior to answering



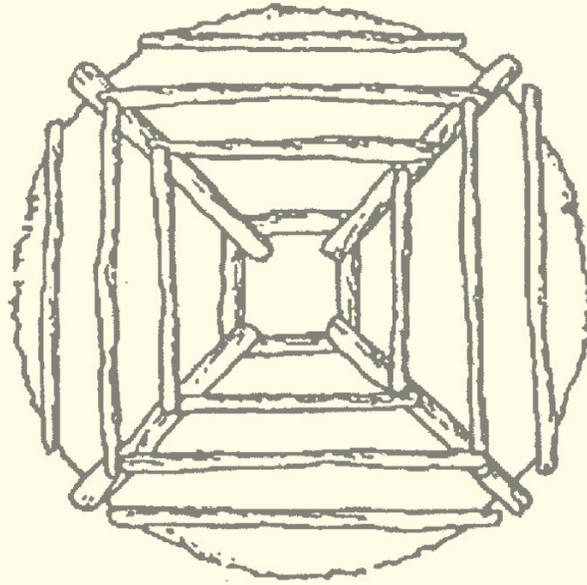
- Provide opportunities for oral presentations and feedback instead of written assignments.
- Use assessment and evaluation practices that are inclusive, fair and authentic:
 - portfolios are perhaps a better way of assessing students in a holistic way (Zubizarreta, 2009)
 - performance or group presentations may work better for some students rather than written tests and essays
- Teach in a circle to increase student-to-student engagement:
 - arranging classroom desks in a circle creates an environment where students can see everyone, and this facilitates conversation with the professor and among students. Teaching with desks in rows allows students to see and converse with the professor, but they mostly see the backs of other students' heads. A teaching circle also implies a sense that students have important experience and information to share. This is known as a talking circle in the Aboriginal community. (P. Walton, personal communication, April 2010)

Note: The talking circle is not to be confused with the healing circle.



“It is very important that people understand about the pictographs on the rock. Native people did not write, but drew pictographs; it is part of their oral history. Pictographs explain how the young people were taught to go out in the country and live. It explains the young peoples’ vision quest at certain ages. The pictographs are drawing of the dreams of the young people, of the animals they see in their dreams, and what they will follow in life. They will also dream about people who guide them. The pictographs are drawn to look at, to read and to understand. They are for others who come to the mountain to prepare themselves for their vision quest and follow the patterns the others took. The pictographs were drawn on the safest spot, on the spot that would last for years.”

Jimmy Jack, TRU Elder



Tecwt'icwell te qelqelmúcw

'different kinds of Aboriginal peoples'

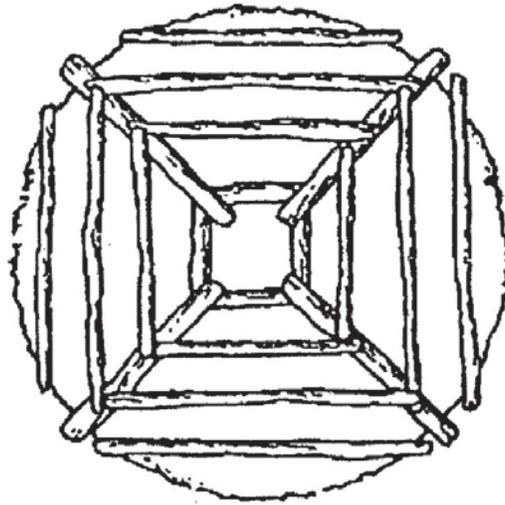
– Student Profile –





Cultural Awareness

Cultural Competence



Cultural Identity

Cultural Sensitivity





The Changing Setting

The Aboriginal population is growing faster than any other group in Canada. Nationally, Aboriginal peoples comprise approximately 1.2 million people or 4% of the total population of the country (Statistics Canada, 2008). In British Columbia, the figure is almost 200,000 Aboriginal people or 5% of the total (Statistics Canada, 2008).

According to Statistics Canada (Milligan, 2010), the transition between high school and post-secondary institutions is improving, but, in comparison to the non-Aboriginal population, a gap still exists.

...nearly half of Aboriginal men (48%) and more than half of Aboriginal women (61%) aged 25 to 64 had completed post-secondary education compared to 58% of their non-Aboriginal counterparts...just under one-quarter (23%) of Aboriginal men and 20% Aboriginal women 25 to 64 years of age had less than a high school education, compared to 14% and 12% of their non-Aboriginal male and female counterparts (Milligan, 2010, p. 9).

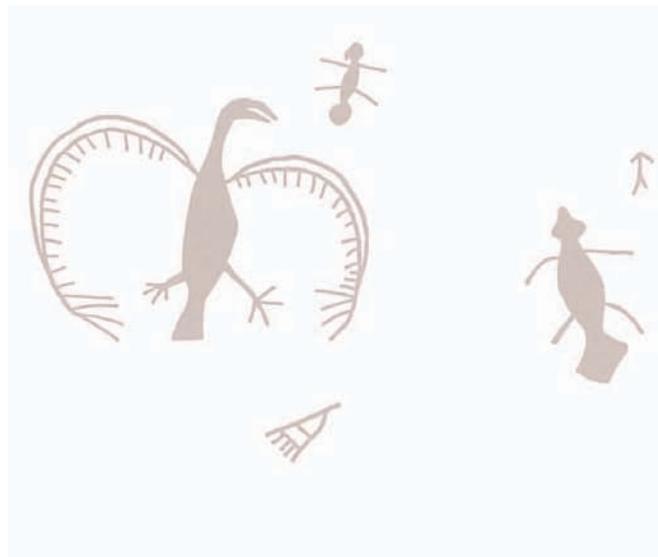


Student Panel Participants, Le,nonet Presentation, TRU
Source: ALBAA Project, TRU



Increasingly, Aboriginal students are attending university, although university degree completion is still below the Canadian average (Pidgeon, 2008). Thompson Rivers University has seen a dramatic increase in the number of Aboriginal students from many different communities and nations. There are 1667 self-identified Aboriginal students enrolled at TRU, not including students in Open Learning (as of August 2010). Most are between 20 to 40 years of age, more female than male. However, according to a study of 430 Aboriginal TRU undergraduate students, 54% of Aboriginal students leave TRU before completing their programs and do not return, compared to 33% for non-Aboriginal students (Walton et al., 2010).

Aboriginal students at TRU represent many different First Nations bands from different parts of BC (over 45 self-identified at the Gathering Place in 2010), with several from Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Métis and Inuit students are also represented. There are also Indigenous students from other parts of the Americas. It is important to recognize that the cultural background of Aboriginal students is very diverse. Bands in BC which are proximate to one another may represent different cultural groups and, therefore, have different languages and customs.





What Educators Need to Know:

- Aboriginal students represent many different cultures and backgrounds; learn where they are from.
- Some students have a strong sense of their cultural background while others do not have much knowledge about their culture.
- Some students were victims of the “Sixties Scoop” which has resulted in many experiencing a loss of identity.
- There are several terms that describe Aboriginal peoples—Indigenous, First Nations (Status and Non-Status), Métis, and Inuit. Care must be taken to use the terms correctly: First Nations are Aboriginal but not all Aboriginal people are First Nations.
- Aboriginal students, if they have grown up in their home community, usually have an extended support system. Many have been raised by their grandparents or aunts and uncles.
- Aboriginal ‘ways of knowing’ are as diverse and as different as the languages through which the knowledge is passed along.
- ‘Indigenizing the curriculum’ is the process of transforming the colonial construction through the introduction of Aboriginal content and perspectives into the curricula.
- Infusion of Aboriginal ‘ways of knowing’ is vital to the process of overcoming the dominance of Eurocentric thought and belief systems within the educational system.
- Developing culturally safe learning environments benefit students, educators, educational institutions and education systems:
 - students are more likely to respond positively to the learning encounter when they feel safe, respected and able to voice their perspective
 - educators are likely to experience more job satisfaction when attendance is better, when the quality of scholarship is good, and when the classroom is an environment of equal engagement between different ways of knowing
 - institutions with high retention rates for an Aboriginal population reflect an educational institution’s commitment to such an environment and to human rights and race relations; such institutes produce more graduates, which attracts more students and thereby increases enrolment (NAHO, 2008)



What About Culture?

According to Chamberlain & Medeiros-Landurand (1991), "...culture is defined as the values, norms, and traditions that affect how individuals of a particular group perceive, think, interact, behave, and make judgments about their world" (as cited in Chamberlain, 2005, p. 197). Culture is a dynamic, lived process that is inclusive of beliefs, practices and values. It is not homogenous or static but is constantly changing. Culture is a complex concept and is viewed from different perspectives, depending on the knowledge and understanding of the viewer. The stages of cultural understanding are represented by the following terms and definitions:

Cultural Identity

Cultural identity is fundamental to how people see themselves and the world. The impact of systematic attempts to destroy culture has resulted in many Aboriginal peoples, their families, and communities, being disconnected from traditional values and teachings.

Identity may mean many different things to Aboriginal students including rejection of Western values and higher education or adoption of traditional values, or something in between. Aboriginal students, in adapting to the mainstream university often create a personal ethnic identity which may reveal assimilated, marginalized, estranged and transcultured characteristics (Huffman, 2001). For example, the assimilated mask refers to an Aboriginal person who has assimilated into mainstream society. On the other end of the spectrum is the estranged student who has strong Aboriginal values and has resistance to mainstream education (Pidgeon, 2008).

First Nations are unique, possess belonging, and are a contemporary people. Uniqueness refers to the language and traditional land. First Nations have a society that has a rightful place within the larger Canadian society. Since contact, First Nations have arrived at this point in time with Europeans and Canadians with shared experiences.

"Being on-campus is a whole other world where you are required to be completely different and disconnected from everything you know."

Nicole Cahoose-Joseph,
TRU Student

"Recently I was talking to an individual who is a student here, who is from a nearby First Nations community where I used to work before I came to TRU. After a short conversation during which we talked about common friends from her community, she said to me, 'I really enjoy talking with you, mainly because you know where I am from.'"

Jack Miller, School of
Education, TRU



Robert Matthew, Principal, Chief Atahm School

Cultural Awareness

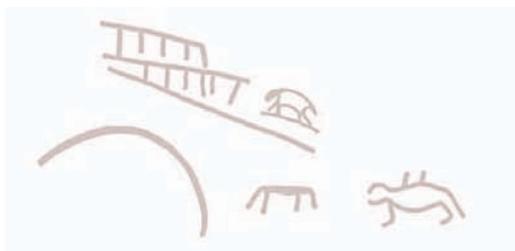
Cultural awareness refers to the acknowledgement of difference, of acknowledging the “Other.” Cultural awareness involves providing opportunities for people of different cultures to get to know one another better, which includes understanding visible and invisible aspects of culture (content) and the interactions between cultural groups (process).

Just as the holistic view invites one to consider not just the parts but how they are related to the whole, a broad view of cultural awareness takes into account, by analogy, not just the species of one individual tree, or just one of its leaves, but the ecology of the whole forest—bugs, streams, stumps and all (the content)—and how they interrelate (the process)

(Friesen et al., 1992, p. 32).

Cultural Sensitivity

Being culturally sensitive involves behaviours such as the choice of words and use of distance (Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada, 2009). It refers to the recognition of the importance of respecting differences. Cultural sensitivity towards Aboriginal peoples includes an understanding of different world-views and belief systems, gender roles, effect of **intergenerational trauma**, and different values and customs. Cultural sensitivity training is a basic requisite for educators.





Cultural Competence

Cultural competence refers to the ability to understand, communicate with, and effectively interact with people across cultures. “Achieving cultural competence means: learning about the culture of the other...sharing in the culture of the other; the ability to communicate between and among cultures; and the ability to demonstrate skill outside one’s culture of origin” (Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada, 2009, p. 22).

Culture Shock and Cultural Safety

Culture shock refers to the anxiety when one experiences the loss of one’s home culture, family and support system, and is confronted with the task of understanding a new culture. Many Aboriginal students experience culture shock upon arriving at university; a lack of awareness by educators may cause them to misunderstand a student’s needs.

According to the National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO), the educator has an important responsibility to ensure that Aboriginal students feel the university is a culturally safe environment, respectful of nationality and culture, and devoid of humiliation and alienation. The term “cultural safety” originated in the 1980s in New Zealand where Maori people were discontent with nursing care (NAHO, 2008). In its broader application, cultural safety analyzes power imbalances, institutional discrimination, colonization and relationships with those groups that have been colonized.



Aboriginal Awareness Week
Source: TRU Welcome Centre

“The motivators that drive me toward success are from all the people who have believed in me. Thankfully for the Creator, my culture, family, friends, elders, parents, educators, First Nations educators and children who praised me to aim and not forget about my journey to success...As a First Nations Educator I experience the various methods, such as the First Nations life and Western knowledge, the traditions, and the mental, spiritual and physical aspects. I realize I need both worlds to succeed in accomplishing any goals or experiences, whether it’s cultural, economic, social or political. The role of my community has a strong support system for me to become successful.”

Tanya Terbasket,
TRU Student



Who is Aboriginal?

There is sensitivity to what Aboriginal peoples call themselves. The Government of Canada has defined the terms First Nations, Inuit, and Métis in the Constitution, under the umbrella term Aboriginal. To Aboriginal peoples, it is more important who self-identifies. This is especially true with Métis people who do not have status under the Indian Act or traditional territory but feel strongly about their group identity and the desire for a homeland.

The term Indigenous is used more and more because it has a global resonance, and is so used by the United Nations to refer to the first inhabitants of a place (whereas the terms Aboriginal/Aborigène are used in reference to former British colonies like Canada and Australia).

Who are First Nations?

First Nations peoples—still referred to as Indians under the Indian Act—form the largest group of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. The term First Nations was created by the Government of Canada in the 1970s to replace the name Indian, which to many people is a pejorative term, although it is still used in long-standing names such as the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC). Although the term has been generally adopted, many First Nations peoples—those defined under the Indian Act as status or non-status Indians—do not accept any government designation and prefer to call themselves by their ancestral tribal name such as *Secwepemc*, *Nuxalkmc*, or *St'át'imc*. The English version of these names—Shuswap, Bella Coola, and Lillooet—is still commonly used by non-native speakers who find the native pronunciations difficult.

Across Canada, there are 615 bands, which represent more than 50 nations or cultural groups and 50 Aboriginal languages. In BC, there are 203 First Nations/Bands, and roughly 30 tribal councils serving these First Nations, comprising more than 160,000 people. Many live in communities in their ancestral territories.

'Indian Band' is a colonial term that has been in use since the formation of the Indian Act. Many First Nations still adhere to this name and use the term 'Nation' to refer to their cultural group. The word nation is a historical term



referring to a people with their own distinct language, culture, and territory. The terms are sometimes used interchangeably. Tribal councils are political groupings of Indian bands such as the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council.

Who are Non-Status Indians?

“Non-status Indians” commonly refers to First Nations individuals who identify themselves as Indians but who are not entitled to registration on the Indian Register pursuant to the Indian Act or are not registered to a band which signed a Treaty with the Crown. Prior to 1985, Status Indians could lose their status and become non-status through enfranchisement (voluntarily giving up status, usually for a minimal cash payment), by obtaining a college degree, or becoming an ordained minister.

Some non-status Indians may be members of a First Nation. Prior to 1985, Indian status could change in a variety of ways: by intermarriage, for if an Indian man married a non-native, she became status, and if an Indian woman married a non-native man, she lost her status; by enfranchisement (until 1960, an Indian could vote in federal elections only by renouncing Indian status); by having a mother and paternal grandmother who did not have status before marriage (these people lost status at 21); or by being born out of wedlock to a mother with status and a father without. The Indian Act was amended in 1985 to restore status to people who had lost it in one of these ways, and to their children (Frideres & Gadacz, 2008).

Who are the Métis?

The word Métis means “mixed-blood” in French. Prior to Canada's crystallization as a nation in North America, the Métis people emerged out of the relations of Indian women and European men, mainly French-Canadians and British. The joining of Aboriginal and European cultures created a unique language, music, dress (with the omnipresent sash), dances, songs, stories and a flag all their own. This combination created a new culture different from its parent cultures, a difference that serves as a major point in defining the distinct Métis nationhood.

Despite their similarities with First Nations peoples, the Métis are not considered “Indians” and thus, are not subject to the restrictions or protections created by the Canadian government through the Indian Act. This is often an area of misunderstanding within Canadian society, as Métis are misinterpreted



Created in 1816, the Métis flag with the infinity symbol represents the merging of two cultures and that the Métis people will exist forever.

Source: Lexicon at the Wikipedia project.



as having the same rights and benefits as “Indians” or First Nations peoples.

There are approximately 390,000 Métis living in Canada today, the majority of whom live in central and western Canada, including approximately 59,000 in British Columbia (Statistics Canada, 2008). In 1982, with the repatriation of the Canadian Constitution, Métis were finally recognized as the third group of Aboriginal people. The Métis assert their rightful place as a recognized Aboriginal community under Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution and work to ensure their proud history is remembered and honoured (Métis Nation of BC, n.d.).

Who are the Inuit?

Inuit are the Aboriginal people of Arctic Canada, specifically the Eastern Arctic, and Inuvialuit are those of the Western Arctic, together comprising the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and northern parts of Quebec and most of Labrador. The Inuit and Inuvialuit are the smallest Aboriginal group in numbers, only 56,000, but inhabit 1/3 of Canada’s landmass. The name Inuit means “the people” in their language, Inuktitut, and is the term by which they refer to themselves (Frideres & Gadacz, 2008).

The lives of Inuit of the far north were largely unaffected by Europeans until the mid-16th century, when the arrival of Europeans damaged the Inuit way of life by introducing diseases and causing upheaval to their traditional life. Nonetheless, Inuit society remained in relative isolation during the 19th century. Inuit and Inuvialuit are not covered under the Indian Act and have never lived on reserves, although they have comprehensive land claims. The Territory of Nunavut, homeland of the Inuit, came into existence in 1999 (Dickason, 2009).

Many Inuit have found their way to southern Canada and some even reside in the larger cities like Ottawa, Montreal, and Winnipeg. A few live in Kamloops. Inuit represent only 0.4% of the Aboriginal population of BC (Statistics Canada, 2008).



What Educators Can Do:

- Recognize Aboriginal ‘ways of learning’ which are derived from different ways of life.
- Avoid singling out Aboriginal students. They are often “spotlighted” for being Aboriginal and the belief they are experts in their culture is intimidating and unfair to the students:
 - some Aboriginal students do not publicly identify
 - when Aboriginal students are not “visibly” Aboriginal—racist comments may be spoken and then the student faces the dilemma of speaking up or not
- Observe student attendance. Sometimes the issue of an absent student is not a reflection of their lack of commitment to course work, but is about living situations beyond their control, for example, daycare issues or family illness. Apply the “Early Alert” program to deal with absenteeism. see: www.tru.ca/staffairs/early_alert.html
- Incorporate healthy and positive messages about cultural identity. This is critical to provide a sense of connection for Aboriginal students. Culture-enhancing activities can help reconnect students to their cultural roots from which they have become disengaged and help them develop a sense of pride in who they are.
- Use a card file which students fill in (voluntarily) in the first class to provide the instructor with some background.
- Know the make-up of your class and which students are First Nation, Métis, or Inuit. If you are enhancing your program, consider the traditions, stories and teachings of each community.
- If you combine traditions and teachings, be clear about where these traditions are coming from. It is disrespectful to mix them into one mythical pan-Aboriginal cultural tradition.
- Adopt humility as a teaching style
- Become an **Indigenist** (S. Wilson, *S’tenistolw* Conference Presentation, unpublished, April 2010).

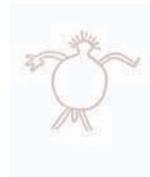


Indigenizing TRU

Thompson Rivers University is gradually introducing aspects of Aboriginal culture to the life of the campus, recognizing the growing number of Aboriginal students and involving them in many events and ceremonies. Graduation commencement involves the use of an Aboriginal mace conceptualized and carved by Kamloops-born Daniel Tom, a member of Seton Lake Band, which is part of the St'at'imc Nations, one of the Interior Salish Nations (see photo on back cover page). Elders participate in opening ceremonies and events, providing prayers in their own languages. As well, hand drumming is a regular feature in traditional Aboriginal ceremonies on campus. Aboriginal Awareness Week is an annual event that presents culture and traditions to the campus community as a whole.



Convocation procession, 2008
Source: TRU archive





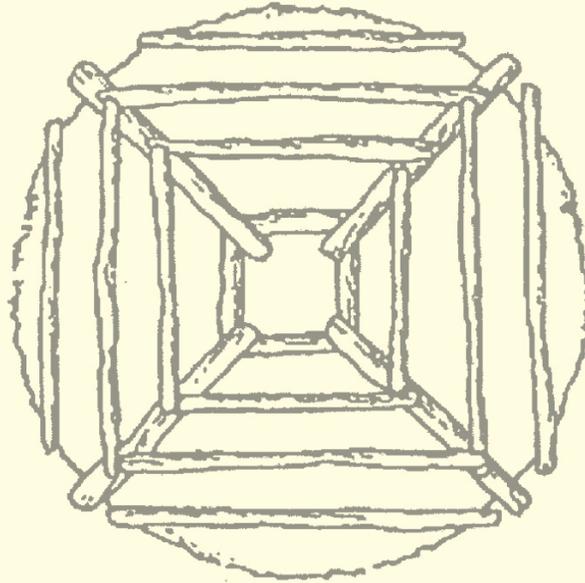
Underway are two initiatives that will physically enhance TRU and remind all students and faculty of the Aboriginal presence on campus. One is bilingual signage on roadways, which recognizes that the university is located on traditional Secwepemc territory; the other is Interior Salish artwork to be displayed around campus, including the new House of Learning.

Another educational initiative at TRU is a program called the Developmental Standard Term Certificate (DSTC) for First Nations language teachers. DSTC is the term used by the BC College of Teachers to describe the program, which is 90 credits, and provides the graduate with a certificate that has a limited term during which they are eligible to teach. The expectation is that during the limited term, the individual would take the necessary courses to qualify for a Bachelor of Education degree and full certification as a teacher.

Thompson Rivers University will continue to develop programs in partnership with First Nations governments and Aboriginal organizations. TRU has a significant role to play in educating Aboriginal people to return to their communities and organizations to make important contributions in fields such as education, economics, social work and health.

As the number of Aboriginal educators, including faculty and staff, gradually increases, students will have more role models and appreciation of the Indigenization that is taking place at the university. But until the numbers increase, it is important for faculty, staff and administrators to have an understanding of the issues and history of Aboriginal peoples.





Knucwentwécw te s7el7elkst.s ne7élye

‘workers here who help one another’

– Supports –



Supports

There are service supports in place on campus to assist Aboriginal students with any challenges that arise. If any Aboriginal students are having difficulty adapting to the institutional climate of the university, or adjusting to the university culture and structure, or are experiencing obstacles with funding or academic policies, assistance can be offered by referring them to the appropriate service supports available.

Aboriginal Education Centre

(OM 1468, will move to the House of Learning in January 2011)

Contact:

Nathan Matthew, Executive Director

Telephone: 250.377.6050

**Joanne Brown, Coordinator,
Communications and Projects**

Telephone: 250.852.7152

Email: jobrown@tru.ca

First Nations Student Association (FNSA) (IDC161)

The First Nations Student Association (FNSA) is a student group involved in student-run activities on campus.

Telephone: 250.371.5753.

First Nations Collective

The First Nations Collective (inclusive of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) is an arm of the Thompson Rivers University Student Union (TRUSU) that ensures the concerns and perspectives of the Aboriginal members are reflected in the organization. Each year they elect an Aboriginal student representative to their Council.

“Indigenization is the acknowledgement and representation of Aboriginal ways of being, knowing and seeing. The Aboriginal Education Centre coordinates, facilitates and drives TRU’s indigenization of its policies, practices, services for students and its academic delivery and support. The Aboriginal Education Centre liaises, collaborates and supports work with TRU’s campus community, but most importantly links and connects to Aboriginal communities within the region and beyond.”

Joanne Brown,
Coordinator,
Communications
and Projects



TRU Kamloops Campus

Supports for Students:

The Gathering Place

“The Elder-in-the-House Program at TRU is a vital component of Aboriginal student support on campus. The Elders provide personal consultation, conversation, guidance and mentorship to Aboriginal students. The Elders’ role is a surrogate grandmother or grandfather to Aboriginal students and shares their teachings of culture and language with the students on campus. This program is constantly under development and given sufficient financial support will continue to grow.”s
Bernadette Charlie,
Coordinator for
Aboriginal Services,
TRU



Cplūl'kw'ten—The Gathering Place (House 5)

Source: Mairi Budreau

The Gathering Place provides a focal point for Aboriginal student activities and other post-secondary supports. It is an information and support centre for Aboriginal students and for the entire campus community. It is non-political and has been established to encompass the cultural values of all Aboriginal people: First Nation (Status and Non-Status), Inuit, and Métis peoples and to recognize the diverse Aboriginal population at TRU.



Support Services include:

- liaising with Community Education Coordinators and other appropriate agencies
- referring students to other TRU departments and service areas
- providing information about services in the community
- providing information about other educational institution in BC and Canada
- supporting individuals in their search for housing, funding, transportation, and daycare
- Elders-in-the-House Program

Contact:

Bernadette Charlie, Coordinator of Aboriginal Student Services

Telephone: 250.828.5246

Email: bcharlie@tru.ca

Dory La Boucane, Aboriginal Transition Planner

Telephone: 250.371.5854

Email: dlaboucane@tru.ca



Students at First Friends Feast

Source: TRU Welcome Centre



TRU Williams Lake Campus Supports for Students: The Gathering Place (opened September 2010)



Cplūl'kw'ten—Gathering Place
Source: TRU Marketing & Communications

The Gathering Place will provide study and meeting space for students, as well as space for ceremonies and displays, celebrating Aboriginal culture and history. The new space will house TRU's 'Elders in Residence' program, which provides counseling and support to Aboriginal students.

Support Services include:

- liaising with Community Education Coordinators and other appropriate agencies
- referring students to other TRU departments and service areas
- providing information about services in the community
- providing information about other educational institution in BC and Canada
- supporting individuals in their search for housing, funding, transportation, and daycare

Contact:

Rhonda Johnson, First Nations Coordinator

Telephone: 250.392.8009

Email: ralphonse@tru.ca



Learning Centre

The Learning Centre provides Aboriginal communities in the surrounding area with access to hundreds of Open Learning courses and programs. All Open Learning courses and programs are delivered online or by distance education and facilitated through the Learning Centre. The Learning Centre is managed by a facilitator who aids students through advising, counseling and mentoring, and helps students work through their courses.

Contact:

Dolly Kershaw, Learning Centre Facilitator

Telephone: 250.392.8179

Email: dkershaw@tru.ca



Williams Lake Campus

Source: TRU Marketing & Communications



TRU Kamloops and Williams Lake Campuses

Support for Educators:

Centre for Teaching and Learning

“It is important that all faculty, staff, and administrators help to provide a welcoming, supportive and engaging learning environment that will assist all Aboriginal students in achieving their educational goals.”

Gary Hunt,
Centre for Teaching
and Learning

The purpose of the Centre for Teaching and Learning is to foster and enable high quality teaching across the University through taking a leadership role in providing professional development opportunities that enhance the culture and scholarly practice of teaching and learning among faculty. The Centre supports faculty in developing effective approaches to teaching which include cultural awareness and sensitivity to the issues faced by culturally diverse learners including Aboriginal students.

In our effort to support faculty, we encourage you to contact the Centre with your ideas, requests for support, and willingness to volunteer with initiatives that support the development of effective scholarly teaching practices.

Gary Hunt, Coordinator, Centre for Teaching and Learning

Telephone: 250.828.5461

Email: gahunt@tru.ca

Workshops

In addition, on-campus, there will be ongoing Aboriginal workshops regarding history, culture, and traditions.



Resources

There are many excellent books and multimedia resources about Aboriginal peoples in Canada and British Columbia. The following is a select list of resources that were identified as particularly useful in the framing of ideas for this handbook. Each has its own bibliography and links to other resources.

Thompson Rivers University Resources

Aboriginal website (under construction): www.tru.ca

This website is an interactive database of literature, documents, photos, videos and web links that are meant to support students throughout their educational experience and to support faculty in their teaching or research endeavours. It is a place where the University and Secwepemc communities can connect to increase our awareness and understanding of our relations. Examples of resources include: financial aid for Aboriginal students, best practices for teaching and learning, ethics and protocol guidelines for research, history and culture of the Secwepemc Peoples, biographies of Secwepemc Elders, and Aboriginal national, provincial, local and university events.

Included within the TRU Aboriginal website is a resource list of Aboriginal websites that are identified as excellent teaching resources for university faculty and students. As well, included are teaching resources for teachers and children from grades four to twelve. Over 450 Aboriginal websites were identified by B.Ed. students in the “Teaching First Nations Children” education course (EDFN 420), and later reviewed by a panel of Aboriginal Elders, students, and faculty. The final resource lists approximately 200 websites and includes a brief abstract and teaching suggestion for each site.

Provincial Resources

ABE Articulation Guide: For more information regarding ABE First Nations courses see ABE articulation handbook (www.aved.gov.bc.ca/abe/handbook.pdf)

BC Teachers Federation has also taken steps to better serve Aboriginal students including policies, lists of resources, and workshops (www.bctf.ca/IssuesInEducation.aspx?id=13404)



First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC): a provincial collective organization formed in 1992 which is a leader in Aboriginal education in terms of policy development, including promoting decolonization. FNESC has over 30 publications, many on-line; including English First Peoples 12 (www.fnesc.ca/efp/efp12.php)

Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA) was formed at the request of Indigenous controlled Post-Secondary Institutes and Adult Learning Programs to address and further the mutual interests of all Indigenous controlled Learning Centres in British Columbia (www.fnesc.ca/iahla)

Indigenous Child Welfare Network: A BC strategy for strengthening the voices of Aboriginal children (web.uvic.ca/icwr/home.htm)

General Resources on the Secwepemc

Bouchard, R., & Kennedy, D. (1979). *Shuswap stories*. Vancouver, BC: CommCept Publishing Ltd.

Dawson, G. M. (1891). Notes on the *Shuswap people of British Columbia*. Ottawa: Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, 2(1): 3–44.

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Secwepemc-kuc: We are the Secwepemc. Retrieved from <http://secwepemc.sd73.bc.ca>

Secwepemc NEWS: A monthly publication serving the people and communities of the Shuswap Nation www.secwepemc.org

Other Resources

Resources for Teachers:

Aboriginal Canada Portal: www.aboriginalcanada.gc.ca/acp/site.nsf/eng/ao31045.html

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Ignace, M. & Ignace, R. (2004). The Secwepemc: Traditional Resource Use and Rights to Land. In R. Morrison & C. Roderick Wilson (Eds.), *Native Peoples: The Canadian experience*. Oxford and Toronto, ON: Oxford University Press.

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Glossary

This glossary expands on some of the important terms in the text that are shown in **bold**.

Aboriginal rights refer to the activities, practice, and traditions of the Aboriginal peoples in Canada that are integral to the distinctive culture of Aboriginal peoples.

Aboriginal title is a legal term that recognizes Aboriginal interest in the land. It is based on Aboriginal peoples' longstanding use and occupancy of the land as descendants of the original inhabitants of Canada. The Calder case (1973) ruled that Aboriginal title existed prior to Confederation, thereby opening a new era for government and Aboriginal negotiations (Campbell et al., 2003).

Contact is the term used for the time and place where Aboriginal peoples first met Europeans in the Americas. Contact varied from place to place and over time. In British Columbia, first contact did not occur until the European explorations in the late 18th century. Prior to contact, however, diseases and trade goods diffused across North America in advance of actual exploration and the meeting of peoples.

Decolonization refers to the undoing of colonialism, the establishment of governance or authority through the creation of settlements by another country or jurisdiction. In the Canadian context, it involves the process of self-determination by Indigenous people, including rediscovering their traditional values and redefining themselves as peoples.



Deterritorialization refers to the colonial process of removing or controlling original peoples and eradicating their traditional life ways from their land (traditional territory). For example, missionaries regularly destroyed symbols and artifacts of Aboriginal beliefs and rituals in order to maintain their control. Indian agents controlled the movement of individuals by the issuance of passes.

Elders are Aboriginal people, whose wisdom about spirituality, culture and life, is recognized by their community. Aboriginal people seek the advice and assistance of Elders in various aspects of traditional as well as contemporary issues. As a sign of respect, the term is capitalized. A gift of appreciation is often presented to Elders for their help. It is believed that tobacco is a sacred gift to be used sparingly and for spiritual guidance or healing.

Eurocentric and eurocentrism are fairly recent terms coined in the later 20th century to refer to the practice of viewing the world from a European perspective, with an implied belief, either consciously or subconsciously, in the preeminence of European culture.

Indigenization is derived from the term **Indigenous**, and has different meanings, but in relation to education, indigenization refers to the pedagogical process of introducing Aboriginal ways of knowing into the curricula of the academy. To **indigenize** means to produce teaching and learning materials that are culturally relevant to Aboriginal students.

Institutional racism (also called **structural racism** or **systemic racism**) is any form of racism occurring specifically within institutions such as public government bodies, private business corporations, and universities (public and private), “the collective failure of an organization to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin”.¹

Intergenerational trauma refers to the recognition of an array of social conditions among Aboriginal peoples including poverty, alcoholism, drug addiction and abuse that has impacted individuals and communities over a long period of time. The healing of the deeply-rooted pain of intergenerational trauma at the individual level involves family, community and nation, with the use of traditional Aboriginal healing practices including healing circles, the sweat lodge, fasting, the vision quest, and other ceremonies.

Interior Salish is a term which comprises the First Nations of the Interior of BC, including the Secwepemc, Nlaka’pamux, St’at’imc, and Okanagan who together represent a cultural area, sharing similar cultural traits such as the use of the pithouse.

The Memorial to Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier (1910) is an extended letter, which

¹ *Race: The Power of an Illusion* (CPD, the Ford Foundation and PBS).



presented the grievances of the Interior tribes to Laurier. They believed Laurier, who represented the French-Canadians who first came to the BC Interior during the fur trade period, would understand their problems – loss of land, hunting rights, and restrictions on their movements. Laurier listened and promised action but was not re-elected in 1911.

Potlatch is a traditional ceremony among many First Nations in BC that served and continues to serve important social and economic functions. Potlatches are held to commemorate important events in the lives of individuals and clans. (For the potlatch among the Interior tribes, see: Crop Eared Wolf, 1996). In 1884, potlatches were made illegal by the government of Canada in the belief that it was a pagan ritual. Many items such as masks, rattles and other artifacts were confiscated by the government. In 1951, the anti-potlatch law was repealed.

Regalia refers to the ceremonial dress of specific First Nations that show which the area and from what family and culture they have descended. Regalia is a very personal and artistic expression of the dancer's life, feelings, interests, family, and spiritual quest. Often elements of the regalia are gifts from Elders or special people in the dancer's life and are honourings to be worn with pride and responsibility. The regalia evolves and changes with the dancer's life depending on fashion or personal taste. There is no contradiction in blending historic elements with very modern elements, for example interweaving traditional beadwork with fluorescent streamers. Regalia should never be referred to as costumes.

Reterritorialization is the restructuring of a territory with a new set of values and laws that has undergone deterritorialization.

Secwepemc, pronounced “suh-kwep'-mugh”, is known by Europeans and still referred to occasionally as Shuswap (as in Shuswap Nation Tribal Council). They are descendants of people who have lived in the south-central interior of the province for at least 10,000 years.

Secwepemcúlecw refers to the “land of the Secwepemc.”

Traditional knowledge, also known as Indigenous knowledge, is defined by The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in this manner:

The indigenous people of the world possess an immense knowledge of their environments, based on centuries of living close to nature. Living in and from the richness and variety of complex ecosystems, they have an understanding of the properties of plants and animals, the functioning of ecosystems and the techniques for using and managing them that is particular and often detailed... locally occurring species are relied on for many – sometimes all – foods, medicines, fuel, building



materials and other products. Equally, people's knowledge and perceptions of the environment, and their relationships with it, are often important elements of cultural identity.

Source: Alan, R. Emery and Associates. (1997). *Guidelines for environmental assessments and traditional knowledge*. A Report from the Centre for Traditional Knowledge of the World Council of Indigenous People, Ottawa, ON, p. 4.

Traditional territory refers to the homelands of First Nations in pre-contact times within which political control was exerted. There is considerable controversy over the modern interpretation of traditional territories of various First Nations, especially in relation to boundaries, due to the reliance on Euro-Canadian historical accounts which are not entirely accurate and sometimes contradictory. Care should be taken to verify the source and purpose of maps showing traditional territories before using them as instructional tools.

The White Paper on federal Indian policy, when released in 1969, "... generated a storm of protest from Aboriginal people, who strongly denounced its main terms and assumptions" (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996, Vol. 1, p. 201) – the dissolution of the Indian Act and the assimilation of Indian people into mainstream culture. The formation of a new First Nations political organization, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, grew partly in response to the White Paper. In the same year, the British Columbia Association of Non-Status Indians was formed to organize Métis and non-Status First Nations. A response to the White Paper by Harold Cardinal and the Indian Chiefs of Alberta (entitled "Citizens Plus" but commonly known as the "Red Paper") explained the widespread opposition to the federal policy by Status Indians in Canada (Canada in the Making, n.d.).



TRU CEREMONIAL MACE

Designed and carved by: Daniel Tom, Seton Lake Band

Photo: Mairi Budreau

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