Beyond the Classroom: The Impact of a Required Indigenous Education Course in the Lives of Pre-service Teachers

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Introduction

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC, 2015) released in June 2015 marked a pivotal moment in the history of education in Canada. The report included 94 calls 'Calls to action' that stressed the importance of addressing the many injustices committed against Indigenous[1] peoples attending residential schools between 1876 and 1996. In these calls the need for federal, provincial, territorial and Aboriginal governments to play a key role in developing education for reconciliation was highlighted. In particular, Call 62i recommended that educators work to develop 'age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students' (p. 11). Similarly, Call 62ii states that the provincial and territorial governments, who are responsible for education, need to 'provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms' (p.11). This chapter will describe

[1]Reflective of our inclusive practices and scholarship, we use the words Indigenous and Aboriginal interchangeably throughout the chapter.

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how three instructors, working in two post-secondary Canadian institutions, have worked to introduce required courses in Indigenous education with an aim towards shifting the minds and hearts of pre-service teachers in becoming more culturally aware, responsive, and inclusive to the learning aspirations and experiences of Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Positioning Ourselves

Carmen

> My hope emerges from those places of struggle where I witness individuals positively transforming their lives and the world around them. Educating is always a vocation rooted in hopefulness. (hooks, 2003, p. xiv)

My name is Maria del Carmen Rodríguez de France, and like bell hooks, my hope too, emerges from the places and the spaces where uncertainty, confusion, and chaos renders me with opportunities to change and transform the lives of others around me. Such spaces and places of struggle are often found within the university, and in the classrooms where I facilitate courses on Indigenous knowledge and pedagogy. I am also an immigrant; a visitor on this land that I now call home. My Indigenous heritage is from the Kickapoo Nation in Northeastern México. I arrived to the territory of the Lekwungen speaking people almost two decades ago, and during time I have worked closely with local communities through a process of what I commonly refer to as relational accountability. Wilson (2008), an Opaskwayak Cree scholar, describes this form of accountability, as the responsibility a scholar/researcher needs to acquire to be able to authentically work with the Indigenous peoples, in their communities. As an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Victoria (UVic) most of my work includes mainly aspects of social justice, education, Indigenous epistemologies, and Indigenous education. In addition, and as a teacher and facilitator, these courses offer the opportunity to think more about how I can benefit the people with whom I work with, for and alongside.

Lex

> Solidarity is an uneasy, reserved, and unsettled matter that neither reconciles present grievances nor forecloses future conflict. (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 3)

My name is Alexa (Lex) Scully, and I too have experienced both hope and struggle engaging in compulsory Indigenous education courses within the teacher education programme. While our personal and geographical locations are different, we all have a great deal in common, both in our experience of doing this

work, and in our convictions about how to do it well. I have written and presented about my position in this field as a white settler of Celtic heritage, by starting some of my classes with the important question, 'Why is the whitest woman on the planet teaching about Aboriginal education?' (Scully, 2011, 2012, 2015)—often it is an awkward attempt to use humour to acknowledge my socio-political location as 'always already oppressor' (McLaren, 1995, p. 63). From a B.A. Honours in Indigenous Studies at Trent University in Peterborough, to canoe trip guiding, to environmental education, to teaching and learning in the Education program at Lakehead University (LU) in Orillia and Thunder Bay, Ontario, all of my schooling and most of my work has been in Anishinaabe territory.

The Thunder Bay campus of LU is on the traditional territory of the Fort William First Nation, and is situated within the Robinson Superior Treaty territory; while the Orillia campus of LU is on the territory of the Chippewa Tri-Council, and is situated within the Williams Treaty territory. These campuses are 1,700 kms apart, and all on Anishinaabe land. For me, this work has been an incredibly challenging journey to learn how I, a white settler, can use the privilege of my position and education by shifting the perspectives of the predominantly white pre-service teachers as they relate to Indigenous peoples and lands in Canada. In this way, I hope to contribute to the resurgence and well-being of Indigenous people in Canada through improving what Canadian children learn at the K-12 levels. Doing education 'differently' means striving for relational accountability (Wilson, 2008); asking students to be accountable to one another, spending time on the land, and centring Indigenous community members and Lands in these classes. What I have observed in these classes supports what I was taught by the Elders at Trent; that land and Indigenous knowledge are the First Teachers, and are what constitute 'good' Indigenous education for all learners.

Onowa

As is Indigenous custom, I will introduce myself, acknowledging my ancestral roots and community connections and my connection to the work. I am maskēkowak (Swampy Cree) and Scottish-Canadian. My Cree grandparents were from Norway House and Cross Lake in northern Manitoba and my settler family were farmers from southern Saskatchewan. I have been grateful visitor on Coast and Straits Salish territory, specifically Lekwungen and WSANEC territories, for more than 15 years. I have been a faculty member and the Director of Indigenous Education at the UVic since 2008 where, following the initial course design coordinated by Dr. Lorna Williams, Carmen and I redeveloped and taught the early iterations of the required course in Indigenous education in our faculty. I am deeply privileged to work in this place, on this territory and I share with my colleagues a passion for this work that touches and shapes our most precious souls, the next generations of children, both Indigenous and not, in Canada.

The Work

This chapter describes the evolution of two separate courses on Indigenous education at two different institutions in Canada. It also describes how we, the instructors, have responded to feedback from diverse sources such as end of the term surveys, student comments, and interviews for the past 6 years[2] at the UVic and a study conducted through the Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices (S-STEP) (Kitchen, 2005; Loughran, 2004; Samaras & Freese, 2006) research study based at LU. As a result of constantly evaluating our teaching approaches (i.e. content, tests and activities) we have allowed the time teaching such courses to be more fluid, inclusive and based on using recursive based pedagogy.

Through this writing, we are also reflecting on the opportunities each of us has had as a facilitator to improve our own practice, and to engage students differently over time. We also wish to instil a sense of social responsibility, change and commitment in our students as Canadian citizens, and more specifically, as educators following their developing understanding of education from an Indigenous perspective, and the ways in which they can Indigenize the curriculum and become, as Shawn Wilson (2008) says 'Indigenists'. In addition, we seek to support the evolving self-concept of pre-service teacher as competent facilitators who can appreciate, support, and foster development in students by establishing foundations and teaching philosophies, which include Indigenous approaches.

Related Literature

In Canadian teacher education, there is a great deal of literature addressing the lack of 'awareness of the history of racism and colonialism in America, and the lack of knowledge of the past and present strengths, accomplishments, and resources of the neo-colonized cultural communities they are entering' (Swartz, 2003, p. 256). Supporting these statements, Chambers (2005) describes Euro-western academia as 'a space in which Indigenous knowledge has been neglected, at worst denied, over centuries of cultural oppression' (p. 1). Non-Indigenous teachers and teacher-educators often need to decolonize their own perspectives and practices in order to transform Indigenous education in Canada—and to increase the success of Indigenous learners, understand social justice measures for Indigenous peoples and to create greater cross-cultural understanding by non-Indigenous learners (den Heyer, 2009; Dion, 2009; Godlewska, Moore, & Bednasek, 2010; Haig-Brown & Hodson, 2009; Kanu, 2005; Madden, 2015; Schick, 2000; St. Denis, 2007; Tompkins, 2002; Tupper, 2012, 2013). A common thread emerging across all of these authors' work is idea of resistance on the part

[2]Comments from surveys and interviews in this chapter resulted from several research studies conducted at UVic from 2009 to 2015.

of student–teachers, and to examine or change their own perspectives and practices working with Indigenous learners in the classroom (Scully, 2015). While Indigenous-specific teacher education programs such as the Native Indian Teacher Education Program (NITEP) at the University of British Columbia (described in this book) and the Native Teacher Education Program (NTEP) at LU (est.1974) are well established; however, required courses in Indigenous knowledge within post-secondary institutions are relatively new in Canada. It is anticipated that such courses will shift the exclusive focus Swartz (2003) mentions, and more importantly contribute to the growing decolonization discourse movement concerning Indigenous people and their allies in Canada, as well as around the world. We believe that the *Accord on Indigenous Education* (Archibald, Lundy, Reynolds, & Williams, 2010) is contributing to this paradigm shift. Further to the signing of the Accord, the British Columbia College of Teachers passed a policy in 2011 requiring that all graduates of the province's teacher education programs 'complete mandatory coursework in First Nations studies' ('Closing the gap', p. 10). Some institutions had already implemented or were in the development process of adding such courses; however, the policy decision confirmed the direction for all teacher education programs in the province of British Columbia. In Ontario, this process has been supported by the Ministry of Education's (2007) policy framework. While not a directive, it has been useful in supporting the move towards Indigenous education in Ontario schools, and in various faculties of education.

Various scholars have conducted research that explore shifts in students' attitudes and personal transformation as a result of developing awareness and learning about Indigenous people by including a mandatory course in their programs of study (see Battiste, 1998, 2000; Dion, 2009; Fitznor, 2005; Nardozi & Mashford-Pringle, 2014). However, Cherokee scholar Heath Justice (personal communication, 21 November 2015) states that it seems clear that 'required Indigenous content' is aimed at non-Indigenous learners. As an non-Indigenous scholar, I (Scully) see this as an important part of the work that I do; that is, modeling my own actions and responsibility as a treaty partner striving for 'relational accountability' (Wilson, 2008).

The Contexts

In SENĆOŦEN, one of the Indigenous languages on southern Vancouver Island, EŁ TELNIW̱T means 'to make/to become a whole person'. The course 'EŁ TELNIW̱T and Indigenous Education' was offered for the first time in 2008 as an elective course. In 2009, it became a requirement for all teacher education programs in the Faculty of Education at UVic in British Columbia, Canada. A main objective of the course is to 'fill the gaps' in the pre-service teacher's school experiences in regards to the lack of knowledge about Aboriginal education, and relative to their own training as teachers. Given that the history of Aboriginal people of Canada is sometimes unknown to the majority of the students who are

mostly non-Aboriginal; spaces for clashes in cultural worldviews exist hand-in-hand with the desire that some students have to advance their knowledge. Therefore, one of the first stages in entering this new 'space' consists of 'unlearning' certain ways of understanding the world; appreciating that the knowledge that emerges from such an examination will inescapably challenge students to explore and interrogate their own ways of understanding how those views have evolved and developed over time, and how their own perspectives and academic development have been shaped by conventional teacher education ideology. Or, as Battiste (2002) suggests, by being 'marinated' in 'Cognitive Imperialism', which privileges only some sources of knowledge and ways of knowing.

Students who are unfamiliar with histories of Aboriginal people need opportunities to interpret new knowledge, experience it and incorporate it into their discipline, their profession and into their lives. However, the invitation to engage in dialogue emerges sometimes as a form or resistance when new knowledge is being introduced, old knowledge is deconstructed, and ultimately, when all new knowledge is re-constructed. While the course objectives are multiple, the main goal of EŁ TELNIWT is to better prepare student teachers for the contextual reality within the school system and the larger society; as it pertains to the Indigenous education learning contexts.

By having students study Indigenous worldviews, spirituality, history of education and recent developments within curriculum development, among other topics, they learn more about local cultures and their histories; and ultimately, they are provided with a unique opportunity to uncover and reflect upon their own personal cultural historical narratives through assignments and activities, community engagement, and academic preparation. In addition, being taught by an all-Aboriginal group of instructors models for student's ways of being and knowing that underscores the learning objectives in the course. Although, the course is face-to-face, it also utilizes a culturally inclusive interface to support specific activities, and to compile course related materials; additionally, it offers opportunities for experiential learning, reflection, group work and individual development.

A variety of pedagogical approaches are included to elicit understanding of what constitutes an Indigenous epistemology; whose knowledge is valued and validated, how curriculum is designed and delivered, and as aforementioned, what constitutes social justice within the frame of Indigenous education. Restoule (2011) asserts that Aboriginal teachers cannot achieve these goals alone but that it is also the responsibility of non-Aboriginal teachers 'to understand our shared histories, our perspectives, our visions and our goals, and to participate in achieving them together' (p. 17). Battiste (2010) argues that it is critical for educators to look at how the curriculum explores the connections between 'what is being taught, who is being excluded, and who is benefitting from public education' (p. 17). These aspects of teaching and learning are explored in various ways throughout the course especially since our pre-service teacher find themselves in a unique moment in their academic journey where they experience learning as a student, as well as the practice of teaching as future teachers.

Pedagogical approaches include both reflective and reflexive practice; discussions around required readings, films, guests and the impact other teaching resources have had on the students at a particular time within the course. To further model Indigenous ways of knowing and being in the course, evaluation and assessment take different forms, which include the opportunity to document the learning process in creative ways including: classroom presentations hands-on activities, opportunities to present final assignments in diverse formats such as sharing learning experiences, going for a walk, as well as, spoken word, visual art, and so forth. At the end of the term, students' experiences vary. For some, learning is challenging but positive; for others, resistance dominates their emotional-self leading to ongoing experiences of discomfort. Notwithstanding, the majority of the students who commented on the required nature of the course provided positive and supportive views such as the fact that all students need to be aware of diversity; further, they felt that this course provided reliable knowledge that would dissuade misunderstandings. Here are a few examples gleaned from students before and after participating in the course:

> *I think every person should learn about the people who were here first.*
>
> *I think this course has done a lot to further my thinking about Aboriginal issues and the difficulties of incorporating them in my class.*
>
> [the course gave me] *exposure to so many alternate ways of thinking and living was inevitable helpful for allowing me to place myself in my own world; search for purpose.*
>
> *I learned ways to bring cross cultural education into the classroom, and I was empowered to bring change.*

Ontario

At LU in 2007, a required course entitled Aboriginal Education (EDUC 4416) was split out from the Multicultural Education course. Until the Indigenous content requirement was doubled for the new 2-year Bachelor of Education course in 2015, this course was weighted as a 0.25 credit, that is, 18 contact hours. The description of the course in the LU course calendar was short: *Theory and strategies of appropriate education for Aboriginal students*. There were no official shared course objectives over the many sections. (These have been developed for the new extended course). I (Scully) was hired at Lakehead Orillia to teach the class in 2009–2010. I taught eight sections of 40 students that year, commuting first from Algonquin Park where I was working as a labourer, and then from Toronto where I was working retail. The size and structure of the classes was overwhelming (we were squished into very small rooms), as was the profound lack of knowledge that the learners had about Canadian history, and about Indigenous peoples in general. This 'lacking' was motivation to learn how to do this work well, and to contribute to shifting this violent 'common knowledge'.

There are four core elements of the course that stayed the same throughout the 17 iterations that I taught: (1) We began many classes with icebreakers/community builders, (2) At least two classes were led by Elders and/or local Indigenous community members, (3) At least one class took place on the Land and/or on reserve and (4) Three core assignments: the Local assignment, a group project to gather resources for the class on a topic (Residential schools, stereotypes, MMIW, books/authors, art, hip hop, media), and a culminating short paper reflecting on an experience of learning or engagement with Indigenous community. Throughout this teaching work, I have been committed to two core principles: *Land as First Teacher* and *All my relations*.

Land as First Teacher is a principle that I learned from Anishinaabe-kwe Elder Edna Manitowabi at Trent University in the early 1990s. Recently, there have been echoes of this teaching in the education discourse articulated as *A Pedagogy of Land* (Tewa scholar Cajete, 2009; Haig-Brown & Anishinaabe knowledge keeper Kaaren Daanneman, 2002; and Anishinaabe scholar Simpson, 2014). Both the Local assignment and the classes that take place on the Land honour this teaching, that the Land is the source of the knowledges, languages, economies and epistemologies of Indigenous peoples, and must be respected as a teacher in this context. The Local assignment accomplishes this by honouring the place-knowledge of the learners (they must choose a place that they feel connected to, or somewhere they would like to teach), and then extends their knowledge of place by seeking Treaties, comprehensive land claims, Indigenous communities, place names, resources, languages that grew in that place. Taking the classes outside and/or to a local Indigenous community place, and doing so in a way that is specific and critical, further connects the learners to the place that we are learning in/on. These pedagogies bring us to *All my relations;* one interpretation of this teaching, also imparted by Elder Manitowabi, describes that we are all connected, and that it is simply a matter of uncovering these connections. This is the work of compulsory Indigenous education in teacher education—supporting the sometimes very uncomfortable understanding that all Canadians are implicated in a just future for Indigenous peoples and lands … we are always already in relation. Land and community relationships are at the heart of Indigenist (Wilson, 2008) education in Canadian teacher education.

Shared Experiences

We have all experienced very similar pushback to this work from the learners in the classes. A significant number of students questioned why they had to take this course in place of a course on multiculturalism or a culture of their choice 'more relevant to where they will teach' such as 'Asian' if in Greater Vancouver area, and South Asian in the Greater Toronto Area. This is a common site of resistance

to this content, referred to as managing 'competing marginalities' (Sefa Dei, 2005). Consequently, we both agree that fundamental to these courses is the need to confront the various forms of oppression that 'reproduce and sustain white dominance, power, and privilege' (Sefa Dei, 2005, p. 59). The comments below from data collected at UVic reflect a lack of awareness and exposure to the problem of race and racism:

Annoyance! I was really annoyed that we were taking a class specifically on aboriginals but there is no other class for any other culture.

Why an aboriginal course and not just a course on multiculturalism in the classroom? What makes aboriginals so special?

My big question is: do you teach differently to Aboriginal people?

How are they different from the rest?

I believe the course should be multi-cultural and not just focused on Aboriginal culture.

In addition, some students saw the course as applicable to other professions but not so critical for teachers:

I can see it being applicable to a social work setting.

Students did not believe that Indigenous people are all over the world, and therefore did not necessarily agree that the course was relevant for everyone or felt that they should not have to learn about the Indigenous people of Canada if they were not planning to teach in Canada, for example:

I feel that it is a regional specification if you are teaching in Canada, then yes. But I personally have an international focus and it should not necessarily be mandatory.

Not all of us teachers will be teaching in Canada after we finish. There are no jobs here. I'm going overseas where indigenous education has no relevance.

An interesting aspect to these findings is that one foundational and philosophic principle of this course is to help students understand the concept of 'territory' and that everywhere they are, where they live, where they stand, everywhere they teach, they are standing in someone's territory. This prompts them to question then, what does that mean? What does it mean to them? What does it mean to the people whose territory it is? Indicating that one should choose 'which' cultural group to focus on is to miss one of the fundamental foundations of the course about the concept of territory and the history of colonization in all parts of present day Canada. Bang et al. (2014) describe the need to disrupt the 'settler zero point epistemologies'—that is, the profoundly mistaken belief that settler communities are the first to be in a particular place, and that there are no Indigenous peoples or communities in a place. Additionally, Donald (2009) describes the pervasive perspective that Indigenous history in Canada is somehow discrete from settler history. The interruption of this dysconsciousness (King, 1991) through a pedagogy of Land does this work: We are always already in relation.

The 'Toolbox' Approach

Another experience that we have in common is that students were seeking a 'toolbox' and a list of 'dos and don'ts'. They were more focused on finding ready-to-use tools for teaching, and did not value history, or an investigation of personal location, as relevant to their profession. They wanted to be told 'how to teach' Indigenous students and content rather than look at themselves and their own family histories as an opportunity to 'peel off' the layers of privilege, and examine their own biases, racism, and notions of what constitutes social justice. They were frustrated at times by the emphasis on 'history' without always seeing its relevance to present day. EŁ TELNIWT left many students feeling unsure about what to do with what they had learned about Indigenous people and themselves following the completion of the course. Some students expressed this as having missed out on an 'authentic Indian experience', missing that Indigeneity is *all* around them: their instructor, guest speakers, the pedagogy and the ground beneath their feet.

Several students suggested:

'Maybe visiting a reserve…' or '*…seeing ceremonies happen*'.

At Lakehead the courses in trying to provide an 'authentic Indigenous experience'—that is, teachings from an Elder, going to the reserve, going to the sweatlodge or to the 5,000-year-old fish fence—I believe may have inadvertently re-entrenched some deeply held stereotypes about Indigenous peoples. To paraphrase Thomas King, this was the *very* Indian they had in mind (Miliken, Kinistino, & King, 2007). While these classes were unanimously lauded as the 'best' or 'most powerful', they were also the classes where people were not asked to understand their implications in systemic oppression. These experiences are fundamental to Indigenous education, and they must be done respectfully, critically, and in relation to the unsettling pedagogies of the course. At both sites, students expressed fear and anger at their own ignorance. At UVic, many students explained it was due to a lifetime lack for exposure to experiences, truthfulness and well-rounded information from parents, community members and schools about Indigenous people, for example:

> *Overall, I feel that the cdn pop.*[sic] *knows very little about Aboriginal people apart from stereotypes and media stories … we come out* [of a] *system*[that] *has not prepared us.*

Some students expressed feeling overwhelmed by the new knowledge they had gained about themselves and Indigenous people and continued to struggle with how to make practical use of it in the classroom.

> *I still feel overwhelmed by trying to incorporate Indigenous knowledge into my classroom for fear of offending…*

This last theme of 'fear of offending; is a prevalent one; not just with our students but in other countries where similar research has been conducted

(McLaughlin & Whatman, 2007; Phillips, 2011; Restoule, 2011; Riley, Howard-Wagner, Mooney, & Kutay, 2013). Students choose to err on the side of caution instead of trying diverse approaches to engage in conversation and/or work in Indigenous communities and/or with people. Students report needing more than just one course to feel confident, knowledgeable and comfortable with the materials and the topics. Restoule (2011) describes his findings:

> I've often encountered two types of benign resistance from those who would otherwise be strong allies: the fear of appropriation and a lack of confidence. Approaching indigenous inclusion through the fostering of relationships can address both of these issues. (p. 18)

Confusion and Dissonance—it is Just One Class

Through the UVic survey questionnaires and interviews, students expressed confusion and frustration about their instructor's 'call to integrate' and acknowledge Indigenous worldview and contributions into all aspects of their teachings yet did not experience this in their own program of study. This was the overwhelming sense at Lakehead too: students expressed an overall disconnection to the rest of the teacher education program. As contributors to the program, we recognized this as a paradox: students were asked in the context of the required Indigenous knowledge course to integrate Indigenous perspectives across subject areas but they do not experience such approaches within other courses in their teacher education program. One student questioned:

> *… just how to integrate aboriginal education into other subject areas. I don't know if that is the fault of the course or more the education program itself because I think that when we take all the other classes there is such a low emphasis on integrating aboriginal content.…*

How the Course was Different

The majority of students welcomed the course structure and noted the difference they felt from their other courses. Twenty-five of the twenty-seven students interviewed at UVic in 2010 mentioned the talking circles and learning in circle as positively benefiting their learning experience and was something they recognized as being different from their other classes in structure and tone. At Lakehead, many students noted the attention to relationships within the class and with each other, and appreciated the time outside the classroom with community members on the Land. In particular, the repeated emphasis that they were not required to be an 'expert' in this field, but were being encouraged to integrate community into their classes was remarked upon:

> *It was really different from other courses, a lot of my class mates described it as being an oasis from other classes…*

At the end of a busy day… it was a very grounding kind of place to come to.

I really like the circle aspect, of sitting in the [circle] *… taking time to connect with each other…there were a lot of things that I learned about my fellow classmates that I didn't know and it really created a sense of community within the classroom.*

I noticed that there were a lot of people that had negative attitudes maybe, going into the class and a lot of the people who were on the other end of the spectrum were really excited to take the course. I think it 'threw' people who had never taken that type of course before to have to sit through and learn in that way.

A Good Place to Practice to Work it Out

… for a long time when people were saying ignorant things or whatever around me I would get really emotional about it, but I was trying to find ways to be able speak articulately … This was a good place to practice because everybody knew each other and even though we all come from different backgrounds … and it was the place where everyone was able to hash that out and learn about the truth and give me a place to practice to be able to stand up for my belief of the history and different… (Student)

Discussion

With the release of the TRC report (2015) calling for a nation-wide infusion and rewriting of public school curriculum to educate Canadians about the real history of this country, post-secondary educators of pre-service teachers must not only mirror this effort in terms of providing this education to pre-service teachers but also assist them to prepare *themselves* to *teach* this material.

The lessons learned from this research in Faculties of Education is that it is almost impossible to educate groups of 30 or more students on a millennia of history that they may have missed due to colonially oriented schooling programs and families who were not equipped to educate them on these topics as well as bring the group forward all the way to 'how do you teach Indigenous students' or integrate Indigenous knowledge across all subject areas in 36–39 course contact hours. Clearly, more than one course is needed in teacher education programs that focus on Indigenous knowledge, worldview and education. In addition, Indigenous perspectives need to be deeply woven into the curriculum throughout teacher education programs if we hope to encourage upcoming teachers to appreciate the importance of this approach.

As instructor-researchers, we learned some important lessons. One is to make the pedagogy of the course more evident within the course. In other words, highlight for the students that the way we offer the course is an example of Indigenous ways of knowing, teaching and learning. Further, courses can approach

Indigenous education in diverse ways where history, socio-cultural and political issues are discussed as foundational to the understanding of complex social matters related to Indigenous peoples and communities. Students generally arrive to their third year of study at university still holding on to stereotypes and assumptions about Indigenous people. By offering students opportunities to discuss their personal location their sense of self (personally and professionally), and question and dismantle dominant discourses, we hope they will begin to see themselves in a more holistic manner, to understand that they cannot 'leave themselves at door' and become a cardboard cutout figure moving back and forth across the front of the class. As future teachers, they need to begin to appreciate the relationship between their 'lived experiences', their family history, their cultural location, their privilege (or lack thereof) and their future practice. As members of an institution of higher education, and as instructors we must offer educational opportunities where students are encouraged and challenged to examine racialized oppression and the structures within which oppression exists. As Sefa Dei (2005) suggests, we must encourage students to challenge the normalized order of things and the dominant patterns of knowledge production.

As Indigenous education in teacher education gains momentum, in Canada, we are encouraged by the innovative and powerful practices, and frustrated by the challenges and ignorance, being observed and reported in our own classrooms and in classrooms across the country. While it is affirming to share challenges with colleagues, we must be clear about our successes and about our fears going forward. Since the publication of the TRC Report (2015), and in the most recent People for Education (2016) report, there have been more calls and support for compulsory Indigenous education. Thankfully, there have been editorials pushing back on these calls, asking the crucial questions: 'For who? By whom? To what end?' (McDonald, 2016). One of the findings from this research so far is that compulsory Indigenous education is complicated, possibly counter-productive for some, and certainly insufficient. This work may help to contribute to understanding how to do this work better. What is clear is that it must start with the land.

Future Directions and Concluding Thoughts

Given the number and variety of ways that required Indigenous knowledge courses are being implemented in teacher education programs across the country it would be advantageous to have a national survey of such programs and their experiences with the creation, implementation and evolution of these courses. We are passionate about the topic and hope that our work with help to inform both Indigenous educators tasked with the implementation and maintenance of these courses in their own institutions as well as the greater scholarly educational community as they continue to learn about and collaborate on the greater inclusion of

Indigenous people and our world views in Faculties of Education. Having encountered a variety of reactions, insights and experiences related to this required course, it has become an interest to expand the research by interviewing past students/participants and explore if, and how the course on Indigenous knowledge has helped them in their quest towards EŁ TELNIWT (becoming a whole person), and a *Right Relation*.

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